SOCIAL TYPES IN SOUTHERN PROSE FICTION

A Dissertation

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Preface

No treatise on fiction can in the slightest sense be considered a substitute for the fiction itself. One must read the works of novelists and short story writers if one wishes to live mentally among the scenes which those authors have created or to cultivate an acquaintance with characters into whom the writers of narratives have breathed the breath of life. Hence, this dissertation on Southern fiction is written with no vain thought that it will furnish sufficient knowledge of Southern social types to those who for themselves have not read Southern literature. The hope is, rather, that should this work be read by any who have not strolled along the pleasant ways of Southern prose, it may be in some degree a stimulus to direct their energies towards those paths and may serve as a guide to their footsteps. But let the reader make his best acquaintances in the novels and stories themselves.

In these pages the types treated are entirely the South's own. After careful consideration the cowboy has not been discussed. True he is found in Texas, a Southern State; but he is more of the West than of the South and has been treated by Western more than by Southern authors. Likewise, life in Missouri along the Mississippi River, Mark Twain's special field, has not been included, for that too would be something of a trespass into the pioneer literature of the West.

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Dr. J. C. Metcalf of the University of Virginia for his suggestion of the subject and for the helpful encouragement which he has given while the dissertation was being prepared.

M. C. H.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION.

Fiction depends for its value upon the reflection of life in an interesting way. Poetry may extol the beauties of Nature or fire the emotions without touching human actions; essays may analyze the workings of the human mind without portraying a creature of flesh and blood; history and biography may relate true events without creating a living atmosphere; but the very essence of the novel or short story is life. Fiction is not life itself; it is rather the image of life,—the author's mind being the mirror from which the image is reflected. That mirror, moreover, must be neither concave nor convex—it must be plane and clear, for the discerning reader wants no distortions.

Since fiction is the reflection of life, the complete substance of this kind of literature is created around characters. Consequently those types of character which are deemed picturesque have served as models for the pen, and those communities where picturesque characters lived have been the authors' favorite backgrounds.

American literature has very naturally fallen into geographic groups. The fiction of a section has logically partaken of provincial tone or color. And with no attempt to disparage the mirroring of any section's attributes, the student of American fiction is likely to find that the most interesting local color is the South's.

There is ample reason for this claim of Southern literature. Where Nature is lavish, the pen-artist will find a setting; where hearts beat warmest, the romancer will tell his story; where race and circumstance have combined to nourish and preserve ideals, the novelist

will find characters that will be close to his heart. Professor Pattee rightly states: "The cause of the Southern tone which American literature took on during the eighties lies in the single fact that the South had the literary material. The California gold, rich as it was when first discovered by the East, was quickly exhausted. There were no deep mines; it was surface gold, pockets and startling nuggets. Suddenly it was discovered that the South was a field infinitely richer, and the tide turned. Nowhere else were to be found such a variety of picturesque types of humanity: negroes, crackers, creoles, mountaineers, moonshiners, and all those incongruous elements that had resulted from the great social upheaval of 1861-1865. Behind it in an increasingly romantic perspective lay the old regime destroyed by the war; nearer was the war itself, most heroic of struggles; and still nearer was the tragedy of reconstruction with its carpet-bagger, its freed slaves, and its Ku-Klux terror. Never before in America, even in California, had there been such richness of literary material. That a group of Southern-born writers should have arisen to deal with it was inevitable. Who else could have dealt with it, especially in the new era that demanded reality and absolute genuineness?"[1].

The extent of Southern fiction is known and appreciated by comparatively few. The mass of it is startling. The quality of much of it is admirable. Scarcely a Southern state has failed to produce writers to put its life into the pages of fiction. Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, and Louisiana have been especially well represented. Out of the characters which are so abundant in Southern fiction the following types are most prominent: the pioneer, the Indian, the landed aristocrat, the negro, the cracker, the Creole, the mountaineer, and the Confederate soldier. Time and circumstance have produced character evolution, so that from several of these types there has

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1. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, pages 295-296.

come a resultant type, the modern Southerner. Though he may lack the halo which a romantic past alone can give, the Southerner of to-day is distinctive enough to occupy a very secure place in American literature.

There is a distinct, though gradual, trend to be noticed in Southern prose fiction. There is a movement from romanticism to realism, from triviality of details to essentiality and import, from provincialism to Americanism. But the Southern ideal is never lost, and it is this undimmed ideal, revealed in the love, the courtesy, the chivalry, the sacrifice, and the honor of Southern life, that fills Southern fiction with its grace and charm.

Chapter II

T H E P I O N E E R

When a new country is discovered, explored, and colonized, it is to be supposed that those persons who leave behind them the luxuries of civilization and face the uncertainties of a settler's life are persons of fearless mien and stout heart. Furthermore it is to be supposed that settlers in the forests of a new country encounter many dangers and experience many adventures. So wilderness scenes, thrilling adventures, and courageous hearts challenge the writer of fiction,—and the writer is quick to use them. Thus the pioneer of North America, isolated in the boundless forests from the life and friends he had formerly known, relying upon his individual endurance, bravery, and skill to maintain his new home, deserves to be well treated by American authors. The world to-day knows the American pioneer as he appears in fiction chiefly through the familiar figure of James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo. But, just as the dangers to be faced by the pioneers in the North were no greater than those faced by the pioneers in the South, and as the tasks in one section were as arduous as those in another, other writers besides Cooper recorded stories of adventure in their sections and drew fairly good—though not very well known—likenesses of the men who blazed the way of civilization into the new areas.

"William Gilmore Simms...did for the South and Southwest what Cooper did for the North—that is, caught the evanescent atmosphere of an unfrequented country, recorded the rough, simple customs of isolated people, and impressed upon a canvas, redolent with savage uncouthness, the spirit of heroic sentiment.

"Yet in the contrast of Cooper and Simms, it is remarkable that the latter fails to rise to the height of the former, though his

work, taken in detail, exhibits him equally as inventive, as observant, and as conscious of historical development. Simms had large faults; the rapidity with which he worked made him careless, forced him into contradictory statement and conflicting description. He was more violent than Cooper, more prone to make use of the melodramatic. But, on the other hand, his lights and shades were more evenly distributed, and his middle-class 'pioneer', so to speak, more typical and unusual."[1].

While in our fiction there is no single outstanding figure to represent the Southern pioneer as Leatherstocking represents that type in the North, many characters in many stories reveal the virtues and vices of the Southern settler, hunter, Indian fighter and backwoodsman. The earliest distinctively American fiction consisted of tales of adventure. Authors who were pioneers in our literature frequently drew their characters from pioneers of our country's history. And we are told that "Although by 1851 tales of adventure had begun to seem antiquated, they had rendered a large service to the course of literature: they had removed the stigma, for the most part, from the word novel."[2].

William Gilmore Simms did his choicest work when he depicted scenes of the early days of his native state, South Carolina. In his best known novel, The Yemassee, he represents Charles Craven, governor of South Carolina, under the assumed name of Gabriel Harrison, as a man of pioneer hardihood, sharing the dangers of the colonists who had established their homes in the forests of the upcountry. In the same novel, the brothers, Walter and Hugh Grayson, pioneers, display a capability in meeting the wiles of the savages such as a life in the wilderness far from the fortified towns alone

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1. Montrose J. Moses' The Literature of the South, pages 239-240.
2. The Cambridge History of American Literature, Volume I, page 307.

develops. And the preacher who sometimes accompanied the pioneer to the outskirts of the American colonies finds a representative in the person of the Puritan Mr. Matthews, father of the heroine of The Yemassee.

Simms did not confine his pioneer tales to the borders of his own state. It would have been better if he had done so. Too ambitious was the attempt to cover the greater portion of the South in the pioneer days. The result was a lack of concentration and a certain carelessness of art in the eagerness to tell many stories —a fact that explains in part, at least, why Simms is so little read at the present time.

Guy Rivers is a reflection of the pioneer's actions in Georgia. Mark Forrester in this novel, while occupying only an obscure corner in literature, is a typical pioneer of rugged good qualities and entirely fit for comparison with Cooper's more famous creation. A somewhat detailed description of Forrester as Simms presents him will give us a clear portrait of the traditional Southern backwoodsman:

"Mark Forrester was a stout, strongly-built, yet active person, some six feet in height, square and broad-shouldered—exhibiting an outline, wanting, perhaps, in some of the more rounded graces of form, yet at the same time far from symmetrical deficiency. There was, also, not a little of ease and agility, together with a rude gracefulness in his action, the result equally of the well-combined organization of his animal man and of the hardy habits of his woodland life. His appearance was youthful, and the passing glance would perhaps have rated him at little more than six or seven-and-twenty. His broad, full chest, heaving strongly with a consciousness of might—together with the generally athletic muscularity of his whole person—indicated correctly the possession of prodigious strength. His face was finely southern. His features were frank and fearless

—moderately intelligent, and well marked—the tout ensemble showing an active vitality, strong, and usually just feelings, and a good-natured freedom of character, which enlisted confidence, and seemed likely to acknowledge few restraints of a merely conventional kind. Nor, in any of these particulars, did the outward falsely interpret the inward man. With the possession of a giant's powers, he was seldom so far borne forward by his impulses, whether of pride or of passion, as to permit of their wanton or improper use. His eye, too, had a not unpleasing twinkle, promising more of good-fellowship and a heart at ease than may ever consort with the jaundiced or distempered spirit. His garb indicated, in part, and was well adapted to, the pursuits of the hunter and the labors of the woodman. We couple these employments together, for, in the wildernesses of North America, the dense forests, and broad prairies, they are utterly inseparable. In a belt, made of buckskin, which encircled his middle, was stuck, in a sheath of the same material, a small axe, such as, among the Indians, was well known to the early settlers as a deadly implement of war. The head of this instrument, or that portion of it opposite the blade, and made in weight to correspond with and balance the latter when hurled from the hand, was a pick of solid steel, narrowing down to a point, and calculated, with a like blow, to prove even more fatal, as a weapon in conflict, than the more legitimate member to which it was appended. A thong of ox-hide, slung over his shoulder, supported easily a light rifle of the choicest bore; for there are few matters indeed upon which the wayfarer in the southern wilds exercises a nicer and more discriminating taste than in the selection of a companion, in a pursuit like his, of the very last importance; and which, in time, he learns to love with a passion almost comparable to his love of woman. The dress of the woodman was composed of a coarse gray stuff, of a make sufficiently outré, but which, fitting him snugly, served to set off

his robust and well-made person to the utmost advantage. A fox-skin cap, of domestic manufacture, the tail of which, studiously preserved, obviated any necessity for a foreign tassel, rested slightly upon his head, giving a unique finish to his appearance, which a fashionable hat would never have supplied."[1].

The character just described possessed with his "free and hearty manner" a bravery without which he could not have faced the dangers of the wilderness. His boldness in combat may be understood from his own words: "There's quite enough of us, when a scalp's in danger, who can fling a knife and use a trigger with the best, and who won't wait to be asked twice to a supper of cold steel."[2].

The pioneer settlements, springing up at various places, became centers of trade and communication for those who had cast their lot on the outskirts of civilization. In Guy Rivers we find a typical pioneer town: "The village, or town—for such it was in the acceptation of the time and country—may well deserve some little description; not for its intrinsic importance, but because it will be found to resemble some ten out of every dozen of the country towns in all the corresponding region. It consisted of thirty or forty dwellings, chiefly of logs; not, however, so immediately in the vicinity of one another as to give any very decided air of regularity and order to their appearance. As usual, in all the interior settlements of the South and West, whenever an eligible situation presented itself, the squatter laid the foundation-logs of his dwelling, and proceeded to its erection. No public squares, and streets laid out by line and rule, marked conventional progress in an orderly and methodical society; but, regarding individual convenience as the only object in arrangements of this nature, they took little note of any other,

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1. William Gilmore Simms' Guy Rivers, pages 59-60.
2. Ibid., page 107.

and to them less important matters. They built where the land rose into a ridge of moderate and gradual elevation, commanding a long reach of prospect; where a good spring threw out its crystal waters, jetting, in winter and summer alike, from the hillside or the rock; or, in its absence, where a fair branch, trickling over a bed of small and yellow pebbles, kept up a perpetually clear and undiminishing current; where the groves were thick and umbrageous; and lastly, but not less important then either, where agues and fevers came not, bringing clouds over the warm sunshine, and taking all the hue, and beauty, and odor from the flower. These considerations were at all times the most important to the settler when the place of his abode was to be determined upon; and, with these advantages at large, the company of squatters, of whom Mark Forrester, made one, by no means the least important among them, had regularly, for the purposes of gold-digging, colonized the little precinct into which we have now ventured to penetrate."[1].

The cosmopolitan nature of such a settlement is explained in the words: "Here, alike, came the spendthrift and the indolent, the dreamer and the outlaw, congregating, though guided by contradictory impulses, in the formation of a common caste, and in the pursuit of a like object—some with the view to profit and gain; others, simply from no alternative being left them; and that of gold-seeking, with a better sense than their neighbors, being in their own contemplation, truly, a dernier resort."[2].

Richard Hurdis is a novel of pioneer Alabama, and Border Beagles of Mississippi when that State was new. In these books Simms runs to romance; sentiment flows from his pen. He justifies his love stories when he writes: "These first loves, or favorable impressions, are very common to a forest country such as ours, where no long time is

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1. William Gilmore Simms' Guy Rivers, pages 60-61.
2. Ibid., pages 61-62.

allowed for the formation of intimacies, and where the instincts of blood are always more active than the slow and cautious approaches of reason and philosophy."[1.]

Some general characteristics of frontier folk are stated by Simms in the "Advertisement" to his Charlemont, a novel which with its sequel, Beauchampe, presents pioneer Kentucky. Simms explains: "It is in all newly-settled countries, as among the rustic population of most nations, that the absence of the compensative resources of wealth leads to a singular and unreserved freedom among the people. In this way, society endeavors to find equivalents for those means of enjoyment which a wealthy people may procure from travel, from luxury, from the arts, and the thousand comforts of a well-provided homestead. The population of a frontier country, lacking such resources, scattered over a large territory, and meeting infrequently, feel the lack of social intercourse; and this lack tends to break down most of the barriers which a strict convention usually establishes for the protection, not only of sex and caste, but of its own tastes and prejudices. Lacking the resources of superior wealth, population, and civilization, the frontier people are naturally required to throw the doors open as widely as possible, in order to obtain that intercourse with their fellows which is, perhaps, the first great craving of humanity. As a matter of necessity, there is little discrimination exercised in the admission of their guests. A specious outside, agreeable manners, cleverness and good humor, will soon make their way into confidence, without requiring other guarantees for the moral of the stranger. The people are naturally frank and hospitable; for the simple reason that these qualities of character are essential for procuring them that intercourse which they crave. The habits are accessible, the restraints few, the

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1. William Gilmore Simms' Border Beagles, page 252.

sympathies are genial, active, easily aroused, and very confiding. It follows, naturally, that they are frequently wronged and outraged, and just as naturally that their resentments are keen, eager, and vindictive. The self-esteem, if not watchful, is revengeful; and society sanctions promptly the fierce redress—that wild justice of revenge—which punishes without appeal to law, with its own right hand, the treacherous guest who has abused the unsuspecting confidence which welcomed him to a seat upon the sacred hearth....

"It is not less the characteristic of these regions to exhibit the passions and the talents of the people in equal and wonderful saliency. We are accordingly struck with two classes of social facts, which do not often arrest the attention in old communities. We see, for example, the most singular combination of simplicity and sagacity in the same person; simplicity in conventional respects, and sagacity in all that affects the absolute and real in life, nature and the human sensibilities. The rude man, easily imposed upon, in his faith, fierce as an outlaw in his conflicts with men, will be yet exquisitively alive to the nicest consciousness of woman; will as delicately appreciate her instincts and sensibilities, as if love and poetry had been his only tutors from the first, and had mainly addressed their labors to this one object of the higher heart, education; and in due degree with the tenderness with which he will regard the sex, will be the vindictive ferocity with which —even though no kinsman—he will pursue the offender who has dared to outrage them in the case of any individual. In due degree as his faith is easy will his revenges be extreme. In due degree as he is slow to suspect the wrong-doer, will be the tenacity of his pursuit when the offender requires punishment. He seems to throw wide his heart and habitation, but you must beware how you trespass upon the securities of either.

"The other is a mental characteristic which leads to frequent surprises among strangers from the distant cities. It consists in the wonderful inequality between his mental and social development. The same person who will be regarded as a boor in good society, will yet exhibit a rapidity and profundity of thought and intelligence —a depth and soundness of judgment—an acuteness in discrimination —a logical accuracy, and critical analysis, such as mere good society rarely shows, and such as books almost as rarely teach. There will be a deficiency of refinement, taste, art—all that the polished world values so highly—and which it seems to cherish and encourage to the partial repudiation of the more essential properties of intellect. However surprising this characteristic may appear, it may yet be easily accounted for by the very simplicity of a training which results in great directness and force of character —a frank heartiness of aim and object—a truthfulness of object which suffers the thoughts to turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, but to press forward decisively to the one object—a determined will, and a restless instinct—which, conscious of the deficiencies of wealth and position, is yet perpetually seeking to supply them from the resources within its reach."[1].

In the novels of the Revolutionary War by Southern authors, frequently the most interesting characters, if not always the characters intended to be chief, are those that may be considered in the class of the pioneer. A great deal of the fighting done by the Americans in the Southern campaigns of the Revolutionary War was carried on in the fashion of the backwoodsman. Those men who had learned their lessons of warfare as Indian fighters were usually most successful against the British. To the wary frontiersman, alert, secretive, undismayed by superior numbers, and ready to rally

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1. William Gilmore Simms' Charlemont, pages 8-11.

with his comrades after every defeat that scattered patriots to their hiding places, really belongs the ultimate success of the patriots' cause. History has the record. And the novelists too have told their story, and created heroes to represent the type. For instance, The Scout by William Gilmore Simms records the deeds of the South Carolina scout, John Bannister, known as Supple Jack, who, knowing the ways of the swamps and possessing unyielding devotion to his cause, was among those who kept alive the spark of resistance to the English. In getting himself and his friends out of difficult places, in hiding successfully in the swamps, and in using accurately his rifle, which he affectionately called Polly Longlips, the scout Bannister proved himself expert in tactics acquired by pioneers in the American wilds. Horseshoe Robinson in the novel of that name by John Pendleton Kennedy is, like John Bannister, an American "sodger" with something of pioneer cleverness.

More modern writers than Simms and Kennedy have found occasion to introduce the pioneer of the South into their works. Mary Johnston's To Have and to Hold, a novel of Jamestown in 1619, has as its hero Ralph Percy, gentleman settler, the most romantic kind of pioneer. Again, in the first part of Miss Johnston's Audrey we are shown a pioneer, living with his wife and three children in a rude cabin near the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. In this instance the fate of the pioneer was one that was not unusual. Indians attacked in the night, burned the home, and murdered all members of the family but a hidden child. Some Southern novels have given in a rather subordinate light, apart from their main plots, accounts which show the pioneer's place among the various types of characters in our history and fiction. The passage of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia by westward moving settlers after Governor Spottswood had explored the top of the range is mentioned thus in a novel:

"Presently, at long intervals, came pioneers in small companies of two or three, well armed and vigilant, feeling every breeze that stirred to be charged with meaning, hearing a death-knell often in the echoes of the rocks that rang under their horses' hoofs and the branches that cracked beneath their weight, seeing an Indian in every shadow that fell and every leaf that rustled; scenting danger in everything, yet delighting in daring the worst. The buffalo did not like this, and showed it by seeking out other and more circuitous, secluded ways of getting into the valley. Small trains of pack-mules filed along it now, bringing a few precious packages and a breath from the outer world once or twice in the twelvemonth. The trail knew now that it was a road, grass-grown, seldom traversed, not always clearly marked out, but still a road, never again a trail. High-shouldered wagons were soon pushing aside impeding boughs, laden with rude household stuff, with children's faces peeping from under the hood, and a dog trotting alongside and dashing occasionally into the undergrowth after a rabbit."[1.]

James Lane Allen's The Choir Invisible, laid in Kentucky in 1795, contains a few pictures of those pioneers who had taken the white man's civilization to "the Dark and Bloody Ground." The Kentucky frontiersman is here described: "Seated on the roots of an oak were a group of young backswoodsmen—swarthy, lean, tall, wild and reckless of bearing—their long rifles propped against the tree or held fondly across the knees; the gray smoke of their pipes mingling with the gray of their jauntily worn raccoon-skin caps; the rifts of yellow sunlight blending with the yellow of their hunting-shirts and tunics; their knives and powder-horns fastened in the belts that girt in their gaunt waists; the heroic youthful sinew of the old border folk. One among them, larger and handsomer than the others, had

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1. Francœs Courtenay Baylor's Behind the Blue Ridge, pages 6-7.

pleased his fancy by donning more nearly the Indian dress. His breech-clout was of dappled fawn-skin; his long thigh boots of thin deer-hide were open at the hips, leaving exposed the clear whiteness of his flesh; below the knees they were ornamented by a scarlet fringe tipped with the hoofs of fawns and the spurs of the wild turkey; and in his cap he wore the intertwined wings of the hawk and the scarlet tanager."[1].

The mates of the Kentucky pioneers, after years had passed and civilization had followed in the wake of their daring, are thus mentioned: "And the women! Some—the terrible lioness-mothers of the Western jungles who had been used like men to fight with rifle, knife, and axe—now sat silent in the doorways of their rough cabins, wrinkled, scarred, fierce, silent, scornful of all advancing luxury and refinement."[2].

Those men who had blazed the way for the westward march of the Anglo-Saxon race in America did not, as a rule, in their old age enjoy dwelling in the communities that were so rapidly growing and prospering under the laws of the nation. The pioneer's nature continued to feel the call of the vast wilderness; the greatest freedom of individualism was the ideal he worshipped; his greatest love was for the solitudes that know only their own laws. The following sentence illustrates concretely: "Sitting on a stump apart from every one, his dog at his feet, his rifle across his lap, an aged backwoodsman surveyed in sorrow the civilization that had already destroyed his hunting and that was about sending him farther west to the depths of Missouri—along with the buffalo."[3].

Years after the settlers had erected their homes in the new country old pioneer beliefs and superstitions were handed down. James Lane Allen gives the following example: "One day Erskine brought

1. James Lane Allen's The Choir Invisible, pages 14-15.
2. Ibid., page 18.
3. Ibid., pages 16-17.

the skin of the panther which he was preparing...He brought his rifle along also,—his 'Betsy', as he always called it; which, however, he declared was bewitched just now; and for a while John watched him curiously as he nailed a target on a tree in front of John's door, drew on it the face of the person whom he charged with having bewitched his gun, and then, standing back, shot it with a silver bullet; after which, the spell being now undone, he dug the bullet out of the tree again and went off to hunt with confidence in his luck."[1.]

The latest treatment of the type under discussion is in John Fox, Jr.'s Erskine Dale—Pioneer. No particularly fine portraits of the pioneer are added by this novel, but the general qualities of the type are thus summarized: "Healthy, husky, rude, and crude these people were, but hearty, kind, wholesome, and hospitable to the last they had."[2.]

Though the pioneer does not have the prominent place in Southern literature that some other social types hold, and has not been brought out by the narrator's pen as definitely as—let us say—the landed aristocrat or the negro, he is by no means a negligible type. What he needs is a pen to give him a more distinct outline, a pen that will contribute some strong, unmistakable character as a truly representative figure.

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1. James Lane Allen's The Choir Invisible, pages 164-165.
2. John Fox, Jr.'s Erskine Dale—Pioneer, page 105.

Chapter III

T H E I N D I A N

Most poetic of all types in Southern fiction is the Indian. In him we have a creature of a past age, whose romance exists in the spell which is woven around departed centuries. We say that the Indian is a poetic type, because there is much elusive imagery about him. He is a savage, of course; but we find a picturesqueness and pathos about his race, a musicality in his language, a hopelessness in his struggles, and a cruelty in his ultimate destiny that demand our sympathies. In fiction we find his glory only the glory of the vanquished. He does not stand out as distinctly in Southern literature as do some other types. He always occupies the position of a subordinate character. But where we do find him, he is a stirrer of the imagination and the emotions.

Two American authors above all others are known as creators of Indian characters in fiction: James Fenimore Cooper in the North and William Gilmore Simms in the South. And, just as in the case of their treatment of the pioneer, so in their treatment of the Indian we find a contrast. Cooper's Indians are far better known than those of Simms, the chief reason perhaps being that Cooper made his characters what readers wanted them to be. He clothed them in the garb of extreme romance and placed in their breasts sentiments that were sometimes too desirable to be genuine. The Indians of the South Carolina author "were marked with more of the savage qualities—a characteristic which often forced Simms, in a graphic style, to resort to the revolting, typical examples of which are to be found in 'The Yemassee'."[1] It should not be thought for a moment, however, that Simms wrote novels of realism. Both he and Cooper were full of

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1. Montrose J. Moses' The Literature of the South, page 240.

the romanticism of Sir Walter Scott. Simms simply depicted the Indian more nearly as he was, while Cooper told the more fascinating story.

Simms in The Yemassee has painted his most vivid picture of the Indian. The novel is a story of South Carolina in 1715, when the Yemassees, leagued with the Coosaw, Creek, Combahee, Edistoh, Santee, and Seratee tribes, made war upon the white settlers in a vain attempt to annihilate the whites or expel them from the country. Sanutee, chief of the Yemassees, is a veritable patriot and hero. He is an imposing figure among his people. His appearance is thus presented: "The warrior was armed after the Indian fashion. The long straight bow, with a bunch of arrows, probably a dozen in number, suspended by a thong of deerskin, hung loosely upon his shoulders. His hatchet, or tomahawk, was slightly secured to his waist by a girdle of the same material. His dress, which fitted tightly to his person, indicated a frequent intercourse with the whites. He wore a sort of pantaloons, the seams of which had been permanently secured with strings,—unsewed, but tied. They were made of tanned buckskin of the brightest yellow, and of as tight a fit as the most punctilious dandy in modern times would insist upon. An upper garment, also of buckskin, made with more regard to freedom of limb, and called by the whites a hunting-shirt, completed the dress. Sometimes the wearer threw it loosely across his shoulders, secured with the broad belt which usually accompanied the garment. Buskins, or, as named among them, moccasins, also of the skin of the deer, tanned, or in its natural state, according to caprice or emergency, enclosed his feet tightly."1.

This Indian, as heroic as any of his race in our fiction, aroused in his people hatred against the whites from the truest

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 15.

sense of race loyalty. Contrast the character of Sanutee with that of the chief, Ishiagaska, in the following harangues of the two leaders:

"'They [the white settlers] shall die, and their scalps shall shrivel around the long pole in the lodge of the warrior,' exclaimed Ishiagaska, fiercely, to his brother chief. The response of Sanutee was in a different temper, though recognizing the same necessity.

"'The Yemassee must be free,' said the elder chief solemnly; the Manneyto [the Yemassee God] will bring him freedom—he will put the bow into his hands—he will strengthen him for the chase; there shall be no pale-faces along the path to rob him of venison. The Yemassee shall be free.'"1.

These latter words are the accents of nobility, not the cries of a bloodthirsty savage; they reveal the inner greatness of a man who is willing to sacrifice everything for his people's weal.

Fiction represents that frequently the vices of the Indian were derived from the white man. The bane of strong drink was brought to the Indians by the colonists. A tragic example is in the case of Occonestoga, son of Sanutee, whose loyalty to the English and desertion from his tribe were purchased by the liquor which the English gave him. Other members of the Yemassee tribe also proved traitors to their race and in consequence received the most ignominious of disgraces—expatriation, which to the Indian was far worse than death. The victims from their own people "found no mercy. The knife sheared the broad arrow [the Yemassee totem] from breast and arm, and in a single hour they were expatriated men, flying desperately to the forests, homeless, nationless, outcasts from God and man, yet destined to live."2.

The Indian mother, Matiwan, slew Occonestoga, her son, to save

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 53.
2. Ibid., page 70.

him from the curse of such an exile. The following words give the desperate maternal love of Matiwan as she performed the horrible deed that alone could accomplish her boy's redemption:

"'I strike thee but to save thee, my son:—since they cannot take the totem from thee after the life is done. Turn away from me thy head—let me not look upon thine eyes as I strike, lest my hands grow weak and tremble. Turn thine eyes away.'

"His eyes closed, and the fatal instrument, lifted above her head, was now visible in the sight of all. The executioner rushed forward, but he came too late. The tomahawk was driven deep into the skull, and but a single sentence from his lips preceded the final insensibility of the victim."[1].

Later the same Indian woman released Gabriel Harrison from captivity because in her mind she compared him with her dead son. This human sympathy of Matiwan in the fiction of Simms may be compared with the Pocahontas story in the historical writings of Captain John Smith.

In The Cassique of Kiawah Simms gives an intimate account of Indian life. This novel reveals the soul of the red man, and has in certain parts the tone of Longfellow's epic, Hiawatha, though in other parts it deals with the Indian in his struggles with the white man.

The Indian country as found by colonial settlers can be seen in the following passage:

"'But the red man,' say you. 'He is here.' Ay, there are his scattered tribes—they are everywhere; but feeble in all their numbers. He is a savage, true; but savage, let me tell you—and the distinction is an important one, arguing ignorance, not will—savage rather in his simplicity than in his corruptions. His brutality is

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 112.

rather that of barbarism than vice. He wanders through these woods at seasons; here fishing today—tomorrow, gone, leaving no trace; gone in pursuit of herds which he has probably routed from old pasturages along these very waters. For a hundred miles above, there rove the tribes of the Stono and Isundiga, the Edisto and the Sewee, the Kiawah, and the Ashepoo, all tributaries of the great nation of the Yemassee. You will wander for weeks, yet meet not a man of them; yet, in the twinkling of an eye, when you least fancy them, when you dream yourself in possession of an unbroken solitude, they will spring up beside the path, and challenge your attention by a gutteral, which may seem to you a welcome; or by a cri de guerre, which shall certainly appear to you the whoop of death!"[1].

The Cassique of Kiawah bears a resemblance to the poem Hiawatha in its account of the training of the Indian youth. From the age of eight to fifteen the boy is put through a strenuous physical training, during which time his body becomes inured to the hardships of forest life. During this time also he listens to thousands of Indian myths and legends. At fifteen the youth is solemnly dedicated to the Great Spirit, for mystic religion is a strong part of the red man's life. He is taken to some lonely place, and after "various exorcisms of the priest," he is left weaponless and with a scanty supply of food, measured to last a limited time—from seven to twenty-seven days. He drinks water in which bitter roots with emetic properties have been steeped. Later he drinks a concoction made from roots that intoxicate. The youth is thrown into delirium or temporary madness. "Then the visions follow. And these visions have a divine import, which the young man must carefully remember. They embody the mystery, and the moral, and perhaps the model, of his future life."[2]. After the period of solitude, the priest reappears, puts on the youth's feet the "mockasons of manhood, prepared

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Cassique of Kiawah, pages 15-16.

for the occasion," and arms him with a new bow, belt, and arrows, that have been consecrated. Sometimes the youth takes a new name temporarily until he has done some deed that will give him a permanent name. Simms remarks, "An Indian boy at fifteen is five years older than a European boy at the same age."[1].

In virtually all fiction dealing with the Indian, the red man's unremitting determination to get revenge for wrongs done him is one of his dominant racial traits. "The vengeance of the red man never sleeps, and is never satisfied while there is still a victim."[2]. And this desire for revenge is attended with the keenest craft and deception. An example of how an Indian could wait long to carry out his plans of vengeance is in The Cassique of Kiawah when the old chief, Cussoboe, sends his son, Iswattee, to occupy a menial position in a white man's household in order that the lad may be in a position to aid his race in their work of destruction at a future time. The boy is an agent of national revenge and he is fully conscious of the duty before him. "It involves treachery, havoc, and murder; and he is put in a position to minister to the terrible object by his keen subtlety and cunning stratagem."[3].

In this instance, however, the Indian boy is not the stoic that, in the common conception, every member of his race is taken to be. He is of a gentle nature, and he grows thin and sick with the thought of approaching scenes of blood. Simms refutes the customary idea of the Indian's nature when he writes: "He could moan—the red man can weep, moan, and laugh, like the men of another race, if he be alone. But his self-esteem, which is always nursed by solitude, will never suffer a witness of his tears; hardly of his laughter. He is not adamant, though he hides from the sight of the white man—whom his instincts describe to him as a mocking superior—his passionate

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Cassique of Kiawah, page 262.
2. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 14.
3. William Gilmore Simms' The Cassique of Kiawah, page 515.

emotions, his agonies, his fears and tears."[1] Iswattee's concern for the fate of the white settlers is not only the result of the boy's tender nature, but also a consequence of his love for Grace Masterton, his "Annegar". It is the sentiment of a Pocahontas in the heart of a lad.

Most Indian stories rely for their chief thrills upon accounts of Indian attacks. In both of the novels by Simms mentioned in this chapter may be found well related Indian assaults with all their vigor, fury, desperation, and futility.

Thus far our mention of the Indian in Southern fiction has been confined to the redskin of South Carolina. The Indian in Virginia has been fairly well portrayed also, though occupying, like his fellows of the lower South, a subordinate place among the characters of romances.

In St. George Tucker's Hansford two striking Indian characters, young Manteo of the Pamunkey tribe and his sister Mamalis, are presented. The latter merits the following description: "The figure was that of a young girl, scarce twenty years of age, whose dark copper complexion, piercing black eyes, and high cheek bones, all proclaimed her to belong to that unhappy race which had so long held undisputed possession of this continent. Her dress was fantastic in the highest degree. Around her head was a plait of peake, made from those shells which were used by the Indians at once as their roanoke, or money, and as their most highly prized ornament of dress. A necklace and bracelets of the same adorned her neck and arms. A short smock, made of dressed deer-skin, which reached only to her knees, and was tightly fitted around the waist with a belt of wampum, but scantily concealed the swelling of her lovely bosom. Her legs, from the knee to the ancle, were bare, and her feet were covered with buckskin sandals, ornamented with beads, such as are yet seen in our

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Cassique of Kiawah, page 517.

western country, as the handiwork of the remnant of this unhappy race. Such a picturesque costume well became the graceful form that wore it. Her long, dark hair, which, amid all these decorations, was her loveliest ornament, fell unbound over her shoulders in rich profusion."[1].

Manteo and Mamalis, after the death of their relatives, lived quietly in their wigwam as friends to the colonists "and secured a comfortable subsistence—he by fishing and the chase, and she by the cultivation of their little patch of ground, where maize, melons, pompions, cushaus, and the like, rewarded her patient labour with their abundant growth."[2]. Besides she made mats, baskets, and sandals, and sold them in Jamestown and the vicinity.

But in spite of the friendly relations between the colonists and these orphan Indians, Manteo "was still ardently devoted to his race, and thirsting for fame; and stung by what he conceived the injustice of the whites, he had leagued himself in an enterprise, which, regardless of favour or friendship, was dictated by revenge."[3]. Changed from the harmless youth that he had appeared, he assumed the characteristics of a wild beast as he led on his war party to attack the whites. The novelist shows us Manteo the warrior thus: "Their leader, a tall, athletic young Indian, surpassed them all in the hideousness of his appearance. His closely shaven hair was adorned with a tall eagle's feather, and pendant from his ears were the rattles of the rattlesnake. The only garment which concealed his nakedness was a short smock, or apron, reaching from his waist nearly to his knees, and made of dressed deer skin, adorned with beads and shells. Around his neck and wrists were strings of peake and roanoke. His face was painted in the most horrible manner, with a ground of deep red, formed from the dye of the pocone root, and variegated with

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1. St. George Tucker's Hansford, page 49.
2. Ibid., page 67.
3. Ibid., page 52.

streaks of blue, yellow and green. Around his eyes were large circles of green paint. But to make his appearance still more hideous, feathers and hair were stuck all over his body, upon the fresh paint, which made the warrior look far more like some wild beast of the forest than a human being." [1].

The Indian is found to be a creature of extremes. In his treatment of captives he is represented as a fiend of relentless cruelty. No torture could be too horrible for him to inflict. An instance of the savage's delight in the worst forms of inflicting anguish is found in the story of a victim who was tied to a tree, lacerated with sharp mussel shells, disembowelled, and finally burned by the application of fire to splinters that had been stuck in his body.

In Mary Johnston's Audrey the extreme passion of an Indian is seen in the half-breed, Jean Hugon, who, thwarted in his desperate love, tries to kill his successful rival, and, instead, mortally wounds the girl whom he has sought to marry.

But, as strongly as an Indian can hate an enemy, equally sincerely can he love and serve a friend. A beautiful example is found in the character of Monakatocka, a Conestoga Indian, in Miss Johnston's Prisoners of Hope. Monakatocka, eternally grateful to his white friend, Godfrey Landless, is the personification of fidelity.

Noticeably characteristic in the Indian's nature is his tendency to vaunt his superiority over members of other tribes. Tribal distinction is strong within him. Thus the half-Monacan, Jean Hugon, scornfully and boastfully exclaims against the Indian youths at college in Williamsburg: "'They are all'—he swept his hand toward the circle beneath the elm—'they are all Saponies, Nottoways, Meherrins; their fathers are lovers of the peace pipe, and humble to the English. A Monacan is a great brave; he laughs at the Nottoways, and

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1. St. George Tucker's Hansford, page 56.

says that there are no men in the villages of the Meherrins.'"[1].

The Indian's expression of religious sentiment is very poetic. He sees in the Nature about him and in his own experiences evidences of the Great Spirit, the good Manitou, and of the evil Okee. Referring again to Tucker's Hansford, we find in the lament of Mamalis after her brother's death a requiem of expressive beauty:

"They have plucked the flower from the garden of my heart, and have torn the soil where it tenderly grew. He was bright and beautiful as the bounding deer, and the shaft from his bow was as true as his unchanging soul! Rest with the Great Spirit, soul of my brother!

"The Great Spirit looked down in pity on my brother; Manitou has snatched him from the hands of the dreadful Okee. On the shores of the spirit-land, with the warriors of his tribe he sings the song of his glory, and chases the spirit deer over the immaterial plains! Rest with the Great Spirit, soul of my brother!

"But I, his sister, am left lonely and desolate; the hearth-stone of Mamalis is deserted. Yet has my hand sought revenge for his murder, and my bosom exults over the destruction of his destroyer! Rest with the Great Spirit, soul of my brother!

"Rest with the Great Spirit, soul of Manteo, till Mamalis shall come to enjoy thy embraces. Then welcome to thy spirit home the sister of thy youth, and reward with thy love the avenger of thy death! Rest with the Great Spirit, soul of my brother!"[2].

Added to the Indian satisfaction at revenge in this chant of sorrow is something of the subtle grief of David's lament for Saul and Jonathan and of the poetic imagery in The Song of Solomon.

As the pioneers thinned the forests, the Indians of Virginia were threatened with race extinction. This advance of the colonists against the new lands is spoken of as "the warfare, bequeathed from

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1. Mary Johnston's Audrey, pages 372 - 373.
2. St. George Tucker's Hansford, pages 222-223.

generation to generation, against the standing armies of the forest, that subtle foe that slept not, retreated not, whose vanguard, ever falling, ever showed unbroken ranks beyond."[1]. And the result came to be: "Trapper and trader and ranger might tell of trails through the wilderness vast and hostile, of canoes upon unknown waters, of beasts of prey, creatures screaming in the night-time through the ebony woods. Of Indian villages, also, and of red men who, in the fastnesses that were left them, took and tortured and slew after strange fashions. The white man, strong as the wind, drove the red man before his face like an autumn leaf..."[2].

Scattered through Southern literature are fugitive short stories dealing with the Indian. An example is Loka by Mrs. Kate Chopin, which portrays a half-breed girl from Bayou Choctaw, living in a Creole family, who, homesick for the freedom of the forest, is only prevented from running away by her devotion to the baby that her mistress has left in her care.

Except in his days of primitive grandeur the Indian is a forlorn figure. He must be given the settings of his primeval forests, his wigwams, his council fires, and his war paint, in order to be a character of genuine romance. Most of the individual Indians known in our fiction meet a tragic fate. They play their minor parts and their lives are snuffed out: such is the usual course of the story. And the lot of these individuals in our literature is scarcely more than a symbol of the tragedy of their race.

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1. Mary Johnston's Audrey, page 404.
2. Ibid.

Chapter IV

THE LANDED ARISTOCRAT; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE TIDEWATER

To the traveler who takes the leisurely trip down James River or some sister stream in eastern Virginia there appear here and there upon the banks old colonial homes; and if the traveler has an imaginative mind, he can people once more these old places with lovely ladies and stately gentlemen, long dead and gone. Such mansions as are found on the banks of the rivers or are reached by sandy or muddy roads in tidewater Virginia were the homes of the colonial gentry of the eighteenth and the slaveholding aristocracy of the early nineteenth century,—now a lost race had not the historian and the romancer painted an everlasting picture of them that will live in the realm of warm hearts. The landed aristocrat has been the model for the brightest picture—and the favorite picture—in all Southern literature.

Professor Pattee, commenting upon Southern fiction in general, has written: "A dwelling upon the merely quaint and unusual in the local environment to arouse laughter and interest was perhaps the leading source of failure in Southern fiction even to the time of the later seventies. From the days of Longstreet's Georgia Scenes, pictures there had been of the 'cracker', the mountaineer, the Pike, the conventional negro of the Jim Crow and the Zip Coon or the Uncle Tom type, the colonel of the fire-eating, whisky-drinking variety, but there had been no painstaking picture of real Southern life drawn with loving hand, not for mirth and wonder, not for the pointing of a moral, but for sympathy and comprehension. Horace E. Scudder as late as 1880 noted that 'the South is still a foreign land to the North, and travelers are likely to bring back from it only what does not grow in the North.' It was true also of travelers in its books as well,

for the most of its books had been written for Northern publication. The first writer really to picture the South from the heart outward, to show it not as a picturesque spectacle but as a quivering section of human life, was Thomas Nelson Page (1853-), whose first distinctive story, 'Marse Chan', appeared as late as 1884."[1.]

The author of Marse Chan and Red Rock is a true artist in the portrayal of the landed aristocrat in Virginia. It has been well said that "the Cavalier spirit is uppermost in the art of the Southern writer, and its persistency...is largely due to the influence of Mr. Page."[2.]

Among our living Southern authors there is one who has gone back to life in colonial Virginia to get material for some of her best work. Miss Mary Johnston has caught the spirit of Virginia in the seventeenth century and has composed some fascinating novels of that time. In Prisoners of Hope she has drawn a vivid picture of Verney manor, on Chesapeake Bay, where Colonel Richard Verney, tobacco planter, lived in baronial pride. The time is during the rule of Governor William Berkeley, after the restoration of Charles II to the English throne. In Colonel Verney's iron overlordship on his plantation and his unswerving loyalty to governor and king; in the careful, obedient deportment of Patricia Verney to her father; in the knightly courting of Patricia by her cousin, the brave, fiery, carefree Cavalier, Sir Charles Carew, we see the Virginia aristocrat as a merely transplanted Englishman. The novel is frank in showing the terrible hardship endured by the slaves and servants of a big tidewater plantation, some of them being white men of excellent stock, sentenced to bondage because of aid rendered the Cromwellian army or government. The unrest and inclination to insurrection among these unfortunates and the

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1. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, pages 264-265.
2. Montrose J. Moses' The Literature of the South, pages 239-240.

strictness with which they were held in check are emphasized in the book.

St. George Tucker in Hansford, a tale of Bacon's Rebellion, has also presented the early estate of the Virginia Cavalier. Again we see the proud, stern father, the daughter hesitating between love and filial duty, and the courteous, knightly, faithful lover. An idea of the landed aristocrat's place in the Virginia of 1676 may be gained from the following:

"Begirt with love and blessed with contentment, the little family at Windsor Hall led a life of quiet, unobtrusive happiness. In truth, if there be a combination of circumstances peculiarly propitious to happiness, it will be found to cluster around one of those old colonial plantations, which formed each within itself a little independent barony. There first was the proprietor, the feudal lord, proud of his Anglo-Saxon blood, whose ambition was power and personal freedom, and whose highest idea of wealth was in the possession of the soil he cultivated. A proud feeling was it, truly, to claim a portion of God's earth as his own; to stand upon his own land, and looking around, see his broad acres bounded only by the blue horizon walls, and feel in its full force the whole truth of the old law maxim, that he owned not only the surface of the soil, but even to the centre of the earth, and the zenith of the heavens. There can be but little doubt that the feelings suggested by such reflections are in the highest degree favorable to the development of individual freedom, so peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon race, and so stoutly maintained, especially among an agricultural people. This respect for the ownership of land is illustrated by the earliest legislation, which held sacred the title to the soil even from the grasp of the law, and which often restrained the freeholder from alienating his land from the lordly but unborn aristocrat to whom it should descend."[1].

1. St. George Tucker's Hansford, pages 10-11.

Perhaps no American novelist has been more faithful and devoted to the history of his native State than John Esten Cooke of Virginia. As to Cooke's purpose in his novel writing there has been some difference of opinion. The following seems just: "I cannot find an authoritative expression of Cooke's purpose, as it is stated in some notices, to do for Virginia what Cooper did for New York, and Simms for South Carolina. He simply filled himself full of material where alone he had opportunity—for he was outside the State only for occasional brief trips—and colored it with his patriotic devotion. He knew his scenes, and never confused, never tangled them. He loved them dearly, as he loved the men and women that peopled them."[1].

In The Virginia Comedians, republished as two separate novels, Beatrice Hallam and Captain Ralph, John Esten Cooke has drawn one of the best pictures of the colonial Virginia aristocrat. The time is 1763-1765, the period of resentment against the Stamp Act, and the scene is Williamsburg and adjacent country. Here we see the satisfied squire, the jolly, fox-hunting bachelor, the condescending fop just returned from Oxford and London, the vigorous soldier returned from European wars, the young militant son of the squire; here also move the squire's dignified, stately spinster sister, his pretty daughters, —one soft and gentle, the other elegant and sarcastic, both refined and lovable,—and his little niece, whose childish love and purity are a blessing to the household.

In Audrey Miss Mary Johnston has presented Williamsburg and the tidewater manors about twenty years prior to the time of The Virginia Comedians. But the reader necessarily feels that Miss Johnston received the basic idea of her plot from Cooke's work. The life of the landed aristocrat is essentially the same in these novels.

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1. Article on John Esten Cooke, by J. L. Armstrong, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 1035.

The Virginia planter in the middle of the eighteenth century is represented in fiction as living in luxury in his noble manor house near the James or some other Virginia river, dining sumptuously with his friends, drinking heavily his imported wine, visiting neighbors' homes and the colonial capital in his coach or on horseback, extending to his neighbors unstinted hospitality, bowing courteously to the ladies who love his home, listening to them play upon harpsichord or spinet, hunting the fox over the broad fields, attending the Established Church with regularity, and arguing with parson or squire on any subject of religion, philosophy, or politics.

In Armistead C. Gordon's fascinating little romance, Robin Aroon, we get a description of a typical Virginia manor.

"It was an imposing, roomy house, with the redness of it offset by its lofty white-columned portico, that reached to the full height of its two tall stories, and with its staring dormer windows in the roof, and its upreaching chimneys at either gabled end, where a multitude of swallows spent the recurrent summers, to the impotent wrath of the negro house-servants. The mansion fronted a breadth of green-turfed yard; and beyond the yard lay a still broader stretch of the River Way, whose waters on this sunshiny morning, late in May, were dazzling to the eyes of any beholder.

"On both sides of the house and at its rear stretched the fertile tobacco fields that had made their owners rich through the generations; and there were outbuildings—offices, kitchens, house-servants' quarters, stables—of an amplitude and dignity commensurate with the establishment of one of the wealthiest and most important families in the Province.

"Nearly a mile away to the southeast and farther down the River Way, the cabins of the negro slaves, facing each other in rows of long green streets, and the more imposing dwelling-house of the overseer, shone white on a field of verdant beauty in the limpid and translucent

atmosphere."[1].

A typical head of a wealthy colonial plantation is Squire Effingham of Effingham Hall, a creation of John Esten Cooke's. "The squire is in exuberant health, and is clad just as we have seen him before. His broad plain hat, which has lost its loops and is rolled up shovel fashion, covers a face reddened and embrowned by exercise and exposure:—his huge coat brushes against his strong thick silk stockings, which disappear in heavy half-boots:—and his long waist-coat is nearly covered by his frill, soiled now like his wide cuffs and stockings, with the dust of his field. The squire has just returned from his morning ride over the plantation, and has been listening to Miss Kate Effingham performing upon the harpsichord, and singing one of his favorite airs."[2].

And here we have Squire Effingham with his neighbor, Mr. Lee: "Seated in the library, the old gentlemen discuss matters in general, over a decanter of sherry: and dispute with the utmost vehemence, on the most trifling matters, in the good old way. Both are fortified in their opinions as a matter of course, and they deplore each the other's prejudices and unreasonableness. But let no one suppose that these word-quarrels were not the most friendly contentions imaginable. There were no better friends in the world, and they were only pursuing the immemorial habit of Virginians to discuss, contradict, and argue on all occasions."[3].

From Miss Johnston's pen we get this general idea of Virginian society in the eighteenth century: "It was a society less provincial than that of more than one shire that was nearer to London by a thousand leagues. It dwelt upon the banks of the Chesapeake and of great rivers; ships dropped their anchors before its very doors. Now and

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1. Armistead C. Gordon's Robin Aroon, pages 14-15.
2. John Esten Cooke's The Virginia Comedians, Volume II, page 38.
3. Ibid., Volume II, page 40.

again the planter followed his tobacco aboard. The sands did not then run so swiftly through the hourglass; if the voyage to England was long, why, so was life! The planters went, sold their tobacco,—Sweet-scented, E. Dees, Oronoko, Cowpen, Non-burning,—talked with their agents, visited their English kindred; saw the town, the opera, and the play,—perhaps, afar off, the King; and returned to Virginia and their plantations with the last but one novelty in ideas, manner, and dress. Of their sons not a few were educated in English schools, while their wives and daughters, if for the most part they saw the enchanted ground only through the eyes of husband, father, or brother, yet followed its fashions, when learned, with religious zeal. In Williamsburgh, where all men went on occasion, there was polite enough living: there were the college, the Capitol, and the playhouse; the palace was a toy St. James; the Governors that came and went almost as proper gentlemen, fitted to rule over English people, as if they had been born in Hanover and could not speak their subjects' tongue."[1.]

The landed aristocrat of the tidewater is readily seen to be a sociable, pleasure-loving human being. Most picturesque is the gathering upon some festive occasion. The following description of Governor Fauquier's ball well illustrates: "See this group of lovely young girls, with powdered hair brushed back from their tender temples, and snowy necks and shoulders glittering with diamond necklaces; see the queer patches on their chins close by the dimples; see their large falling sleeves, and yellow lace, and bodices with their silken network; see their gowns, looped back from the satin underskirt, ornamented with flowers in golden thread; their trains and fans, and high red-heeled shoes, and all their puffs and furbelows, and flounces; see, above all, their gracious smiles, as they flirt their fans and

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1. Mary Johnston's Audrey, pages 42-43.

dart their fatal glances at the magnificently-clad gentlemen in huge ruffles and silk coats, with sleeves turned back to the elbow and profusely laced; see how they ogle, and speak with dainty softness under their breath, and sigh and smile, and ever continue playing on the hapless cavaliers the dangerous artillery of their brilliant eyes.

"Or, see this group of young country gentlemen, followers of the fox, with their ruddy faces and laughing voices; their queues secured by plain black ribbon; their strong hands, accustomed to heavy buck-skin riding-gloves; their talk of hunting, crops, the breed of sheep and cattle, and the blood of horses.

"Or, pause a moment near that group of dignified gentlemen, with dresses plain though rich; and lordly brows and clear bright eyes, strong enough to look upon the sun of royalty, and, undazzled, see the spots disfiguring it. Hear them converse calmly, simply, like giants knowing their strength; how slow and clear and courteous their tones; how plain their manners!"[1]

The same author describes another festive occasion thus:

"The races!

"That word always produces a strong effect upon men in the South; and when the day fixed upon for the Jamestown races comes, the country is alive for miles around with persons of all classes and descriptions.

"As the hour of noon approaches, the ground swarms with every species of the genus homo; Williamsburg and the seafaring village of Jamestown turn out <u>en masse</u>, and leave all occupations for the exciting turf.

"As the day draws on the crowd becomes more dense. The splendid chariots of the gentry roll up to the stand, and group themselves around it, in a position to overlook the race-course, and through the wise windows are seen the sparkling eyes and powdered locks, and

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1. John Esten Cooke's <u>The Virginia Comedians</u>, Volume I, pages 261-262.

diamonds and gay silk and velvet dresses of those fair dames who lent such richness and picturesque beauty to the old days now so long ago in the far past. The fine looking old planters too are decked in their holiday suits, their powdered hair is tied into queues behind with neat black ribbon, and they descend and mingle with their neighbors, and discuss the coming festival.

"Gay youths, in rich brilliant dresses, caracole up to the carriages on fiery steeds, to display their horsemanship, and exchange compliments with their friends, and make pretty speeches, which are received by the bright-eyed damsels with little ogles, and flirts of their variegated fans, and rapturous delight."[1.]

As extravagant as the laces, braids, and ruffles of the gentlemen's costumes were the Cavalier speeches in Virginia's society of the eighteenth century. Studied phrases and profuse compliments filled the conversations. Love making represented unabating ardor. The fervor of a lover's address is found in the words of Haward to Audrey:

"'I will love you until the sun grows old', he said. 'Through life and death, through heaven or hell, past the beating of my heart, while lasts my soul!...'"[2.]

In colonial Virginia the landed aristocrat was very constant in his loyalty to the Church of England. He and his family attended the parish services, and sometimes, like his English cousin, the famous Sir Roger de Coverley, he felt responsible for the religious regularity of other parishioners. Though sometimes the clergymen in charge of the colonial churches were very pious, devoted ministers, too frequently they were worldly and incompetent. Cooke in The Virginia Comedians painstakingly draws a contrast between the two types of Virginia clergy. Parson Tag is an unworthy servant of mammon; Mr. Christian is a true pastor of his flock. Armistead C. Gordon in

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1. John Esten Cooke's The Virginia Comedians, Volume II, pages 132-133.
2. Mary Johnston's Audrey, page 401.

Robin Aroon represents Mr. Heffernan, the Irish parson living near Bushy Park, as a loyal subject of the king and a lover of carnal pleasure. His proclivities are suggested in the following quotation: "'We have missed you at Bushy Park, Parson,' remarked Robert....'The house has been full of pretty girls, who have pined for you in a minuet. David's violin is out of tune when he cannot play with you; and Colonel Selden says he hasn't had a genuine mint-julep since the last one you made for him at the Glebe.'"[1].

Concerning the landed aristocrat of the tidewater in the middle of the eighteenth century it has been said: "The greater men, authoritative and easy, owners of flesh and blood and much land, holders of many offices and leaders of the people, paid their respects to horse-racing and cock-fighting, cards and dice; to building, planting, the genteelest mode of living, and to public affairs both in Virginia and at home in England."[2]. In spite of the last phrase, the Virginia planter was no longer a merely transplanted Englishman. He was a Virginian, and not ashamed to acknowledge the fact. The idea of democracy was growing in the depths of his nature more rapidly than appeared on the surface, more surely than he himself could perceive. The same novel from which the above quotation was taken reveals a certain form of democracy among those attending the popular theater at Williamsburg: "The armorer from the Magazine elbowed a great proprietor from the Eastern shore, while a famous guide and hunter, long and lean and brown, described to a magnate of Yorktown a buffalo capture in the far west, twenty leagues beyond the falls. Masters and scholars from William and Mary were there, with rangers, traders, sailors ashore, small planters, merchants, loquacious keepers of ordinaries, and with men, now free and with a stake in the land, who had come there as indentured

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1. Armistead C. Gordon's Robin Aroon, pages 78-79.
2. Mary Johnston's Audrey, page 405.

servants, or as convicts, runaways, and fugitives from justice."[1].

Within the rude schoolhouses of the colony this spirit of democracy was fostered beyond doubt. "The 'old field school', as these establishments have been called from time immemorial, was a plain edifice of logs of some size, and roofed with boards held in their places by long poles pinned to the eaves by huge pegs. The windows were small, and secured by shutters of oak, heavy and creaking on their hinges. A log served for a step before the half open door, and from the chimney, which was of stone, and built up outside of the edifice, a slight curling smoke rose. To these schools, as at the present day, children of all ages and classes, and of both sexes, resorted—for education, their parents thought, for amusement, the youngsters were convinced."[2].

When the storm of the American Revolution broke, the planters of the tidewater were for the greater part champions in the cause of liberty. History bears a true record of the patriotic leadership of the Virginia aristocrat against British oppression. Fiction reflects the same truth. A writer of romantic fiction makes Captain Paul (afterwards John Paul Jones of the American navy) predict the American Revolution thus: "And the silken-clad, luxurious colonials—these laughing, joyous boys and girls, in their silks and brocades, wearing their love-verses on their lips, and their love-songs in their hearts—madam, I foresee them in the front of that tremendous fray. Their ease of life will be forgotten in the ardor of sacrificial struggle; and they will learn, with brave hearts and smiling faces, the beautiful meaning of the Roman saying, that it is a sweet and honorable thing to die for one's country."[3].

As fine a piece of local color fiction as has been done in Virginia in recent years is Lewis Rand, by Miss Mary Johnston, which

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1. Mary Johnston's Audrey, page 403.
2. John Esten Cooke's The Virginia Comedians, Volume II, pages 50-51.
3. Armistead C. Gordon's Robin Aroon, page 215.

presents a very vivid picture of the Virginia aristocrat in the period 1790-1807. In this novel we are taken to the Piedmont section of the State, to Albemarle, the county of Jefferson. Colonel Dick and Major Edward Churchill, veterans of the Revolutionary War, are Federalists in politics, and are representatives of the old, failing aristocratic order. The Carys of Greenwood inherit from their fathers the same tendencies to maintain the superiority of a class. But Jacqueline Churchill, in spite of heritage and environment, and opposition of her uncles, rejects the suit of Ludwig Cary, the aristocrat, and marries Lewis Rand, the commoner.

Between the formation of the Union and the outbreak of the Civil War existed a period in Virginia to which the reader likes to turn. That time now seems to us a dream age—not too remote to be unreal, not too near to be commonplace. It was the good old day of our grandfathers' and grandmothers' earliest memories. Life on a tidewater plantation of that time has been well recorded in John Pendleton Kennedy's Swallow Barn. The author himself states that this work is not a novel; it is more exactly a series of sketches, reminding one of the Sir Roger de Coverley Papers of Addison and Steele. Though Swallow Barn lacks the plot which we usually expect in works of fiction, its leisurely narrative makes us live among its scenes and know its people. In this piece of essay-like fiction we are introduced to Frank Meriwether, the master of Swallow Barn plantation on the south bank of the James River below City Point, and to Lucretia, his wife; in it we see the courtship of Ned Hazard, country gentleman of thirty, and Bel Tracy, who lives on an adjoining plantation; further, we smile at the age-old lawsuit over a boundary line which runs on between Bel's father, old Isaac Tracy, and Mr. Meriwether; and we are afforded character sketches of such personages as Prudence, the spinster sister at Swallow Barn, Mr. Chub, parson and schoolteacher, and Philly Wart, country lawyer.

Thus we have the position of the Virginia plantation owner:

"The solitary elevation of a country gentleman, well to do in the world, begets some magnificent notions. He becomes as infallible as the Pope; gradually acquires a habit of making long speeches; is apt to be impatient of contradiction, and is always very touchy on the point of honor."[1].

"The gentlemen of Virginia live apart from each other. They are surrounded by their bondsmen and dependents; and the customary intercourse of society familiarizes their minds to the relation of high and low degree. They frequently meet in the interchange of a large and thriftless hospitality, in which the forms of society are foregone for its comforts, and the business of life thrown aside for the enjoyment of its pleasures. Their halls are large, and their boards ample; and surrounding the great family hearth, with its immense burthen of blazing wood casting a broad and merry glare over the congregated household and the numerous retainers, a social winter party in Virginia affords a tolerable picture of feudal munificence."[2].

The good will and hospitality of the old Virginia home, the familiarity of friends visiting it, and the gentle, regulating influence of the mistress of the household may be understood from two paragraphs which we shall quote.

"Those who have visited Swallow Barn will long remember the morning stir, of which the murmurs arose even unto the chambers, and fell upon the ears of the sleepers;—the dry-rubbing of floors, and even the waxing of the same until they were like ice;—and the grinding of coffee-mills;—and the gibber of ducks, and chickens, and turkeys; and all the multitudinous concert of homely sounds. And then, her [Mrs. Meriwether's] breakfasts! I do not wish to be counted extrava-

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1. John Pendleton Kennedy's Swallow Barn, page 35.
2. Ibid., page 71.

gant, but a small regiment might march in upon her without disappointment; and I would put them for excellence and variety against any thing that ever was served upon platter. Moreover, all things go like clockwork. She rises with the lark, and infuses an early vigor into the whole household. And yet she is a thin woman to look upon, and a feeble..."[1].

"A dinner party in the country is not the premeditated, anxious affair it is in town. It has nothing of that long, awful interval between the arrival of guests and the serving up of the dishes, when men look in each other's faces with empty stomachs, and utter inane common-places with an obvious air of insincerity, if not of actual suffering. On the contrary, it is understood to be a regular spending of the day, in which the guests assume all the privileges of inmates, sleep on the sofas, lounge through the halls, read the newspapers, stroll over the grounds, and, if pinched by appetite, stay their stomachs with bread and butter, and toddy made of choice old spirits."[2].

What Kennedy attempted to do in Swallow Barn George W. Bagby succeeded in doing in a more nearly perfect manner in The Old Virginia Gentleman and Other Sketches. As the title implies, the contents of the book are sketches. These can not be called fiction; yet from them light is cast upon the life in Virginia which served as the background for novels and short stories by other authors. Thomas Nelson Page has written, "When the old life shall have completely passed away as all life of a particular kind must pass, the curious reader may find in George W. Bagby's pages, pictured with a sympathy, a fidelity and an art which may be found nowhere else, the old Virginia life precisely as it was lived before the war, in the tidewater and southside sections of Virginia."[3].

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1. John Pendleton Kennedy's Swallow Barn, page 38.
2. Ibid., page 314.
3. Thomas Nelson Page's Preface to Bagby's The Old Virginia Gentleman, page XI.

The mind catches a panoramic glimpse of country life from this sentence of Bagby's : "Of church-going on Sunday, when the girls kept the carriage waiting; of warrant-tryings, vendues, election and general muster days, of parties of all kinds, from candy-stews and 'infairs' up to the regular country balls at the county seat, of fun at negro weddings, of fish-fries, barbecues, sailing-parties, sora and duck shooting, rides and drives—the delights of Tidewater life—of dinings in and dinings out, of the bishop's visit, of company come for all day in addition to the company regularly domiciled for the week, month, or half-year, I need not speak at length."[1].

Bagby outlines five types of the ante-bellum Virginia gentleman. The first is the "stout, bluff, hearty, jovial old fellow, fond of juleps, horse-races, and 'a little game of draw'". The second is "a small, thin, sharp-featured, black-eyed, swarthy man; passionate, fiery indeed in temper; keen for any sort of discussion; profane, but swearing naturally and at times delightfully; hot, quick, bitter as death; magnanimous, but utterly implacable—a red Indian imprisoned in the fragile body of a consumptive old Roman." The third is "a broad, solid, large-headed, large-faced, heavy, actually fat, deeply pious old gentleman—beaming with benevolence, the soul (and body, too!) of hospitality and kindness, simple as a child, absent-minded, unpractical to the last degree, and yet prosperous, because God just loves him—a dear, big, old father to everybody." The fourth is "a refined, scrupulously neat, carefully dressed, high-toned, proud, exclusive man; courteous but somewhat cold; a judge of rare old wines and a lover of them; a scholarly but dry and ungenial intellect; regardful of manners, a stickler for forms and social distinctions; fond of ancient customs, observances, and fashions, even to the cut of his clothes, which he would fain have made colonial; an aristocrat,

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1. George W. Bagby's The Old Virginia Gentleman, page 11.

born and bred, and never quite unconscious of the fact; a high type, one that commanded more of respect than love, but not, I think, the highest type." The fifth is Bagby's favorite. "Last and best comes the Virginian, less fiery than the old Roman-Indian, but of spirit quite as high; as courteous every whit as the aristocrat just named, but not so mannered; in culture not inferior to either, and adding thereto a gentleness almost feminine, and a humility born only, as my experience teaches, of a devout Christian spirit; a lover of children with his whole heart, and idolized by them in turn; knightly in his regard for womankind, in the lowest fully as much as in the highest sphere; —in a word, as nearly perfect as human infirmity permits man to be."[1].

George Cary Eggleston in Dorothy South and a few other novels has treated the old Virginia life prior to the war. The following statement appears in the Library of Southern Literature: "What most impresses one about the novels of George Cary Eggleston is not the story certainly, nor, indeed, the characters—for these are often shadowy—but the atmosphere, the purple haze of romance, which invests the life of a vanished time. He knows his setting, and being an idealist, and therefore a lover of youth, he reproduces in his books his earlier impressions of scenes which mightily fascinated him. The setting in most of these novels is about the same and may be found in and about Amelia County, Virginia, or in some other spot visited by the author as a soldier, and so is simply an idealized transcript of an old plantation neighborhood."[2].

But to Thomas Nelson Page we turn for the best stories of the Virginia aristocrat "before the war". Page does not tire his reader with too lengthy descriptions of places and persons, but his interest-compelling narratives give very vigorously the local color of the

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1. George W. Bagby's The Old Virginia Gentleman, pages 28-29.
2. Article on George Cary Eggleston, by J. C. Metcalf, in the Library of Southern Literature, pages 1529-1530.

tidewater. His novelette, On Newfound River, breathes forth the atmosphere of the old phantation life in Hanover County, Virginia, the place of the author's nativity. The Long Hillside sketches, in a way to delight a boy's heart, a hare hunt at Christmas time, showing how three white boys, a crowd of negroes, and a pack of dogs went after Polly cottontale. It furnishes a realistic picture of the love of the out-of-doors on the plantation. Polly presents the figure of the Colonel, a big, choleric, swearing despot, who in reality is a quickly appeased, warmhearted old gentleman.

In the story, My Cousin Fanny, we get a character portrait of a proud old maid of the Old South, and the home in which she dwelt:

"She was as proud as Lucifer; yet she went through life—the part that I knew of—bearing the pity of the great majority of the people who knew her.

"She lived at an old place called 'Woodside', which had been in the family for a great many years; indeed, ever since before the Revolution. The neighborhood dated back to the time of the colony, and Woodside was one of the old places. My cousin Fanny's grandmother had stood in the door of her chamber with her large scissors in her hand, and defied Tarleton's red-coated troopers to touch the basket of old communion-plate which she had hung on her arm.

"The house was a large brick edifice, with a pyramidal roof, covered with moss, small windows, porticos with pillars somewhat out of repair, a big, high hall, and a staircase wide enough to drive a gig up it if it could have turned the corners. A grove of great forest oaks and poplars densely shaded it, and made it look rather gloomy; and the garden with the old graveyard covered with periwinkle at one end, was almost in front, while the side of the wood—a primeval forest, from which the place took its name—came up so close as to form a strong, dark background."[1].

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1. My Cousin Fanny, in Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns and other stories, pages 172-173.

Frequently enough between neighbors in ante-bellum days bitter feuds existed, sometimes because of disputes about land, sometimes because of political differences. The Christmas Peace, a short story by Page, shows that hostile feeling between families could go even to the following absurd length: "As neither owner would join the other even in keeping up a partition fence, there were two fences run within three feet of each other along the entire boundary line between the two places."[1] In Marse Chan we see fine old neighbors made enemies in the warmth of Whig and Democrat politics, with recourse to the honorable arbitrament of the duel.

Into these scenes of the aristocrat's life—his pride and power of landownership, his holiday pleasures, his prejudices and petty controversies with neighbors—swept the Civil War. The petty matters were put aside. Political bickerings were hushed. The Whig and the Democrat became one on the principle of States' Rights.[2] The man who had opposed disunion and had gone so far as to free his slaves enlisted as readily as his secessionist neighbor when his State withdrew from the Union and was threatened with invasion.[3] In the tidewater, loyalty to home, to the State, was the first duty of all.

The close of the Civil War left the Southern aristocrat stripped of his possessions and reduced to a position which he could scarcely comprehend. But he did not despair. He struggled heroically, though his struggles were often in vain. If the prevailing color of the fiction which depicts the colonial master is one of picturesque gayety; if the prevailing atmosphere of ante-bellum years is one of home-loving contentment,—the prevailing tone of the fiction-framed aristocrat surviving the Civil War is one of pathos.

Looking back into the feudal civilization which the Civil War

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1. The Christmas Peace, in Thomas Nelson Page's Bred in the Bone and other stories, page 174.
2. See Thomas Nelson Page's Marse Chan.
3. See Thomas Nelson Page's The Christmas Peace.

shattered, Thomas Nelson Page has written with intelligent feeling:

"It was a goodly land in those old times—a rolling country, lying at the foot of the blue mountain-spurs, with forests and fields; rich meadows filled with fat cattle; watered by streams, sparkling and bubbling over rocks, or winding under willows and sycamores, to where the hills melted away in the low, alluvial lands, where the sea once washed and still left its memory and its name.

"The people of that section were the product of a system of which it is the fashion nowadays to have only words of condemnation. Every ass that passes by kicks at the dead lion. It was an Oligarchy, they say, which ruled and lorded it over all but those favored ones who belonged to it. But has one ever known the members of a Democracy to rule so justly? If they shone in prosperity, much more they shone in adversity; if they bore themselves haughtily in their day of triumph, they have borne defeat with splendid fortitude. Their old family seats, with everything else in the world, were lost to them—their dignity became grandeur. Their entire system crumbled and fell about them in ruins—they remained unmoved. They were subjected to the greatest humiliation of modern times: their slaves were put over them —they reconquered their section and preserved the civilization of the Anglo-Saxon.

"No doubt the phrase 'Before the war' is at times somewhat abused ....But for those who knew the old County as it was then, and can contrast it with what it has become since, no wonder it seems that even the moonlight was richer and mellower 'before the war' than it is now. For one thing, the moonlight as well as the sunlight shines brighter in our youth than in maturer age; and gold and gossamer amid the rose-bowers reflect it better than serge and crepe amid myrtles and bays. The great thing is not to despond even though the brilliancy be dimmed: in the new glitter one need not necessarily forget the old

radiance. Happily, when one of the wise men insists that it shall be forgotten, and that we shall be wise also, like him, it works automatically, and we know that he is one of those who, as has been said, avoiding the land of romance, 'have missed the title of fool at the cost of a celestial crown.'

"Why should not Miss Thomasia in her faded dress, whom you shall meet, tell us, if she pleases, of her 'dear father', and of all her 'dear cousins' to the remotest generation; and Dr. Cary and General Legaie quote their grandfathers as oracles, alongside the sages of Plutarch, and say 'Sir' and 'Madam' at the end of their sentences? Antiquated, you say? Provincial? Do you, young lady, observe Miss Thomasia the next time she enters a room, or addresses a servant; and do you, good sir, polished by travel and contact with the most fashionable—second-class—society of two continents, watch General Legaie and Dr. Cary when they meet Miss Thomasia, or greet the apple-woman on the corner, or the wagoner on the road. What an air suddenly comes in with them of old Courts and polished halls when all gentlemen bowed low before all ladies, and wore swords to defend their honor. What an odor, as it were, of those gardens which Watteau painted, floats in as they enter! Do not you attempt it. You cannot do it. You are thinking of yourself, they of others and the devoirs they owe them. You are republican and brought up to consider yourself 'as good as any, and better than most'. Sound doctrine for the citizen, no doubt; but it spoils the bow. Even you, Miss or Madam, for all your silks and satins, cannot do it like Miss Thomasia. You are imitating the duchess you saw once, perhaps, in Hyde Park. The duchess would have imitated Miss Thomasia. You are at best an imitation; Miss Thomasia is the reality. Do not laugh at her, or call her provincial. She belongs to the realm where sincerity dwells and the heart still rules—the realm of old-time courtesy and high breeding, and you are the real provincial. It is a wide realm, though, and some day, if Heaven be

good to you, you may reach it. But it must be by the highway of Sincerity and Truth. No other road leads there."[1].

In Page's Red Rock Dr. Cary, an old Southern gentleman who has lived to face the horrors of Reconstruction but who retains his ennobling, altruistic qualities, is a character that deserves a place among the greatest creations of American fiction.

Portraits in fiction of old Virginia aristocrats who survived the war are fairly numerous. We shall mention Thomas Nelson Page's the Old Gentleman of the Black Stock, F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter, and Armistead C. Gordon's Maje.

The first of these we see with "his thin, high-bred face, soft and spotless linen, and kindly, firm, gentle voice,"[2]. and feel the benign influence which he sheds upon the younger folk about him. He met disappointments in life, but he treasured lofty and righteous ideals. And in the end he was unchanging in his single great conclusion:

"He reached over and took up the old Bible from his table.

"'This book alone,' he said, 'has held out. This has not deserted me. I have read something of all the philosophies, but none has the spirituality and power that I find in certain parts of this. No wonder Scott said, "There is but one book."'".[3].

F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter of Cartersville and Colonel Carter's Christmas may be read with pleasure. But, whether as a result of the author's deliberate purpose or of his over-zeal, his representation of Colonel George Fairfax Carter of Carter Hall, Cartersville, Virginia, is a caricature, not a true character sketch of the landed aristocrat. The colonel's Southern virtues are expanded to absurdities. The Virginian of the old school is scarcely so simple

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1. Preface to Thomas Nelson Page's Red Rock, pages VII-X.
2. Thomas Nelson Page's The Old Gentleman of the Black Stock, page 32.
3. Ibid., page 108.

as to misunderstand entirely the use of a groceryman's book, or to make himself free with the stationery, stamps, and messengers of an office in which a desk has been lent to him. In fact, Colonel Carter may almost be said to be the Don Quixote of Southern aristocracy. Thus Smith introduces him: "A Virginian of good birth, fair education, and limited knowledge of the world and of men, proud of his ancestry, proud of his State, and proud of himself; believing in states' rights, slavery, and the Confederacy; and away down in the bottom of his soul still clinging to the belief that the poor white trash of the earth includes about everybody outside of Fairfax County."[1]. He continually uses the old cut-glass decanter and its contents. He never varies his dress from the old coat and white vest. His honor is never allowed to catch the slightest stain. A challenge to a duel is to him a most natural thing.

In spite of the exaggerations which no discerning reader can overlook, one loves the old colonel's way of saying, "I am a Virginian, suh. Command me",[2]. and his favorite toast: "Gentlemen, the best thing on this earth—a true Southern lady!"[3].

Armistead C. Gordon's Maje: A Love Story is a beautiful, pathetic story of a gentleman of the Long Ago, who after a gallant career in the Civil War lived in poverty on his dwindling country estate, attended by two faithful ex-slaves. It is one of many stories of the old-time Southern pride, and the old-time Southern constancy in love though the lovers had been estranged from one another through the years.

Miss Ellen Glasgow in The Deliverance, a romance of the Virginia tobacco fields, has well pictured a family of "broken down aristocrats". Their ancestral lands stolen by their former overseer, they live in poverty. The mother of the family, Mrs. Blake, is blind, and her children keep her in pathetic ignorance of their destitution, allowing

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1. F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter of Cartersville, page 10.
2. Ibid., page 4.
3. Ibid., page 15.

her to think that, the Southern Confederacy having triumphed, the slaves still work the broad fields and the old household customs still prevail. The following words of Mrs. Blake upon her death bed represent the attitude of the Virginia slaveholder of more than half a century ago: "Always remember that a man's first duty is to his wife and children, and his second to his slaves. The Lord has placed them in your hands, and you must answer to Him how you fulfill the trust."[1].

With the death of the generation to which Mrs. Blake and Maje and Mr. Gary belonged we see the passing of a most notable type. In something of a chronological order we have attempted to see the origin and continuation of that type in its first home—on the soil which for a long time nourished it. As time passes and the Virginia aristocrat is looked back upon as a figure all the more romantic because of the interval which separates him from the reader, there is ample reason to suppose that he will continue a favorite character in Southern fiction.

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1. Ellen Glasgow's The Deliverance, pages 476-477.

Chapter V

THE LANDED ARISTOCRAT; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE BLUEGRASS

"God's Country!

"No humor in that phrase to the Bluegrass Kentuckian! There never was—there is none now. To him, the land seems in all the New World, to have been the pet shrine of the Great Mother herself. She fashioned it with loving hands. She shut it in with a mighty barrier of mighty mountains to keep the mob out. She gave it the loving clasp of a mighty river, and spread broad, level prairies beyond that the mob might glide by, or be tempted to the other side, where the earth was level and there was no need to climb: that she might send priests from her shrine to reclaim Western wastes or let the weak or the unloving—if such could be—have easy access to another land."[1.]

Across the mountains, westward into this bluegrass region of Kentucky, passed many Virginians to make their homes in the newer land. They took with them the sentiments and ideals of the Old Dominion, the tidewater love of pleasure and luxury, and the hospitality and courtesy which had been their fathers' and grandfathers' pride. Red brick houses—some with massive, towering columns—arose, to be the dwellings of the landed aristocrats who would derive their wealth from their broad fields of hemp and tobacco. The Kentucky landowner of the bluegrass section was the transplanted Virginian just as the tidewater aristocrat had been for a while the transplanted Englishman. Love for the sunny out-of-doors, for Nature in her freedom—symbolizing vastness, is characteristic of the race.

"And Nature holds the Kentuckians close even today—suckling at her breasts and living after her simple laws. What further use she may have for them is hid by the darkness of to-morrow, but before the Great War came she could look upon her work and say with a smile that

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, page 126.

it was good. The land was a great series of wooded parks such as one might have found in Merry England, except that worm fence and stone wall took the place of hedge along the highways. It was a land of peace and of a plenty that was close to easy luxury—for all. Poor whites were few, the beggar was unknown, and throughout the region there was no man, woman, or child, perhaps, who did not have enough to eat and to wear and a roof to cover his head,, whether it was his own roof or not. If slavery had to be—then the fetters were forged light and hung loosely. And, broadcast, through the people, was the upright sturdiness of the Scotch-Irishman, without his narrowness and bigotry; the grace and chivalry of the Cavalier without his Quixotic sentiment and his weakness; the jovial good-nature of the English squire and the leavening spirit of a simple yeomanry that bore itself with unconscious tenacity to traditions that seeped from the very earth. And the wings of the eagle hovered over all."[1].

The writer of fiction records the heritage of the bluegrass gentry, with Lexington as their social center, thus: "It was the rose of Virginia, springing, in full bloom, from new and richer soil —a rose of a deeper scarlet and a stronger stem: and the big village where the old University reared its noble front was the very heart of that rose. There were the proudest families, the stateliest homes, the broadest culture, the most gracious hospitailty, the gentlest courtesies, the finest chivalry, that the State has ever known. There lived the political idols; there, under the low sky, rose the memorial shaft to Clay. There had lived beaux and belles, memories of whom hang still about the town, people it with phantom shapes, and give an individual or a family here and there a subtle distinction to-day. There the grasp of Calvinism was most lax. There were the dance, the ready sideboard, the card table, the love of the horse and the dog,

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, page 129.

and but little passion for the game-cock. There were as manly virtues, as manly vices, as the world has ever known. And there love was as far from lust as heaven from hell."[1].

In the foregoing quotations we readily discern an author's devotion to his native State. The pen of Fox was guided by his heart throbs. James Lane Allen has also painted lovingly the local color of the bluegrass in his fiction. But he has not represented the Kentucky colonel as Fox has done. In A Kentucky Cardinal and its sequel, Aftermath, we sense the Cavalier tone that has characterized the writings of Thomas Nelson Page, and we see and hear Adam Moss, the Nature lover, wooing and winning Georgiana Cobb with the gentility with which the Southern aristocrat was indued. Yet at best Allen has done very little toward creating representatives of this social type. "His background, to be sure, is always Kentucky and this background he describes with minuteness, but there is no attempt to portray personalities or types peculiar to the State. He is working rather in the realm of human life."[2].

As splendid examples of the landed aristocrat of the bluegrass as may be found are Major Buford and General Dean in The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come and Colonel Robert Pendleton in The Heart of the Hills. The first named deserves a warm place in the hearts of American readers. We see him thus: "The Major was beautiful to behold, in his flowered waistcoat, his ruffled shirt, white trousers strapped beneath his highly polished, high-heeled boots, high hat and frock coat, with only the lowest button fastened, in order to give a glimpse of that wonderful waistcoat, just as that, too, was unbuttoned at the top that the ruffles might peep out upon the world."[3].

Such a man is usually represented in fiction as a jealous guardian of his rights, a complete master of his own possessions,

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, page 212.
2. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, pages 370-371.
3. John Fox, Jr.'s The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, page 214.

and a being who, while most loving and kind and courteous, possesses a will that is law. His heart is big and tender, but he does not easily brook opposition. To ride over his land and view the fields lying peaceful and quiet in the sunshine or to follow the hounds across the fields and through the woods is his delight. And when he goes indoors, he carries with him the sunshine of the outside world. Christmas to him is the same season of merrymaking that it is to the Virginian. At all times he loves the richly spread table where with family and friends he may enjoy the choice food produced on his own land and prepared in his own kitchen.

A dinner at General Dean's in the period just prior to the Civil War receives this description: "The dining-room was the biggest and sunniest room in the house; its walls covered with hunting prints, pictures of game and stag heads. The table ran the length of it. The snowy tablecloth hung almost to the floor. At the head sat Mrs. Dean, with a great tureen of calf's head soup in front of her. Before the General was the saddle of venison that was to follow, drenched in a bottle of ancient Madeira, and flanked by flakes of red-currant jelly. Before the Major rested broiled wild ducks, on which he could show his carving skill—on game as well as men. A great turkey supplanted the venison, and last to come, and before Richard Hunt, Lieutenant of the Rifles, was a Kentucky ham. That ham! Mellow, aged, boiled in champagne, baked brown, spiced deeply, rosy pink within, and of a flavor and fragrance to shatter the fast of a Pope; and without, a brown-edged white layer, so firm that the lieutenant's deft carving knife, passing through, gave no hint to the eye that it was delicious fat. There had been merry jest and laughter and banter and gallant compliment before, but it was Richard Hunt's turn now, and story after story he told, as the rose-flakes dropped under his knife in such thin slices that their edges coiled. It was full half an hour before the carver and story-

teller were done. After that ham the tablecloth was lifted, and the dessert spread on another lying beneath; then that, too, was raised, and the nuts and wines were placed on a third—red damask this time.

"Then came the toasts: to the gracious hostess from Major Buford; to Miss Lucy from General Dean; from valiant Richard Hunt to blushing Margaret, and then the ladies were gone, and the talk was politics—the election of Lincoln, slavery, disunion."[1].

When the War of Secession came on, it was in the true sense of the word a civil war in Kentucky. Members of the same family were sometimes on opposite sides. By blood ties and by his social system the bluegrass aristocrat belonged to the South, and the majority of the type, like Major Buford, General Dean, and Richard Hunt, espoused the cause of the Confederacy.

The old-time Kentucky colonel surviving in the present century has a representative in Colonel Robert Pendleton, ex-Confederate and aristocrat, whose sterling character is portrayed in Fox's The Heart of the Hills. The uprightness and honor of a former day are maintained by him and transmitted to his son.

Not alone from Kentucky comes fiction reflecting the local color of the bluegrass. In Songs and Stories from Tennessee John Trotwood Moore has presented a beautiful collection of poems, short stories and sketches about the horse racing aristocracy and dependent darky element of the Middle Basin. An excerpt from Moore's sketch, The Basin of Tennessee, gives the author's feeling for his section: "An animal is the product of the environments that surround him—the blossom of the soil upon which he lives. He is part of the sunlight and the grass, the rock and the water, the grain and the gravel, the air which he breathes and the ant-hill which he crushes beneath his feet. Man is the highest animal. Then behold the man of the Middle

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1. John Fox Jr.'s The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, pages 216-217.

Basin, the highest development of the animal creation: Jackson, Crockett, Houston, Bell, Polk, Gentry, Maury, Forrest—these and thousands of others whose names and fame are fadeless."[1].

Ole Mistis, by Moore, is a story in which the Tennessee aristocrat of the turf is seen. At the races are Colonel James Dinwiddie, the aristocrat who faces ruin from reckless betting; Anne, his beautiful daughter; Jim Wetherall, her true lover; and little Jake, the devoted negro slave, who as jocky rides Old Mistis in the winning race and saves the Colonel's fortune.

The landed aristocrat of the bluegrass has not been treated by as many authors as has his kinsman of the tidewater. It is natural that such should be the case. The type is readily recognized as the same in both sections; the localities only slightly alter the characters who represent the type. And still further we shall see the landed aristocrat drawn with painstaking and loving touch by other writers in other sections.

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1. John Trotwood Moore's Songs and Stories from Tennessee, page 8.

Chapter VI

THE LANDED ARISTOCRAT; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE LOWER SOUTH

As Englishmen seeking a new world settled in tidewater Virginia and established proud homes along the banks of noble streams, in like manner other colonists a little later chose South Carolina as their abode and there founded a true colonial aristocracy. Particularly did Charleston become a social center, where the refinement displayed was not inferior to that of society in England.

The Revolutionary War found in the established society of Charleston and Carolina in general a sharp political division. Some families in the colony gave themselves heart and soul to the cause of American freedom. Other families were lukewarm and conservative, attempting to take no active share in the conflict. Still others lent their aid to the British king. William Gilmore Simms has written several historical novels on the Revolutionary War in South Carolina, and the character of the colonial aristocrat is prominent in these books. Furthermore, we are not surprised to find the heroes and heroines of Simms very warm in their espousal of the patriots' cause. The Partisan, Mellichampe, and Katharine Walton form a trilogy of the Revolution, wherein are such characters as Colonel Robert Singleton and Colonel Walton, American heroes, valiant and resourceful; beautiful Katharine Walton and sharp-tongued Mrs. Brewton, patriotic heroines; Colonels Balfour and Cruden, redcoat villains. Not all wearers of the king's uniform, however, are represented as repulsive characters. Major Proctor, for instance, is an honorable British officer and a gentleman of true sentiments.

Since the Carolina aristocrat in Southern fiction is in reality introduced as the Revolutionary soldier, it is well to look for the motive which lay behind his outward life. Simms makes the sterling

Major Proctor of the British army, in a conversation with a man he thinks a Tory, utter words which disclose the basic principle that shaped the Southerner's course in joining the Continental army. "The true loyalty is to the soil, or rather to the race. I am persuaded that one is never more safe in his principles than when he takes side with his kindred. There is a virtue in the race which strengthens and secures our own; and he is never more in danger of proving in the wrong than when he resolutely opposes himself to the sentiments of his people. At all events, one may reasonably distrust the virtue in his principle when he finds himself called upon to sustain it by actually drawing the sword against his kindred."[1.]

The defeats suffered by the American forces in the South reduced the patriots to bands, such as those led by Marion and Sumter, that hid in the swamps until opportunity should favor a renewal of attacks upon the foe. Yet in the veins of some of these rough swamp soldiers flowed the best blood of the colony. There is significance in the words of Lieutenant Porgy of Singleton's partisans: "We are mere blackguards now, boys. Nobody that sees us in these rags, begrimed with smoke, could ever suppose that we had been gentlemen; but, losing place and property, boys, we need not, and we do not, lose the sense of what we have known, or the sentiment which still makes us honor the beautiful and the good."[2.]

Katharine Walton contains a good picture of Charleston society in 1780. Under a British garrison the city is divided in sentiment between loyalists and patriots. The former have their fashionable balls, their encounters of wit, their gallantry and brilliance. The latter have their dignity, plots and schemes.

The figure of Katharine Walton is an excellent representation of the Southern heroine whose heart is with her father and her lover in the American ranks. Defiance to enemies is as ready with her as

1. William Gilmore Simms' Katharine Walton, page 126.
2. Ibid., page 170.

courtesy to friends. The pride and spirited patriotism of this girl of aristocratic breeding may be gathered from the following dialogue between her and the British Major Proctor:

"'I take no aid from mine enemy, Major Proctor,' said the fair heiress, half apologetically, and half playfully,—'certainly never when I can do without it. You will excuse me, therefore; but I should regard your uniform as having received its unnaturally deep red from the veins of my countrymen.'

"'So much a rebel as that, Miss Walton! It is well for us that the same spirit does not prevail among your warriors. What would have been our chances of success had such been the case?'

"'You think your conquest then complete, Major Proctor—you think that our people will always sleep under oppression, and return you thanks for blows, and homage for chastisement. Believe so—it is quite as well. But you have seen the beginning only. Reserve your triumph for the end.'

"'Do the ladies of Carolina all entertain this spirit, Miss Walton? Will none of them take the aid of the gallant knight that claims service at their hands? or is it, as I believe, that she stands alone in this rebel attitude, an exception to her country-women?'

"'Nay; I cannot now answer you this question. We see few of my countrywomen or countrymen now, thanks to our enemies; and I have learned to forbear asking what they need or desire. It is enough for me that when I desire the arm of a good knight, I can have him at need without resorting to that of an enemy!'"[1].

It was into a little social paradise of good living, genteel manners, and home-loving contentment that the Revolutionary War in South Carolina had broken. A mere glance into a Carolina home at

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Partisan, pages 135-136.

mealtime is sufficient to furnish us with an idea of the household management: "Following the black, who had thrice summoned them without receiving any attention, they descended to the supper-table, spread out after the southern fashion, with the hundred dainties of the region,—rice-waffles and johnny-cake, hominy, and those delicacies of the pantry in the shape of sweetmeats and preserves, which speak of a wholesome household economy, the fashion of which is not yet gone from the same neighbourhood. There, presiding in all the dignity of starched coif, ruff, and wimple, sat stiffly the antique person of Miss Barbara Walton, the maiden sister of the colonel..."[1.]

To-day the chief reminder of colonial and Revolutionary days in the South is the old church, found in either town or country. Thus we find the colonial aristocrat's place of worship: "And there is the old church, like a thoughtful matron, sitting in quiet contemplation among her children. Their graves are all around her; but she, deserted by those she taught and cherished, without even the tongue to deplore them—dumb, as it were, with her excess of woe—she still sits, a monument like themselves, not only of their worship, but of the faith which she taught. It is a graceful ruin, that will awaken all your veneration, if the gnawing cares of gain, and the world's baser collision, have not kept it too long inactive. It stands up, like some old warrior, grey with many winters, scarred and buffeted with conflicting storms and strifes, but still upright—still erect. The high altar, the sacred ornaments, the rich pews, like the people who honoured and occupied them, are torn away and gone. Decay and rude hands have dealt with them, as death has dealt with the worshippers. The walls and roof are but little hurt. The tower has been stricken and shattered, but still more hallowed by the lightning which has done it."[2.]

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Partisan, page 148.
2. Ibid., pages 337-338.

The first half of the nineteenth century in the lower South furnishes the romancer with backgrounds and picturesque characters very similar to those which we have noticed in ante-bellum Virginia. See the glow of Southern cheer in the home of a Georgia plantation owner:

"The solonel was in ecstacies. The wide fireplace in the sitting-room was piled high with half-seasoned hickory wood, and those who sat around it had to form a very wide half-circle indeed, for the flaring logs and glowing embers sent forth a warmth that penetrated to all parts of the room, big as it was.

"And it was a goodly company that sat around the blazing fire, —men of affairs, planters with very large interests depending on their energy and foresight, lawyers who had won more than a local fame, and yet all as gay and as good-humored as a parcel of school-boys. The conversation was seasoned with apt anecdotes inimitably told, and full of the peculiar humor that has not its counterpart anywhere in the world outside of middle Georgia."[1].

Harry Stillwell Edwards has created, in the character of Major Crawford Worthington, a typical Georgia aristocrat. Two Runaways and Isam and the Major are stories in which Major Worthington and his slave Isam are remarkable figures. When the master leaves his plantation with its three hundred negroes and follows Isam on a reckless private camping trip, the reader is treated to a story of vivid character portrayal and humorous incident.

By way of contrast one may turn from the jovial, prosperous, ante-bellum aristocrat, Major Worthington, to Joel Chandler Harris's old Judge Bascom, a landowner left destitute after the war, whose mania is to buy back his Place. Doubtless Harris intended the following dialogue between the Judge and his daughter to sink into

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1. How Whalebone Caused a Wedding, in Joel Chandler Harris's [illegible] pages 15-16

the reader's thoughts with the weight of truth:

"'A great many people are making money now who never made it before—a great many.'

"'I wish they would tell us the secret,' said the young lady, laughing a little.

"'There is no secret about it,' said the old gentleman; 'none whatever. To make money you must be mean and niggardly yourself, and then employ others to be mean and niggardly for you.'

"'Oh, it is not always so, father,' the young girl exclaimed.

"'It was not always so, my daughter. There was a time when one could make money and remain a gentleman; but that was many years ago.'"[1].

In Louisiana, distinct from the Creole aristocracy of foreign temper, the landed proprietor of English extraction has been presented by authors as following the same general customs, facing the same problems, and at length meeting the same fate as his brethren in other Southern states. Grace King has revealed the Louisiana aristocrat in some of her fiction. With a woman's loving heart and with intense personal feeling Miss King in her Introduction to The Pleasant Ways of St. Medard has sketched the aristocrat that was—the master of a system that is no more. Creating a kindly dramatic atmosphere, she has summed up the whole story of the type in the following paragraphs:

"What a pleasant world that was, to be sure, into which we were born fifty years ago in New Orleans; what a natural, what a simple world! Then there was but one truth, one right, that of Papa, than whom alone the Father in Heaven above was greater but hardly more feared. That tall, dignified gentleman to whom his wife said 'Sir,' and his servants 'Master,' whose frown was a terror to his

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1. The Old Bascom Place, in Joel Chandler Harris's Balaam and his Master, and Other Sketches, pages 195-196.

children, and his caress an awesome favor; who descended every morning from his silent apartment, as from a cloud, to breakfast in majesty alone; to whom there was but one easy means of approach, one sure intermediary, Mama, whose sweet nature and angelic presence so enfolded him that the sharp blade of his temper was as safely sheathed in it, as his flashing sword in his ebony walking stick. She was so pale and delicate-looking in her ruffles and laces, with her mysterious retirements to her apartment, through whose hushed and dimmed atmosphere (wherein the furniture took vast and strange proportions) the frightened children at stated intervals were pushed and jerked by whispering nurses to the great lace-curtained bed, and made to kiss some baby or other, some loathesome, red, little baby. It was brought there, we knew, by that hideous, wrinkled purveyor of babies, old Madame Bonnet, who had a wart covered with long hairs on her chin, and whose only tooth stuck out from her upper gum; the very image of the evil fairy, pictured in the Magasin des Enfants, the nursery authority then on fairies. Children would as soon have touched the devil as her, or her covered basket under the foot of the bed, in which she had brought the baby. And so, after the Mama had given them some dragées from the glass bowl on the table at the side of the bed, they would creep out of the room, shrinking as far as possible from the nefarious figure sitting in her low squat chair.

"And do you remember how those great Papas of ours went to war? And how God did not act towards them as they would have acted towards Him, had they been God and He a Southern gentleman? And how they came back from the war—those that did come back, alas! —so thin, dirty, ragged, poor, unlike any Papas that respectable children had ever seen before? If they had strutted in buskins of yore, as they had been accused of doing by their enemies, rest assured they footed it now in bare soles. And do you remember what followed? Families uprooted from their past and dragged from country to city, and from

city to country, in the attempt to find a foothold in the rushing tide of ruin sweeping over their land. Outlawed fathers, traveling off to Egypt, Mexico, South America, in search of a living for wife and children, even into the enemy's own country. Some of them, with dazzling audacity, changing to the politics (or principles, as politics were then called) of the conquerors, for the chance of sharing in their own spoliation. And these, in memory, seemed always to have traveled the farthest from us. Some fathers of families, however, did nothing more adventurous than to submit to the will of God and His conditions (assuming Him to have been their judge and the arbiter in the war); these merely changed their way of living to the new conditions, retiring with their families to the outskirts of the city, where houses were cheap, living simple, and the disturbing temptations of society out of the question.

"These were the ones, in truth, who had the most adventures afterwards in the quest for fortune. A living was a fortune then, setting themselves to work in the primitive fashion of their forefathers, when they faced a new country and new conditions. But in the wilds of a virgin forest and surrounded by savage Indians these had advantages that their descendants learned to envy.

"The fighting the Papas had done in war was nothing to the fighting they did afterwards, for bread and meat; and the bitterness of their defeat there was sweetness compared to the bitterness that came afterwards. Bayonet in hand was easier to them than hat in hand.

"And the delicate luxurious Mamas, who had been so given to the world, reading and weeping over fictional misfortunes—there were some of them who lived to weep for the security of food and shelter, once possessed by their slaves.

"Saddest of all these memories, and not the least to be wondered at, the man who once had the most friends was the one whoin need found

the fewest. The old friends to whom we used to listen over the dinner table, who told such fine tales of adventure, courage, gallantry wit, that we placed them in our hearts second only to our Papa and third after God, do you remember—but who does not remember?—how in the struggle for life that followed the tempest of ruin they yielded to the tide of self-interest, veering and swaying from their anchorage, often indeed cutting loose and sailing clear out of sight, leaving their crippled companions behind to shift for themselves? It was considered lucky when the deserter did not also turn betrayer and come back to act the pirate upon his old comrades. Starvation is a great dissolvent of friendship, as the shipwrecked have found more than once.

"Poverty is a land to which no one goes willingly, which all strive instinctively to avoid. There seems to be no rest or ease in it. Who goes there old is buried there. The young spend their lives trying to get out of it. But the way out of it is narrow and steep, like the path to Heaven. It almost seems to be the path to Heaven, so hard is the struggle to get through it. It is white with the bones of those who have died in it, as the way to Jerusalem was once with the bones of the Crusaders. Some, giving up the struggle, settle there, marry, and have children there; little ones who never lose the mark of their nativity. The trampling of the hard-footed necessities has told upon them; their hearts are furrowed by the track of hopes passing into disappointments. They know no other land than poverty, and are haunted by strange misconceptions of the land of the rich; the people who live in it and the people who get to it.

"Who of us, who now inherit want as surely as our fathers did wealth, has not at one time or another made a pilgrimage to that Gibraltar of memory, the home of our childhood, of our Olympian beginnings? Leaving behind us the sordid little rented house in

which care and anxiety have whitened the hair and wrinkled the face, we have threaded the streets to stand on the sidewalk opposite some grim, gaunt, battered old brick mansion, filled with shops below and a mongrel lot of tenants above, trying to fit our past into or upon it. 'Is that the balcony ,' we ask ourselves, 'from which on gala days we used to look upon a gala world? Did that grim story hold our nursery, where of mornings we used to lie and watch the white angels pictured on the blue tester of our bed, and once caught them in the act of moving their wings? Was it there, when we woke suddenly at night, that the awful flickering of the taper in the corner, now brightening, now darkening the room, frightened us, opening and shutting, opening and shutting, like the terrible eye of God? Is that the doorway through which our great Past made its entrance and exit? Is that the court-yard where our slaves worked for us? That the building in which they were born to work for us? No, no!'

"To you who have not made that pilgrimage, I say, do not attempt it; you will never find what you seek. Thread the way to it only in memory, if you would find it. And yet, ye who have been in this land we have described, who have buried some of your old ones there, and it may be some of your young ones, who have spent your life trying to get out of it, or helping others dearer than yourself on their way out of it, what think you of it, after all? What in truth found you there in default of the one lack that sent you there? Love, hope, courage, light in darkness, strength in weakness, fortitude under injustice, self-respect in the face of indignity and humiliation—did ye not find them growing there, growing naturally, not cultivated artificially as they are of necessity in that other and upper land? Was less truth to be met there, or more falsehood from others, less self-sacrifice, less wifely devotion or family loyalty, than in the land of your lost inheritance? Did you find the slim purse less

Still the early Southern authors represented well the conditions and circumstances of slavery. John Pendleton Kennedy has the following to say about the negro slaves on a James River plantation in 1829: "They are a strange pack of antic and careless animals, and furnish the liveliest picture that is to be found in nature, of that race of swart fairies which, in the old time, were supposed to play their pranks in the forest at moonlight." [1] In the same book the negro is thus further discussed: "At present, I have said, he is parasitical. He grows upward, only as the vine to which nature has supplied the sturdy tree as a support. He is extravagantly imitative. The older negroes here have— with some spice of comic mixture in it— that formal, grave and ostentatious style of manners, which belonged to the gentlemen of former days; they are profuse of bows and compliments, and very aristocratic in their way. The younger ones are equally to be remarked for aping the style of the present time, and especially for such tags of dandyism in dress as come within their reach. Their fondness for music and dancing is a predominant passion. I never meet a negro man— unless he is quite old— that he is not whistling; and the women sing from morning till night. And as to dancing, the hardest day's work does not restrain their desire to indulge in such pastime. During the harvest, when their toil is pushed to its utmost— the time being one of recognized privileges— they dance almost the whole night. They angle and haul the seine and hunt and tend their traps, with a zest that never grows weary. Their gayety of heart is constitutional and perennial, and when they are together they are as voluble and noisy as so many blackbirds. In short, I think them the most good-natured, careless, light-hearted, and happily-constructed human beings I have ever seen. Having but few and simple wants, they seem to me to

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1. John Pendleton Kennedy's Swallow Barn, pages 309-310.

be provided with every comfort which falls within the ordinary compass of their wishes; and, I might say, that they find even more enjoyment,— as that word may be applied to express positive pleasures scattered through the course of daily occupation— than any other laboring people I am acquainted with." [1].

The first author to put the negro genuinely into literature was the poet Irwin Russell, a native of Mississippi. "Thomas Nelson Page has admitted that Russell was his teacher in this field, and Joel Chandler Harris gives Russell the same distinction. . . " [2]. With the possibilities of the type once fairly recognized, stories of the negro, vivified by dialect, were quick to appear. Their effect in bringing Southern literature before the eyes of the whole nation was instantaneous. "Just as the West of Mark Twain, Harte, Miller, Eggleston, and others had been central in the literature, especially in the fiction, of the seventies," writes Pattee, "so the South became central in the eighties. . . . By 1888 Albion W. Tourgee could write in the Forum, 'It cannot be denied that American fiction of to-day, whatever may be its origin, is predominatingly Southern in type and character. . . . A foreigner studying our current literature, without knowledge of our history, and judging our civilization by our fiction, would undoubtedly conclude that the South was the seat of intellectual empire in America and the African the chief romantic element of our population.'" [3].

Thomas Nelson Page's Marse Chan, written in the dialect of the tidewater Virginia negro, swept the country in 1884. It has been called the first effective refutation of Uncle Tom's Cabin. The keynote of Marse Chan is the unswerving loyalty of a negro slave to his master

1. John Pendleton Kennedy's Swallow Barn, pages 454-455.
2. Fulton's Southern Life in Southern Literature, page 530.
3. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, page 294.

and his master's memory. And the same keynote has resounded through the best stories of the Virginia plantation darky. Example after example may be cited of master and slave or ex-master and ex-slave remaining devoted companions to the end of life. We know Marse Chan only through faithful Sam's narrative of pathos; we think of Colonel Carter of Cartersville as inseparable from the ex-slave Chad, who knows his master better than the master knows himself; as we turn our eyes sympathetically to white-bearded Maje, our hearts warm at the expression of undying love in the devoted service of black Hercules.

In the instance of Maje and Hercules, Armistead C. Gordon represents a typical case of the companionship of young master and young slave: "Playmates and companions, they had shared with each other the joys and delights that youth squanders with prodigal hand, and had each been happy in the happiness of his associate. They had fished for mullets in the river a mile away, shaded by overhanging willows; they had set hare-traps and made partridge-pens in eager partnership; they had gone swimming together, symphonies in ivory and ebony, among the lily-pads of Boler's mill-pond, and had dashed diamonds at each other through the summer air in innumerable water battles. Theirs was the fine and not uncommon story, long since told to the end, of the white boy and the black boy on the old plantation." [1]. And the black boy grown old is the same in his fidelity. "'I b'longed ter him,' he communed with himself, 'an' I always is gwine ter b'long ter him— freedom, nur no freedom!'" [2].

F. Hopkinson Smith puts into Colonel Carter's mouth testimony of the negro Chad's unselfish service: "Do you know, Major, that when I was a prisoner at City Point that darky tramped a hundred miles through the coast swamps to reach me, crossed both lines twice, hung

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1. Armistead C. Gordon's Maje: A Love Story, pages 22-23.
2. Ibid., page 61.

around for three months for his chance, and has carried in his leg ever since the ball intended for me the night I escaped in his clothes, and he was shot in mine." [1].

The dependence of master upon slave is illustrated by Thomas Nelson Page: "The colonel [who had threatened to sell his dram-stealing slave] knew he could no more have gotten on without Torm than his old openfaced watch, which looked for all the world like a model of himself, could have run without the mainspring. From tying his shoes and getting his shaving-water to making his juleps and lighting his candles, which was all he had to do, Drinkwater Torm was necessary to him." [2]. In Page's Meh Lady: A Story of the War Uncle Billy, who tells the tale, is a hero in his faithfulness to his mistress during the war and his subsequent part in helping "de Cun'l" win and wed "Meh Lady." A splendid instance of the ex-slave's undiminished loyalty is found in O. Henry's A Municipal Report, a story of Nashville, Tennessee, wherein an old hack-driver, Uncle Caesar, is the silent protector of Mrs. Azalea Adair Caswell, to whose family he had once belonged.

An important figure in the master's household was always the favorite mammy. Armistead C. Gordon's Ommirandy is constructed upon the character of a faithful old female house servant. Her strongest trait is understood from her words years after the war to the man who had owned her: "You needs me, an' I ain't gwineter quit ye. I gwi' go wid you an' mistis like dat gell in de corn-fiel' say in de Good Book. You-all's folks is my folks; an' whar you-all's a-gwine, dar's whar Mirandy's a-gwine along wid ye." [3].

This keynote of loyalty found throughout the negro stories by Virginia authors is re-echoed by a Tennessee writer, John Trotwood

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1. F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter of Cartersville, page 72.
2. Polly, in Thomas Nelson Page's In Ole Virginia, pages 188-189.
3. Armistead C. Gordon's Ommirandy, page 10.

Moore, in "Dick ", the account of a slave's willing sacrifice of life to save his master. The following excerpt gives this negro's Southern sentiment:

"What's dese Yankees wanter cum down heah an' take our niggers 'way from us fur enny way? Whut we dun to dem? All we ax 'em to do is to let us erlone..." [1].

And let us note the author's comment:

"Where Dick got the sentiments he expressed I cannot say; but I do know that Dick was no exception to his race. Darky like, he was for his home and his white people first, though the freedom of all his race lay on the other side. And Dick, like every other negro, knew it, too, though they worked on and said nothing." [2].

Frequently the thought is expressed that "Page uses the negro as an accessory": the negro's part is to bring out strongly the characteristics and principles of the superior race to which he belonged. Such a thought is likewise true concerning other writers. For instance, John Trotwood Moore's creation, Uncle Wash, fulfills the same office of narrator as do Page's Sam, Unc' Edinburg, and Uncle Billy. However, one must not carry too far the idea that these writers have no other regard for the negro than to make him an instrument to exalt the virtues of his owner. The authors have drawn the negro painstakingly; they have found him a romantic character, though his romance is best when attached to his relations with his white friends. Their work, moreover, has been done sympathetically, a fact which the reader, be he from the South or elsewhere, must feel.

A typical portrait of a negro is found in this description by Page: "'Old Hanover' himself stood well out in front of the rest, like an old African chief in state with his followers behind him about to

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1. John Trotwood Moore's Songs and Stories from Tennessee, page 151.
2. Ibid.

receive an embassy. He was arrayed with great care, in a style which I thought at first glance was indicative of the clerical calling, but which I soon discovered was intended to be merely symbolical of approximation to the dignity which was supposed to pertain to that profession. He wore a very long and baggy coat which had once been black, but was now tanned by exposure to a reddish brown, a vest which looked as if it had been velvet before the years had eaten the nap from it, and changed it into a fabric not unlike leather. His shirt was obviously newly washed for the occasion, and his high clean collar fell over an ample and somewhat bulging white cloth, which partook of the qualities of both stock and necktie. His skin was of that lustrous black which shines as if freshly oiled, and his face was closely shaved except for two tufts of short, white hair, one on each side, which shone like snow against his black cheeks. He wore an old and very quaint beaver, and a pair of large old-fashioned, silver- rimmed spectacles, which gave him an air of portentous dignity." [1.]

Fiction represents the slave on the plantations of tobacco and corn as a simple, kindhearted creature, obsequiously polite, ready to flatter, with a childish delight at receiving a gift and with an unusual devotion to the mistress and white children. As a rule, however, the negro does not possess the deepest sentiments for his own kin. He frequently suspects other negroes of trying to cheat him. "Dat look ter me like pewter money," [2.] says a negro boy when his grandfather offers him fifty cents to disclose a secret. And when the boy accepts the money, this is his proceeding: "With the inevitable instinct of the plantation negro to hide the state of his finances from an inquiring world, he turned his back on his grandfather, and drawing a small and greasy leather bag from his trousers-pocket,

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1. P'laski's Tunament, in Thomas Nelson Page's Elsket and Other Stories, pages 119-120.
2. Bayton, in Armistead C. Gordon's Ommirandy, page 135.

deposited the coin in its recesses and restored the 'puhss' to its accustomed place." [1].

In the system of slavery on the large plantations there came to the negroes who had been born and reared in one place a pride in the master's family and a scorn for whites whom the negroes judged below the level of the aristocracy. With what unfeigned indignation does the old darky Wash relate the court's indifference to his established social lines when he was being tried for "moonshining"! "An' dar dey played er mean trick on me, fur dey sot me down in de same pen wid er lot ob po' white trash frum de mountings dat had bin cotch in de mean act ob makin' wild-cat whisky! Gord, suh, hit made me mad fur I wan't used to 'soshatin' wid dat kind o' white folks!" [2]. An old Virginia mammy states, "Evvybody at Kingsmill is got dey pedigrees f'om de white folks down ter ole Vulcan de fox-dawg, an' dis here goose! Dey 'bleest fur ter have 'em." [3]. Furthermore, this recognition of class distinction remains in the negro's mind at the present day. In Miss Glasgow's The Deliverance, the negro's regard for family is understood by a tobacco farmer when he states concerning an ex-overseer's acquisition of his former employer's land: "Old Bill Fletcher stole his house an' his land an' his money, law or no law— that's how I look at it— but he couldn't steal his name, an' that's what counts among the niggers, an' the po' whites, too. Why, I've a whole parcel o' darkies stand stock still when Fletcher [former overseer] drove up to the bars with his spankin' pair of bays, an' then mos' break thar necks lettin' 'em down as soon as Mr. Christopher [son of the old plantation owner] comes along with his team of oxen. You kin fool the quality 'bout the quality, but I'll be blamed if you kin fool the niggers." [4].

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1. Bayton, in Armistead C. Gordon's Ommirandy, pages 136-137.
2. Br'er Washington's Arraignment, in John Trotwood Moore's Songs and Stories from Tennessee, page 237.
3. Mr. Bolster, in Armistead C. Gordon's Ommirandy, page 350.
4. Ellen Glasgow's The Deliverance, pages 8-9.

Many a negro enjoys the old life in retrospect. The glories of the past easily multiply as his mind returns to them. Old Robin, a negro authority on race horses, in Thomas Nelson Page's Bred in the Bone, loves to style himself "Colonel Theodoric Johnston's Robin, of Bullfield, suh." He never tires of boasting of his master's horses in the ante-bellum days, and he never thinks that anything is as good as it was before the war. Also Colonel Carter's Chad says:

"Dem was high times. We ain't neber seed no time like dat since de war. Git up in de mawnin' an' look out ober de lawn, an' yer come fo'teen or fifteen couples ob de fustest quality folks, all on horse-back ridin' in de gate. Den such a scufflin' round! Old marsa an' missis out on de po'ch, an' de little pickaninnies runnin' from de quarters, an' all hands helpin' 'em off de horses, an' dey all smokin' hot wid de gallop up de lane.

"An' den sich a breakfast an' sich dancin' an' co'tin'; ladies all out on de lawn in der white dresses, an' de gemmen in fairtop boots, an' Mammy Jane runnin' round same as a chicken wid its head off,— an' der heads was off befo' dey knowed it, an' dey a-br'ilin' on de gridiron.

"Dat would go on a week or mo', an' den up dey'll all git an' away dey'd go to de nex' plantation, an' take Miss Nancy along wid 'em on her little sorrel mare, an' I on Marsa John's black horse, to take care bofe of 'em. Dem was times!" [1].

From watching the signs of Nature the old-time negro became a practical philosopher. His judgments are often sound. As a weather prophet he is nearly always accurate. At setting traps and hunting possums he is the small boy's helper and delight. Mixed with his practical philosophy is a great deal of superstition. The belief in

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1. F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter of Cartersville, pages 61-62.

conjuring is strong. Uncle Jonas in Mr. Gordon's Pharzy and Mammy Riah in Miss Glasgow's The Builders are representatives of the many negroes who have abundant faith in their own old fashioned, well intentioned opinions.

Fiction is doing its duty in reflecting life when it represents the tendency of the negro to be a liar and petty thief. The darky's readiness and ability to lie is well illustrated in the familiar story of the one-legged goose, told by Chad in Colonel Carter of Cartersville. And pleasure in exaggeration for its own sake is here illustrated:

"'Wal, sah, I nurver seed sich crops sence de good Lord made me! Why, down in de new grown' dat we cleaned up we didn't hafter plant but half er grain er corn—'

"'Half a grain! Why?'

"'Why, good gracious, sah, er haf er grain made er stalk twenty foot high! Whut we wanter plant er whole grain fer, an' haf sich high corn we cudden't pull it wid wun ob dese yeah fire ladders!'" [1].

And the same vivid imagination recounts: "She [a famous old mule] got dat scar by kickin' a solid shot frum a forty-pounder dat de Mexerkens had fired at our men, back into de Mexekin line, an' killin' er whole regiment ob Mexekins jes' in de act ob sayin' dey ebenin' prayer! Fur de Lord sake, boss, hit's de truth! I w'udn't lie 'bout er mule!" [2].

Though the negro through attachment to a master may be capable of heroic self-sacrifice— and fiction affords numerous examples of such— he is frequently a creature of cowardice. Thomas Nelson Page's "George Washington's" Last Duel is an amusing story of a negro slave who felt free to help himself to his master's personal property and who had a generally high esteem of his own importance until his master

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1. The Wolf Hunt on Big Bagby, in John Trotwood Moore's Songs and Stories from Tennessee, page 100.
2. How Ole Wash Captured a Gun, in John Trotwood Moore's Songs and Stories from Tennessee, page 229.

of the terror district and by thwarting the negro fiend in the execution of his design. Still he truthfully suggested the peril of the period. His art had previously been able to create sympathetically a Sam and an Uncle Billy; now he could candidly expose the trick-doctor Moses, a brute deserving death.

Page in Mam' Lyddy's Recognition has shown the bad influence exerted upon negroes many years after the war. Even a faithful old darky like the ex-slave Mam' Lyddy could, after moving to the North, be changed and given "airs" and a tinge of impudence. But after Mam' Lyddy had lost her four hundred and fifty dollars to the scheming Reverend Amos Johnson, alias Brown, she saw that her white folks from the South were her real friends— and she was cured.

With the passing of the well mannered, old-time darky it seems that the romance of the negro is fading away. The plantation as a background has no present day substitute that is sufficient. It is well indeed that such writers as Page and Gordon, who know the negro as he was and his dialect as it was, have preserved a beautiful phase of the race before that phase slips into oblivion.

Chapter VIII

THE NEGRO; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE COTTON AND RICE FIELDS

If the black house-servant of the Virginia plantation or the negro from the fields of corn and tobacco is an interesting figure in our literature, equally in the states farther south, where "cotton is king," the darky occupies a very striking place in the gallery of the pen-artist. No other type of character has exercised such an important influence upon prose fiction in the South as the negro has. Stories by Will N. Harben, Harry Stillwell Edwards, Sherwood Bonner, Ruth McEnery Stuart, Joel Chandler Harris, and others give us the negro of the cotton belt. Greatest of all that group of writers stands Joel Chandler Harris, who immortalized the negro of the cotton district by his famous creation, Uncle Remus, and who in turn has been immortalized by the figure he created.

Early in the literature of South Carolina and Georgia the negro received notice, but for a long time there was no truly representative figure of the race. William Gilmore Simms in The Yemassee, a novel laid in the year 1715, introduces Hector as a slave of the early colonial era. In Simms' Hector we find the same outstanding quality which we have noticed in Page's favorite negro characters: fidelity. When during troublous times with the Indians his master has disappeared, Hector leaves the security of the block house to search for him, and at departing, says: "I gone, missis, I gone— but'member— ef maussa come back and Hector loss— 'member, I say, I no run way. I scalp— I drown— I dead— ebbery ting happen to me— but I no run way." [1.]

Later when the master offers to set Hector free because of his

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 149.

faithful service, the following dialogue ensues between slave and master:

"'No maussa; I can't go; I can't be free,' replied the negro, shaking his head.

"'Why can't you, Hector? Am I not your master? Can't I make you free, and don't I tell you that I do?'

"'Wha' for, maussa? Wha' Hector done, you gwine turn um off dis time o' day?'

"'Done! You have saved my life, old fellow, and I am now your friend, and not any longer your master.'

"''Tis onpossible, maussa, and dere's no us for talk 'bout it. De ting ain't right. No, maussa— you and Dugdale beery good company for Hector. I no want any better.'

"The negro's objections to liberty were not to be overcome; and his master, deeply affected with this evidence of his attachment, turned away in silence." [1.]

It was left, however, for Joel Chandler Harris in the latter part of the nineteenth century to give the masterstroke to the portrait of the negro in Southern fiction. His Uncle Remus is known all over America and in many foreign countries. Harris's intimate knowledge of the cotton plantation negro is shown in such books as his Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings; Nights with Uncle Remus; Told by Uncle Remus; Uncle Remus and His Friends; Uncle Remus Returns; Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White; Chronicles of Aunt Minerva Ann; Free Joe and Other Georgian Sketches; Balaam and His Master, and Other Sketches and Stories; and Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War.

Pattee's estimate of Joel Chandler Harris's greatest work is the following: "What he did was to paint a picture, minutely accurate,

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1. William Gilmore Simms' The Yemassee, page 181.

of the negro whom he had known intimately on the plantation of Mr. Turner at the transition moment when the old was passing into the new. With a thousand almost imperceptible touches he has made a picture that is complete and that is alive. The childish ignorance of the race and yet its subtle cunning, its quaint humor, its pathos, its philosophy, its conceit, its mendacity and yet its depth of character, its quickness at repartee— nothing has been omitted. The story teller is more valuable than his story: he is recording unconsciously to himself his own soul and the soul of his race. Brer Rabbit after all is but a negro in thinnest disguise. . . .

"Page uses the negro as an accessory. The pathos of the black race adds pathos to the story of the destroyed white régime. Harris rose superior to Page in that he made the negro not the background for a white aristocracy, but a living creature valuable for himself alone; and he rose superior to Russell inasmuch as he embodied the result of his studies not in a type but in a single negro personality to which he gave the breath of life. Harris's negro is the type plus the personal equation of an individual— Uncle Remus, one of the few original characters which America has added to the world's gallery." [1.]

Mr. Harris's scheme in his Uncle Remus stories was to make an old animal fables from negro folk-lore.
darky narrate numerous Concerning these animal tales Mr. Harris stated, "I took the pains to verify every story anew, and, out of a variety of versions, to select the version that seemed to be most characteristic of the negro: so that it may be said that each legend comes fresh and direct from the negroes. My sole purpose in this was to preserve the stories dear to Southern children in the dialect of the cotton plantations." [2.] And still further concerning these animal stories Mr. Harris said, "Not one of them is cooked, and not one nor

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1. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, pages 304-304.
2. Julia Collier Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, pages 155-156.

any part of one is an invention of mine. They are all genuine folk-lore tales".[1] About the negro narrator we have Harris's words: "He was not an invention of my own, but a human syndicate, I might say, of three or four old darkies whom I had known. I just walloped them together into one person and called him 'Uncle Remus'. You must remember that sometimes the negro is a genuine and an original philosopher."[2]

The setting of the Uncle Remus stories has been briefly stated thus: "Finally, the reader not familiar with plantation life is counseled to 'imagine that the myth-stories of Uncle Remus are told night after night to a little boy by an old negro who appears to be venerable enough to have lived during the period which he describes— who has nothing but pleasant memories of the discipline of slavery— and who has all the prejudices of caste and pride of family that were the natural results of the system."[3]

The tone of reality in the picture of Uncle Remus as he tells the wonderful tales comes through his cotton field negro dialect. We have from the daughter-in-law and biographer of Mr. Harris the following tributes paid by different persons to the author's correctness in dialect reproduction:

"In a letter, dated December 14, 1880, from James Wood Davidson, for whose volume, 'Living Writers of the South', father had prepared an index when general factotum of the 'Monroe Advertiser', the writer said of 'Uncle Remus':—

"'It is the only true negro dialect I ever saw printed. It marks an era in its line— the first successful attempt to write what the negro has actually said, and in his own peculiar way. After so

1. Julia Collier Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, pages 157-158.
2. Ibid., page 146.
3. Ibid., page 159.

many dead failures by a hundred authors to write thus, and after the pitiful niaiseries of the so-called negro minstrels, "Uncle Remus" is a revelation.'

"Father, however, did not claim to be the pioneer in this field; he justly and generously maintained that the first accurate and artistic depicter of the negro was the young Texan [Mississippian?] Irwin Russell, who died in the early days of his promise, and whose book of verses, 'Christmas Night in the Quarters', portrays the negro with sympathy and fidelity. Father wrote the introduction to the edition of Mr. Russell's poems published in 1888, and in a letter to Miss Russell, thanking her for a photograph of her brother, he said of the latter: 'No man the South has produced gave higher evidence of genius during a period so short and so early in life. . . . I have always regretted most deeply his untimely death. Had he been spared to letters, all the rest of us would have taken back seats so far as representation of life in the South was concerned.'" 1.

Walter Hines Page said: "I have Mr. Harris's own word for it that he can think in the negro dialect. He could translate even Emerson, perhaps Bronson Alcott, in it, as well as he can tell the adventures of Brer Rabbit." 2.

Thomas Nelson Page wrote: "No man who has ever written has known one-tenth part about the negro that Mr. Harris knows, and for those who hereafter shall wish to find not merely words, but the real language of the negro of that section, and the habits of all American negroes of the old time, his works will prove the best thesaurus." 3.

Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, vice-president of the Confederacy, wrote to Joel Chandler Harris: "My father had an old

1. Julia Collier Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, pages 163-164.
2. Ibid., page 164.
3. Ibid., pages 164-165.

family servant whose name was Ben. He came from Virginia, and was quite lame from rheumatism, from my earliest remembrance. Often have I sat up late at nights in his house, and heard nearly every one of those stories about Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox, and Brer Terrapin, as you have reproduced them. In reading them, I have been living my young life over again." 1.

"And in a letter from Harry Stillwell Edwards, of Macon, Georgia, is found an interesting picture of a gathering on the plantation of one of his friends: 'I had occasion to visit Miss— on a distant plantation some days since, where I surprised a curious assemblage. The lady sat in the midst of a group of pickaninnies and was engaged in reading "Uncle Remus" to the most delighted audience you ever saw: the little devils were grinning and giggling, the last mother's son of them, and my advent was doubtless the most unwelcome thing that could have happened. . . The scene gave birth in my mind to many odd thoughts: a Southern girl reading to little negroes stories which had come down from the dead fathers of their race.'" 2.

In Uncle Remus we find a creature purely, deeply devoted to the white family upon whom he is dependent. Particularly is he fond of the little boy who comes to hear his stories. The darky's love is shown in his tender ministration by the bedside when the child is recovering from a severe illness. "Every night after supper Uncle Remus would creep softly into the back piazza, place his hat carefully on the floor, rap gently on the door by way of announcement, and so pass into the nursery. How patient his vigils, how tender his ministrations, only the mother of the little boy knew; how comfortable and refreshing the change from the bed to the strong arms of Uncle Remus, only the little boy could say." 3.

1. Julia Collier Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, page 165.
2. Ibid., page 166.
3. Joel Chandler Harris's Nights with Uncle Remus, page 84.

Further, we have this picture of the little boy and Uncle Remus after the latter has concluded one of his stories: "The little child had wandered into the land of dreams with a smile on his face. He lay with one of his little hands buried in both of Uncle Remus's, while the old man himself was fast asleep, with his head thrown back and his mouth wide open. 'Miss Sally' shook him by the shoulder and held up her finger to prevent him from speaking. He was quiet until she held the lamp for him to get down the back steps, and then she heard him say in an indignantly mortified tone:

"'Now den, Miss Sally'll be a-riggin' me 'bout noddin', but stidder dat she better be glad dat I aint bus loose en sno'en 'larm de house— let 'lone dat sick baby. Dat's w'at!'" [1.]

There is a vigorous primitiveness about Uncle Remus that Mr. Harris has depicted finely. For instance, the old negro is always at his best when his animal hunger is satisfied. Not only does he enjoy to the full the food which the little boy and Miss Sally give him, but his thoughts of eating give rise in his stories to frequent mention of the "creeturs" being "hongry" and getting their "vittles". When the old man at times appears unwilling to tell his usual evening story, the little boy can bribe him with something from the pantry. The tale, Mr. Fox Is Again Victimized, [2.] is told after the child has brought his pockets full of tea-cakes. A huge piece of mince pie purchases Mr. Wolf Makes A Failure. [2.] The old negro's closeness to the natural world is shown in his powers of imitation. He is an expert at yelping turkeys, and reproduces the sounds of nature with skill.

Uncle Remus thoroughly believes in boogers, ha'nts, witches and conjuring, as well as in weird remedies and charms. He says with

1. Joel Chandler Harris's Nights with Uncle Remus, page 94.
2. In Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings.

all seriousness: "Strip er red flannil tied 'roun' yo' arm'll keep off de rheumatis; stump-water'll kyo 'spepsy; some good fer one 'zeeze, en some good fer n'er, but de p'ints is dat dish yer rabbit foot'll gin you good luck. De man w'at tote it mighty ap' fer ter come out right een' up w'en dey's any racket gwine on in de neighborhoods, let 'er be whar she will en w'en she may; mo' espeshually ef de man w'at got it know 'zactly w'at he got ter do. W'ite folks may laugh,. . . but w'en rabbit run 'cross de big road front er me, w'at does I do? Does I shoo at um? Does I make fer ter kill um? Dat I don't— dat I don't! I des squots right down in de middle er de road, en I makes a cross-mark in de san' des dis way, en den I spits in it." [1.]

A number of Uncle Remus's stories are about witches. His actual belief in such supernatural creatures is seen in such a passage as the following dialogue between him and the little boy:

"' Uncle Remus, what are witches like?'

"'Dey comes diffunt,' responded the cautious old darkey. 'Dey comes en dey cunjus fokes. Squinch-owl holler eve'y time he see a witch, en w'en you hear de dog howlin' in de middle er de night, one un um's mighty ap' ter be prowlin' 'roun'. Cunjun fokes kin tell a witch de minnit dey lays der eyes on it, but dem w'at ain't cunjun, hit's mighty hard ter tell w'en dey see one, kaze dey might come in de 'pearunce un a cow en all kinder creeturs. I ain't bin useter no cunjun myse'f, but I bin livin' long nuff fer ter know w'en you meets up wid a big black cat in de middle er de road, wid yaller eyeballs, dars yo' witch fresh fum de Ole Boy. En, fuddermo', I know dat 'tain't proned inter no dogs fer ter kotch de rabbit w'at use in a berryin'-groun'.'" [2.]

1. Joel Chandler Harris's Nights with Uncle Remus, pages 167-168.
2. Joel Chandler Harris's Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings, pages 152-153.

fo' de war, en dey wa'n't no 'count endurin' er de war, en dey ain't no 'count atterwards, en w'iles my head's hot you ain't gwineter go mixin' up yo'se'f wid de riff-raff er creashun." [1]

Uncle Remus is a veritable philosopher. His plantation proverbs are brimful of common sense and conclusions reached by experience. The Library of Southern Literature states: "Careful readers of Uncle Remus cannot fail to appreciate the homely philosophy, the science and the theology with which his dialect stories abound." [2] And further we read: "Of all the branches of science, Uncle Remus is fondest of astronomy, but he does pay sufficient attention to biology to settle some very vexed questions. He is a Ptolemaic astronomer, holding firmly to the geocentric theory of the heavens. To him, as to the ancient Hebrews and to all the Popes down to the Nineteenth Century, the earth is a flat disc washed round by the ocean, over which the firmament stretches like an enlarged cupola or old-fashioned buggy umbrella, while the sun and stars are on the inside of this vault and only a few miles away. The sun is about the size of a dishpan of a healthy family, and hides in a hole at night, while he snoozes and rests from his hard day's run. Amongst biologists the 'inheritance of acquired character' has long been a matter of dispute. Men like Lemark, Darwin, and Spencer have delivered themselves upon it, but it was reserved for Uncle Remus to settle the matter. He decides that acquired characters are transmitted to offspring. Brer Rabbit having lost his tail, all his progeny become tailless. Uncle Remus is quite in line with the most advanced psychologists in his theory of dreams. He says that they are such stuff as our waking thoughts are made of. In describing the quiet slumbers of the hen-roost he says that the fowls 'sot dar on de roos, dey did, des like two bluebirds on a fence

1. Joel Chandler Harris's Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings, page 130.
2. Article on Joel Chandler Harris by Henry Stiles Bradley, in the

post, en if dey wuz any fuss made, hit wuz when de Ole Dominecker Hen drempt about Little Bille Black Mink en hollered out.'" [1].

Uncle Remus has contempt for the learning of the young. Especially is he disdainful of the new generation of negroes. Concerning negro education he has a most practical theory. It is illustrated in his conversation with a policeman after he has given a negro schoolboy a piece of his mind:

"'What's the matter, old man?' asked a sympathizing policeman.

"'Nothin', boss, 'ceppin I ain't gwineter hav' no nigger chillun a hoopin' an' a hollerin' at me w'en I'm gwine 'long de streets.'

"'Oh, well, school-children— you know how they are.'

"'Dat's w'at make I say w'at I duz. Dey better be home pickin' up chips. W'at a nigger gwineter l'arn outen books? I kin take a bar'l stave an' fling mo' sense inter a nigger in one minnit dan all de school-houses betwixt dis en de State er Midgigin. Don't talk, honey! Wid one bar'l stave I kin fa'rly lif' de vail er ignunce.'" [2].

The Uncle Remus quotations used have been taken from volumes in which the narrator told his stories to the little son of "Mars John" and "Miss Sally". Told by Uncle Remus is a volume of later stories told by the old darky, grown very old, to the little son of the first "little boy". The old negro's power to soothe children is undiminished. His philosophy is perhaps even deeper from his additional years of experience. He knows human nature well, he appreciates the yearnings and natural needs and desires of a child, and he has to the end a genuine sense of love in his heart.

In addition to Uncle Remus there are numerous other negro characters in fiction that help the reader understand the qualities and traits of the black dwellers among the cotton fields. Joel Chandler

1. Article on Joel Chandler Harris, by Henry Stiles Bradley, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 2115.
2. Joel Chandler Harris's Uncle Remus, His Songs and His Sayings, pages 255-256.

Harris's Aunt Minervy Ann represents the old black mammy, and the statement is made: "There is no doubt that as a complete and vivid personality, 'Aunt Minervy Ann' takes her place beside Uncle Remus, and if she were as widely known as the old man she would probably be as widely popular." [1] Sis Tempy is an old negress who is Uncle Remus's friend and companion. [2] The negro mammy, in fact, was a very familiar, very important, and much beloved personage on the old plantation. Mrs. Katherine Sherwood McDowell (Sherwood Bonner) has well presented such a character in the "Gran'mammy" stories published in her Suwanee River Tales. The stories ring true, for the authoress based them on actual characters and facts. There are just six of the "Gran'mammy" stories. It is possible that if Sherwood Bonner had extended her theme she might have drawn almost as fine a character in fiction as Harris did. "Gran'mammy", as the old negro woman is fondly called, tells the young white people of her acquaintance stories from her own experience.

In Why Gran'mammy Didn't Like Pound-Cake the old woman illustrates the negro's temptation to steal. She tells how stealing and eating a whold pound-cake when she was a girl cured her of the sin. Moreover, the negro's inclination to moralize is given in her reply to the little white boy's declaration of "Anyhow, pound-cake is good." "'Yes, my boy,' said our dear old gran'mammy; 'but many a good thing is turned ter poison if you take it on de sly. You's mighty safe ter pend on dat ar trufe!'" [3] The Night the Stars Fell is a beautiful story of the negro mammy's love for those she served and of her trust in God. How Gran'mammy Broke the News is a good Civil War story, showing the old darky's tact and sympathy. Coming Home to Roost centers on negro superstition and belief in Hoodoo doctors, "tricking", and witchcraft.

1. Julia Coller Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, page 408.
2. See Nights with Uncle Remus.
3. Sherwood Bonner's Suwanee River Tales, page 13.

Gran'mammy's Last Gifts is the story of the ex-slave's death and her love for her former owners to the end.

Fidelity to his white friends, as has been previously emphasized, is the trait which Southern authors like most to depict in a negro's character, whether the time is that of slavery, during the war, or near the present. Besides the characters already mentioned, we have Joel Chandler Harris's faithful ex-slave Mingo, and equally true Blue Dave, [1] devoted Balaam and self-sacrificing Ananias, [2] dwarfish Tasma Tid following her "Honey Man" with dog-like constancy, [3] and loyal Tuck sticking by "Marse Dave Henry" in battle and not caring to be free. [4] We have Harry Stillwell Edwards' Isam, the slave and companion of Major Crawford Worthington, in Two Runaways and Isam and the Major. And we have Will N. Harben's heroic Uncle Rastus [5] and trusting, trustworthy Mam' Linda. [6] The trait of fidelity, however, is illustrated by none of these characters better than by the dusky hero of Mr. Edwards' recently published Eneas Africanus.

We have found that Uncle Remus is virtually complete as a personification of the cotton field negro; still we should review some of his traits in other negro characters in fiction. Harry Stillwell Edwards' Isam, with his pride in the white family that owns him, his love of dram, and his ability to wheedle his master into granting his wishes is typical of the favored slave. A negro's agility at circumlocution is humorously presented in Charley and the Possum, by Harry Stillwell Edwards. The negro Charley steals a possum and trap, is tried in court by a negro jury, puts up a remarkable yarn, and is awarded a verdict of "not guilty", because "a possum was no man's

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1. In Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White.
2. In Joel Chandler Harris's Balaam and His Master, and Other Sketches.
3. In Joel Chandler Harris's Gabriel Tolliver.
4. See The Comedy of War, in J. C. Harris's Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War.
5. See The Sale of Uncle Rastus, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia

property until actually in his possession, and that if the trap was stolen, it had been stolen by the possum, and not by Charley Brood."[1] Still further, the faithful Eneas, of Edwards' Eneas Africanus, in his far wanderings to find his old home, becomes famous as a liar wherever he goes.

A good example of negro superstition is found in Harry Stillwell Edwards' Two Runaways. Near a negro graveyard, the pine trees had strange plugs in them. Isam explained them by saying," . . . w'en er spirrit gits out'n de flesh, de only way hit can be boun' en' sot es ter plug er tree. . . . Dere's er plug roun' hyah fur mi'ty nigh ev'y wun dem graves, ef yer knows where ter look." [2]

The genuine, fervent religion which some negroes possess makes itself heard and felt in the sincere, unselfish prayer of Joel Chandler Harris's old Uncle Manuel: "Saviour! Marster! look down 'pon my little Mistiss; gedder her 'nead dy hev'mly wings. Ef trouble mus' come, let it come 'pon me. I'm ole, but I'm tough; I'm ole, but I got de strenk. Lord! let de troubles en de trials come 'pon de ole nigger w'at kin stan' um, en save my little Mistiss fum sheddin' one tear. En den, at de las' fetch us all home ter hev'm, whar dey's res' fer de w'ary. Amen." [3]

Mr. Harris has occasionally made the negro an object of pathos or the victim of tragedy. Where's Duncan?, the story of a quadroon, is tragic; and Free Joe reveals the deplorable condition of a free negro, who was of necessity a mere derelict.

In the preceding chapter mention was made of that picture of the negro which contrasts so vividly with the picture of the contented servant; viz., the vicious negro of the Reconstruction period. The scenes of Thomas Dixon's Reconstruction novels are laid in the Caro-

1. In Harry Stillwell Edwards' His Defense and Other Stories, page 217.
2. Harry Stillwell Edwards' Two Runaways, page 7.
3. Blue Dave, in Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White, page 219.

linas, the overlapping belt of tobacco lands and cotton fields. Some Georgia writers also have drawn Reconstruction scenes, but their narratives have not been replete with the blood-curdling horrors of Dixon. Harry Stillwell Edwards has written of the trouble brewing among the negroes: "The turmoil and disorder continued to increase from day to day. The preachers and the women began to foment trouble." [1] Gabriel Tolliver, by Joel Chandler Harris, is a novel of Reconstruction, but the author represents the negro as the tool of carpetbaggers and scalawags rather than a being moved by his own vice. The following words spoken by one of the characters in the novel doubtless voice Harris's exact sentiments: "'Well, you needn't be too hard on the niggers,' declared Mrs. Absalom. 'Everything they know, everything they do, everything they say—everything— they have larnt from the white folks. Study a nigger right close, an' you'll ketch a glimpse of how white folks would look an' do wi'out the'r trimmin's.'" [2]

There is a vast difference between the depraved Gus of Dixon's The Clansman and Rev. Jeremiah, the negro leader in Harris's Gabriel Tolliver. Jeremiah, vain, foolish, and ambitious, is eager enough for negro rule, but after all he is a rather harmless creature. He is polite to the white folks, and uses his "gift of gab" more than anything else. He and the members of his congregation are sufficiently frightened when the Knights of the White Camellia appear at his church.

The success of the Ku Klux movements resulted from the white man's knowing the negro to be full of fears and superstitions. The incendiary speeches of carpetbaggers could inflame the negro's mind, but usually after a warning from the unseen watchers his ambitions

1. Mas' Craffud's Freedom, in Harry Stillwell Edwards' His Defense and Other Stories, page 145.
2. Joel Chandler Harris's Gabriel Tolliver, page 189.

subsided more quickly than they had risen.

A woman who has written successful negro stories is Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart, a native of Louisiana, and the wife of a cotton planter of Arkansas. On her husband's plantation she knew the negro's actual life, and she possessed the skill to transfer that life vividly to her pages. The following has been written about her negro stories: "Although not the first to treat the negro in fiction, Mrs. Stuart has perhaps been the first to show him in his home life independently of his relations with the white man. Joel Chandler Harris wrote Mrs. Stuart some months before his death: 'You have got nearer the heart of the negro than any of us.' While she has not painted the negro as a saint or tried to obscure the faults of his race, the reader is ever sensible of a sympathetic pen which depicts him at his worse more as a child, with much to learn, than as a flagrant despiser of the decalogue; and never for a moment has she held him up to ridicule." [1] Mrs. Stuart has pictured the old-time negroes and, in such a story as Napoleon Jackson, the Gentleman of the Plush Rocker, the post-bellum negroes as well.

Will N. Harben has written some fearless fiction dealing with the present race problem of the South. The contrast in Mam' Linda, for example, between Sam Dudlow, a villainous negro, and Pete, tactless but innocent of crime, shows clearly the kinds of negroes which the South to-day has to deal with and discriminate between.

Thus far in this chapter, with the exception of Simms' colonial slave Hector, we have considered the negro of the inland cotton fields. Let us now turn to the rice fields of the coast and to the sea islands of South Carolina and Georgia. In the fiction treating the negroes of those regions we shall find characters that are seen

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1. Article on Ruth McEnery Stuart, by Edwin Lewis Stevens, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 5146.

at once to be very different from most negroes known in novels and short stories. The rice field negro appears in fiction to be more primitive and untutored than members of his race on the upland plantations. He has lost fewer of his ancient qualities; he speaks a less intelligible dialect: he is more of the African.

Jupiter, the faithful old servant in Edgar Allan Poe's The Gold-Bug, is an early example of the coast negro in Southern fiction.

John Bennett of South Carolina in The Treasure of Peyre Gaillard has done some noteworthy work in this field. In the Library of Southern Literature occurs the statement, "The South, and particularly the coast region of the South Atlantic States, owes much to John Bennett for the dispassionate truthfulness in his picture of Southern conditions after the war, of the relation of master and slave, and particularly for his rendering of the rice-field negro or 'Gulla' dialect, all of which make historically valuable 'The Treasure of Peyre Gaillard'." [1.]

The same article has the following to say about the "Gulla" speech: "The dialect of the South Atlantic 'rice-field' negro is a thing sui generis and in some respects retains its native African coloring: this is due to the great disparity in numbers between white and black in these regions. One well versed in the negro talk of Page, so true to the Virginia darkey, or in that of 'Uncle Remus', which is the inland tongue of the negro further South, would be at a loss to interpret the ordinary talk of the rice-field and coast-island African. Locally it is known as 'Gulla', or 'Gullah', doubtless a corruption of Angola, whence came many of the slaves to the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. In intonation it suggests the Jamaican negro, in expression only itself can be its parallel. Gilmore Simms, especially

1. Article on John Bennett, by E. A. Smyth, Jr., in the Library of Southern Literature, page 326.

in his 'Woodcraft', faithfully portrays some aspects of this. Mr. A. E. Gonzales of the Columbia, South Carolina, State has written stories which appeared in the Charleston News and Courier and the Columbia State, in which he has shown himself a master not only of the language but also of the quaint humor of the negro of this region. These have, however, never been collected into book form. Mrs. Christensen of Beaufort, South Carolina, has published in Boston 'Afro-American Folk-lore', giving the 'Brer Rabbit' stories in Gulla, as told her by 'Prince', who 'nuse to bin driber on Cumbee fur Nat Heyward'. Rev. John G. Williams of Allendale, South Carolina, published through the News and Courier, a series of negro sermons by 'Brudder Coteny' which truthfully preserve the oddities of Gulla dialect and thought. These are republished in pamphlet form, entitled 'De Ole Plantation', but unfortunately they are probably known to but few. The accuracy and careful use of this idiom, and the spelling of the peculiar negro expressions, is a most valuable portion of 'Peyre Gaillard'. [1]

Perhaps the best known representative of the rice field negro in Southern fiction is Joel Chandler Harris's Daddy Jack, the "ole Affikin nigger", as the house girl 'Tildy calls him. Mr. Harris gained first hand information about this class. He visited the islands off the coast in 1893, and wrote concerning the negroes there: "They are still different from their brothers in the upland plantations, but the Gullah element is nearly wiped out, and the Congo type is rapidly disappearing. They are not so gay as the upland negro, they do not belong to the same tribes, but they are gentler, they are more unaffected, and there is a flute-like note in their voices, a soft lilting intonation at the close of their sentences,

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1. Article on John Bennett, by E. A. Smyth, Jr., in the Library of Southern Literature, pages 336-337.

that is indescribably winning." [1] One of Mr. Harris's correspondents, Mrs. Helen S. Barclay, "commented on the mannerisms of these old island slaves and regretted that she could not reproduce the 'lowering of the voice to a subdued and sly monotone at such points in a story as "Brer Rabbit he watch um,"' which, she remarked, was full of the subtlest humor. Again she said, 'The "Ya-a-s" in the mouth of one of the old-time coast darkies surpasses by far the shrug of the German or the "Je ne sais pas" and uplifted hands of the French.'" [2]

Daddy Jack as a rice field protagonist possesses nearly the same ideas and same traits as Uncle Remus of the cotton plantations. He relieves Uncle Remus sometimes as a teller of animal legends, though the little boy prefers Uncle Remus's stories. The negroes of the up-country plantation are rather suspicious and afraid of old African Jack. He is enough unlike them not to be completely trusted.

The rice field darky, like those of his color on the lands of cotton, corn, and tobacco, fully acknowledges the potency of conjuration, and Daddy Jack is thought to have knowledge of the evil art.

"'Brer Remus!' said Aunt Tempy, in an awed whisper, 'maybe he's a-cunju'n un you.'

"'No-- no!' exclaimed Daddy Jack, snappishly, 'me no cuncher no'n' 't all. Wun me cuncher you all you yeddy bone crack. Enty!'" [3]

Daddy Jack is fond of rhyming, and his verse making is of the crudest, weirdest sort. The following is an example:

> "Yarrah one, yarrah narrah,
> Yarrah two 'pon top er tarrah,
> Yarrah t'ree pile up tergarrah!" [4]

Mr. Harris shows the negro's romance, sentiment, and love making to be of a very crude order. For example, old Daddy Jack thrusts

1. Julia Collier Harris's The Life and Letters of Joel Chandler Harris, pages 312-313.
2. Ibid., pages 194-195.
3. Joel Chandler Harris's Nights with Uncle Remus, pages 326-327.
4. Ibid., page 347.

Civil War, that he still belongs to the Bênitou family. He is a personification of loyalty. For Marse Chouchoute is a story of genuine pathos, in which a little negro, Wash, loses his life doing a favor for a Creole boy. The love of the black for his white friends is emphasized in these words of Mrs. Chopin: "To say that Wash was fond of Madame Verchette and her son is to be poor in language to express devotion. He worshipped her as if she were already an angel in Paradise." 1.

Expressive of the old-fashioned black servant's sentiments are the words of Aunt Dicey about the little son of a visiting photographer:

"'I knows dem kine o' folks,' continued Aunt Dicey, resuming her interrupted ironing. 'Dat stranger he got a li'le boy w'at ain't none too big to spank. Dat li'le imp he come a hoppin' in heah yistiddy wid a kine o' box on'neaf his arm. He say' "Good mo'nin', madam. Will you be so kine an' stan' jis like you is dah at yo' i'onin', an' lef me take yo' picture?" I 'lowed I gwine make a picture outen him wid dis heah flati'on, ef he don' cl'ar hisse'f quick. An' he say he baig my pardon fo' his intrudement. All dat kine o' talk to a ole nigga 'oman! Dat plainly sho' he don' know his place.'

"'W'at you want 'im to say, Aunt Dice?' asked Martinette, with an effort to conceal her distress.

"'I wants 'im to come in heah an' say: "Howdy, Aunt Dicey! will you be so kine an' go put on yo' noo calker dress an' yo' bonnit w'at you w'ars to meetin', an' stan' 'side f'om dat i'onin'-boa'd w'ilse I gwine take yo' photygraph." Dat de way fo' a boy to talk w'at had good raisin'.'" 2.

1. For Marse Chouchoute, in Kate Chopin's Bayou Folk, page 212.
2. A Gentleman of Bayou Têche, in Kate Chopin's Bayou Folk, pages 294-295.

Miss King as well as Mrs. Chopin has portrayed with sympathetic touch the faithful slave. The negress Aglone in The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard is such a one— true to those whom she serves. Her voluntary servitude is thus related: "Among the masters and mistresses of New Orleans it was a general belief that every slave who became the mother of thirteen children purchased, with the birth of her thirteenth child, its freedom and her own. When Aglone bore triumphantly her thirteenth child she was still young, fresh and good-looking, for she was but fifteen when her first child was born. But she bargained with her master to give the freedom she had earned to her eldest child— a boy— which was done; and according to the law, a piece of property was placed in trust for him as a home, and he was apprenticed to the carpenter's trade; and did well in it as youth and man. When ruin came to her master, Aglone refused the choice of being sold with her family in order to remain with him and his family. When again emancipation came and all slaves were freed, Aglone stood to her bargain. She would not accept the freedom she had refused from her master, as a gift from 'strangers', as she called them; and given to good and bad alike. It was owing to this obstinacy of the old woman that Mademoiselle Mimi and her father had a servant to follow them in their emigration and that old Aglone still had a home and a family." [1.]

The novel from which the above quotation is taken traces the change which came to the Louisiana negro with emancipation. One of the characters in the novel, Mrs. Talbot, living in the Reconstruction era, has such memories of the ante-bellum Louisiana plantation as the following:

"Always on coming back from their Sunday walk they would go the round of the quarters, stopping first invariably at the cabin of old

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1. Grace King's The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard, pages 67-68.

Aunt Patsy, the most venerable negro on the plantation. Her cabin stood apart from the others and she lived by herself: a silent, morose old woman, but after the master and mistress the most respected person on the place. Often when the mistress was surcharged with anxiety, she would go and talk with Aunt Patsy, and never come back without being eased, or without remarking, how Aunt Patsy seemed to know everything about life. On Sundays she was always found ready to receive visitors sitting in her low white oak chair covered with deer skin. She wore a cap, the only negress on the place who did so, a broad ruffled white cotton cap, tied under her chin. Very black she was; thin and wrinkled and with front teeth that stood out like tusks. On account of her age, she was exempt from work, but she was always busy, nevertheless, spinning the finest and best knitting cotton and doing the fastest and prettiest knitting. She had no relations, had never borne a child, and her husband had been dead so long that he had become merely a tradition on the place. A boy had been assigned to the duty of cutting wood and fetching water for her, and this was her only connection with her fellow slaves. When she died, her funeral was made a great event. And afterwards the negroes and white children following their superstitions (as white children never fail to do) in passing her cabin always looked to see if she might not be still sitting there 'anyhow' as they said.

"The other negroes in the quarters would be sitting in front of their cabins; the babies, washed and dressed, lying in their mothers' or fathers' arms, their bright alert eyes glancing around and their little hands grabbing at the flies in the air. The other children, in their clean cotonades, with bare legs and feet well scrubbed, would be running around after the chickens— that is the happiest of them— the others would be wedged in the vise of a

parent's knees, while their stubborn hair was being carded, divided and wrapped into stiff wisps with white knitting cotton. Here and there, stretched out in the sun the half-grown boys would be lying asleep, worn out with the exhaustion of having nothing to do.

"After the greetings there would be talk of the weather, and the crops, and gossip about the animals. Sometimes a group of men would be gathered on Jerry's gallery 'passing the time of day,' as they called it, in discussion generally about the causes of things— such as the changes of the seasons, the revolution of the sun or God's ways. And when the master was along, he would step in and join them and answer their questions and make explanations; until all the other negro men would drift in too; and their wives following would sit around on the edge of the gallery to enjoy the entertainment, commenting freely, and guffawing aloud at the good retorts, as each man put his oar into the conversation whenever he got a chance. Meanwhile the mistress and the little girls would continue their walk to the house and the little boys make off with their black followers at their heels upon some adventure, that seemed to be innocent, but always turned out to be mischievous—" [1].

Another kind of negro, the faithless slave during the war, is mentioned by Miss King thus: "It was Gideon, their negro boy, who ran off to the enemy as they entered the city, and told them not only that his master was hidden in the house, but guns and ammunition and gold and silver belonging to the Confederate government. Gideon, the rascal, who was not worth his salt, whom she [Mrs. Talbot] had saved from so many whippings he had richly earned; and once when her husband had made up his mind to sell him, had pleaded and argued against it, even shedding tears, to save him from being sent among

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1. Grace King's The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard, pages 129-131.

strangers, because she knew that then he would meet the treatment he deserved." [1].

With emancipation and the necessity of shifting for themselves, some negroes were paupers. We have this scene of beggar negroes soon after the Civil War:

"So the little girls listened for them and the day never passed that they did not hear the shuffling steps in the street stop under the kitchen window and the hoarse whisper: 'Mistress, I'se here! Mistress, won't you give a poor nigger something to eat? For God's sake, Mistress, I'm that hungry. . . .' And looking out of the window they would see a trembling negro with ashen face, still shivering from fever, or freshly scarred from smallpox.

* * *

"'Thank you, little Mistress! God bless you, little Mistress!' Some of them would cry like children from weakness as the little girls had seen negro men do on the plantation when they were weak and miserable." [2].

We have mentioned the diversity of representations which writers have given of the Louisiana negro. Let us contrast the orderliness of plantation life reviewed by Miss King in The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard with the barbarous scene described by the same writer in Bayou L'Ombre: "On Saturday nights sometimes, in the quarters, when rum had been smuggled in, the negroes would get to fighting and beating their wives, and her father [the master] would be sent for in a hurry to come with his gun and separate them. Hatchets, axes, cane-knives— anything they would seize, to cut and slash one another, husbands, wives, mothers, sons, sisters, brothers; but they were negroes, ignorant, uneducated, barbarous, excited; they could not help it; they could not be expected to resist all at once the

1. Grace King's The Pleasant Ways of St. Medard, pages 78-79.
2. Ibid., page 285.

momentum of centuries of ancestral ferocity." [1]

Yet there is in the soul of even the wild, far-from-civilized negro a softening influence. Fiction repeatedly emphasizes the negro's passion for music. The African in Louisiana is in this respect like the African in Georgia. In The Christmas Story of a Little Church Miss King makes us hear the Christmas anthem of negroes poured forth from emotional depths. Negro minstrels, with an accordion playing the accompaniment, repeatedly sing

"Out of the tears,
Out of the fears,
Man of Bethlehem lead!"

"How often at night they had passed through her dreams, these street minstrels, waking her with tears in her eyes, and she had loved them for their musical gratuity, and gone to sleep again singing the tune over to herself! God may have afflicted them, but He had given them the expression and alleviation of music." [2]

Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart has been mentioned in the preceding chapter as a successful portrayer of the negro of the cotton fields. She has also delineated the negro of the bayou as she has known him in her native Louisiana. We quote the following summary of Mrs. Stuart's diversified work:

"Mrs. Stuart has sometimes been called 'a master of dialects,' and while her readers pass from her stories of the negro and the poor whites of the hill-country to the tales dealing with the Latin-American element of New Orleans (these including not only the descendants of the French and Spanish of the romantic old city, but the considerable Italian contingent, and finally, the concomitant Latin-American negro, the last speaking a jargon of commingled French and English, modified by the characteristic African carelessness of

1. Bayou L'Ombre, in Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place, page 48.
2. The Christmas Story of a Little Church, in Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place, page 233.

enunciation) they feel that she is sure of her ground, knows her people, and is thoroughly familiar with the life and speech which she so sympathetically depicts.

"In this rich Southern field Mrs. Stuart discerned a wealth of literary material going to waste. Indeed, she says that when she returns to her native State she always feels the elements of romance in the very air, no matter whether her journeyings take her to the cane-fields of plantations among the bandana folk, or down in old New Orleans among the fields of purple fleur de lis, or beyond to the quadroon environs, where speech and manner are doubly typified in the low-lying swamp-lands and the 'Flower of France'." [1.]

The quadroon of New Orleans has been more fully treated by George W. Cable than by any other author. The caste has been highly colored by him. We have Mr. Cable's sketch of the origin and position of the caste in the following paragraphs:

"During the first quarter of the present [the nineteenth] century, the free quadroon caste of New Orleans was in its golden age. Earlier generations— sprung, upon the one hand, from the merry gallants of a French colonial military service which had grown gross by affiliation with Spanish-American frontier life, and, upon the other hand from comely Ethiopians culled out of the less negroidal types of African live goods, and bought at the ship's side with vestiges of quills and cowries and copper wire still in their head-dresses,— these earlier generations, with scars of battle or private rencontre still on the fathers, and of servitude on the manumitted mothers, afforded a mere hint of the splendor that was to result from a survival of the fairest through seventy-five years devoted to the elimination of the black pigment and the cultivation

1. Article on Ruth McEnery Stuart, by Edwin Lewis Stevens, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 5146.

of hyperian excellence and nymphean grace and beauty. Nor, if we turn to the present, is the evidence much stronger which is offered by the gens de couleur whom you may see in the quadroon quarter this afternoon, with 'Ichabod' legible on their murky foreheads through a vain smearing of toilet powder, dragging their chairs down to the narrow gateway of their close-fenced gardens, and staring shrinkingly at you as you pass, like a nest of yellow kittens.

"But as the present century was in its second and third decades, the quadroones (for we must contrive a feminine spelling to define the strict limits of the caste as then established) came forth in splendor. Old travellers spare no terms to tell their praises, their faultlessness of feature, their perfection of form, their varied styles of beauty,— for there were even pure Caucasian blondes among then,— their fascinating manners, their sparkling vivacity, their chaste and pretty wit, their grace in the dance, their modest propriety, their taste and elegance in dress. In the gentlest and most poetic sense they were indeed the sirens of this land, where it seemed 'always afternoon'— a momentary triumph of an Arcadian over a Christian civilization, so beautiful and so seductive that it became the subject of special chapters by writers of the day more original than correct as social philosophers.

"The balls that were got up for them by the male sang-pur were to that day what the carnival is to the present. Society balls given the same nights proved failures through the coincidence. The magnates of government,— municipal, state, federal,— those of the army, of the learned professions and of the clubs,— in short, the white male aristocracy in every thing save the ecclesiastical desk,— were there. Tickets were high-priced to insure the exclusion of the vulgar. No distinguished stranger was allowed to miss

them. They were beautiful! They were clad in silken extenuations from the throat to the feet, and wore, withal, a pathos in their charm that gave them a family likeness to innocence." [1.]

Yet for all this tinsel and trancing grace, the quadroon has felt heavily the blight of his caste. Cable in The Grandissimes has illustrated through the characters of the second Honoré Grandissime and Palmyre Philosophe the tragedy which was the quadroon's inheritance. The same theme occurs in Madame Delphine.

The manner in which Cable generally treated the negro and his problem was very objectionable to the author's Southern neighbors. "In his Southern home. . . a feeling was slowly rising that their quondam comrade-in-arms was yielding to Northern influence, and especially to the Abolitionist's point of view as regarded the negro. Many of his old friends considered him a traitor to the cause for which he had fought. Certainly, strange and conflicting forces were at work in the mind of the rising novelist. All of these earlier works turned on the relations, most frequently reprehensible, of the white and black races. The quadroon and the mulatto, more often than otherwise, figured as the hero or heroine of his tales." [2.] The antagonism engendered against him in the South was perhaps chiefly responsible for his leaving New Orleans and taking up his home in the North.

A recent novel of Cable's, The Flower of the Chapdelaines, containing the story of run-away slaves who had not been harshly treated, illustrates the kind of work which awakened resentment among the writer's Southern friends.

Miss Grace King, before quoted for her pictures of slave life, has touched upon life among quadroons also. In her Madrilène; or,

1. Madame Delphine, in George W. Cable's Old Creole Days, pages 4-6.
2. Article on George Washington Cable, by Mrs. John S. Kendall, in the Library of Southern Literature, pages 631-628.

The Festival of the Dead[1] she has drawn such characters as the quadroon Madame Lafs, keeper of chambres garnies, and her daughters and nieces, and the voudoo negress Zizi Mouton, feared by the quadroons. Miss King presents here the miserable condition of the quadroon, but in a less obnoxious way than G. W. Cable. She shows very clearly the degraded life chosen by many quadroons, and represents members of the caste still bound by abject superstitions.

The negro as a race with a problem is a vital object of interest in the South to-day. Consequently he continues to be a subject for the pen of novelist and short story writer. The chief tendency of many present day magazine stories dealing with the negro is to use him as a comic character. One thought should always be remembered by those who study the negro in our fiction: if fidelity to life makes literature, only those writers who have actually known the negro have successfully portrayed him; and in the future likewise we can hope for continued portraits of him from only those who have seen his daily actions and understood and sympathized with his ways.

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1. In Tales of a Time and Place.

Chapter X

T H E C R E O L E

When Frank Norris made his statement, so readily challenged by O. Henry,[1] that "there are just three big cities in the United States that are 'story cities'," he named New Orleans as one of the three. Indeed, no student of local color literature could do otherwise than think of New Orleans as a center of romance. The old French atmosphere lingering about the ancient brick mansions and sheltered gardens throbs with hints of mysteries, plots,—hidden thoughts, emotions, deeds, and systems of persons belonging to a past era. In the city itself and in the parishes of Louisiana has existed a social type than which there is none more strictly unique in Southern fiction. That type is the Creole.

The Creole represents a unique type because he has preserved social traits different from those of the people among whom he has lived. The Creole is a descendant of the French and Spanish settlers of Louisiana, the French element predominating. And with his foreign peculiarities—in speech, appearance, and disposition—he is a remarkable figure in the midst of the Americains of his State. He himself civilly and politically is American; socially he is not, for he has preserved the mode of his Latin forefathers.

Three American writers share the chief credit of putting the Creole into literature; Mr. George Washington Cable, Miss Grace Elizabeth King, and Mrs. Kate Chopin. Cable was the first to enter the field, and has received more widespread notice than either of the other two. His novels and short stories attracted sufficient attention to succeed in directing the eyes of all sections of America to

1. See O. Henry's A Municipal Report.

the Louisiana Creole. But the Creole himself was not satisfied with his portrait as Mr. Cable had executed it. Subsequently Miss King treated the same subject in a manner more agreeable to the Creoles and they were not slow to express their preference for her work.

The Library of Southern Literature presents a very just contrast between the fiction of Grace King and that of G. W. Cable when it states: "She [Grace King] has given the most sympathetic and intimate portrayal of the half French, half English life of Southern Louisiana. The stories of Mr. George Cable have perhaps attracted a wider notice, because they gave the unfamiliar reader more of the picture which his own fancy or prejudice had led him to expect; but Mr. Cable views his characters and their life from a temperamentally unsympathetic isolation, and portrays them usually through the extremes of sentiment or caricature. Miss King, on the contrary, has been fitted by temperament and training to understand her people."[1].

Dr. Pattee writes concerning Grace King's work, "The impulse to write fiction came to Miss King from a conviction that Cable had done scant justice to the real Creoles of Louisiana. She would depict those exclusive circles of old Creole life that she herself had known in her early childhood, circles almost exclusively French with just a touch, perhaps, of Spanish...She excels in her pictures of old Mesdames, relics of the old régime, drawn by the lightest of touches and suggestions until they are intensely alive, like Bonne Maman or like Madame Josephine in 'A Delicate Affair'. A hint or a suggestion is made to do the work of a page of analysis...All her feminine creations are Gallic, like Marie Modeste, or, better still, the vividly drawn Misette in Earthlings, volatile, lovable—impossible. She is always at her best while depicting those whimsical, impracticable, tropic femininities; she makes them not so bewitching as does Cable,

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1. Article on Grace Elizabeth King, by Albert Phelps, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 2929.

but she makes them more real and more intensely alive."[1].

Mrs. Kate Chopin, while not a voluminous writer, caught the true spirit of Creole life in her fiction, writing of that life in an entertaining fashion. "And the events happen in a land of bayous, and flowers, and sunshine, of galleried houses and chicken 'gumbo', where the village priest carries consolation through dusty streets, listening to appeals in soft patois and dialect. In reproducing the charm of this atmosphere, in saturating her stories with color, Mrs. Chopin is, in her way, superior to Cable. The qualities of her style are largely French."[2].

Mr. Cable has sketched Creole life as it was a century ago and also as a remnant of it remains to-day. For instance, the time of The Grandissimes is 1803-04, when President Jefferson was purchasing Louisiana from Napoleon and establishing an American government in the new territory; Madame Delphine is laid in 1821-22; Dr. Sevier is is at the time of the Civil War; The Flower of the Chapdelaines represents descendants of the French in New Orleans during the recent European war, shortly before the United States entered the struggle. Some of the characteristics of the Creole remain about the same through the passing years, while other traits of his have undergone a change, which is easily noticed in the works of Cable.

Let us now consider some of the most prominent features of the Creole's character.

First of all, the Creole is not so much an individual as he is a member of a family. Loyalty to his kin is one of his strongest virtues; and at times this virtue degenerates into a vice. A most forceful illustration is found in the family of the Grandissimes, in Cable's novel of that name. Agricola Fusilier is the powerful old

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1. Pattee's American Literature since 1870, pages 362-363.
2. Article on Kate Chopin, by Leonidas Rutledge Whipple, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 865.

patriarch of his kin, maintaining an almost undisputed influence over them. And as individuals of the same blood may be unswervingly devoted and loyal to one another, likewise with equal intensity there may exist through years the deadliest hatred between families, as between the Grandissimes and their neighbors, the De Grapions.

Cable furnishes a very striking example of family fealty and perfect honesty of one kinsman to another in the characters of Colonel De Charleu and old Charlie in Belles Demoiselles Plantation, from Old Creole Days. Self-sacrifice to the limit for one's own blood is the keynote of that masterpiece of mystery and horror, Jean-ah Poquelin.[1] And Kate Chopin draws a masterpiece of tenderness and pathos in old Jean Baptiste Plochel's awaiting the return of his son and being most lovingly ministered to by his granddaughter Esmée.[2]

Moreover, if loyalty to family is one of the Creole's traits, loyalty to caste is another equally as strong. The Creole of the early nineteenth century, like the previously mentioned old patriarch, Agricola Fusilier, was intolerant of anything that smacked of negro advancement. Among the Creoles dwelt that most unfortunate class, the quadroons. But the former drew their line, and though the quadroon might be free and acquire considerable wealth, the Creoles, like other Southerners around them, granted no chance for social rise to persons of negro blood. Cable has termed the Creoles "the Knickerbockers of Louisiana,"[3] and the title, with reference to family and caste pride, is very apt.

A most realistic scene of the blighted quadroon caste is presented by Grace King in Madrilène; or, The Festival of the Dead,[4] wherein salvation comes to the girl Madrilène, left among quadroons,

1. In George W. Cable's Old Creole Days.
2. See Kate Chopin's The Return of Alcibiade in Bayou Folk.
3. George W. Cable's The Grandissimes, page 101.
4. In Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place.

with the discovery that she is of white parentage. Also Kate Chopin's In and Out of Old Natchitoches[1], demonstrates the Creole's feeling against anything that approaches association with mulattoes, while Desirée's Baby[1] is a tragedy resulting from the sin of race infusion.

Throughout the years, pride has been one of the strongest characteristics of the Creole. "Show me any Creole," Cable makes one of his characters say to another, "or any number of Creoles, in any sort of contest, and right down at the foundation of it all, I will find you this same preposterous, apathetic, fantastic, suicidal pride. It is as lethargic and ferocious as an alligator."[2]. General Villivicencio[3]. furnishes a complete, though not overdrawn, illustration of an old Creole long warped from his natural affections by his pride; and Bonne Maman[4]. is a proud old woman, once rich, trying to eke out an existence without appeal to her kindred for aid.

Before the Civil War the Creole's pride was often coincident with the possession of wealth and broad estates. We are told that "in those days, the days of '59, New Orleans was not, as it is now, a one-heiress place, but it may be said that one could find heiresses then as one finds type-writing girls now."[5]. Thus the pride of Idalie Sainte Foy Mortemart des Islets, who "walked as if the Reine Sainte Foy plantation extended over the whole earth, and the soil of it were too vile for her tread,"[6]. was a product of both race and environment. She lived in the midst of such a scene as this: "Stately walls, acres of roses, miles of oranges, unmeasured fields of cane, colossal sugar-house—they were all there, and all the rest of it, with the slaves, slaves, slaves everywhere, whole villages of negro cabins. And there were also, most noticeable to the natural, as well as to the

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1. In Kate Chopin's Bayou Folk.
2. George W. Cable's The Grandissimes, page 40.
3. See George W. Cable's Madame Delicieuse, in Old Creole Days.
4. See Grace King's Bonne Maman, in Tales of a Time and Place.
5. Grace King's La Grande Demoiselle, in Balcony Stories, page 23.
6. Ibid., page 26.

visionary, eye—there were the ease, idleness, extravagance, self-indulgence, pomp, pride, arrogance, in short the whoe enumeration, the moral *sine qua non*, as some people considered it, of the wealthy slaveholder of aristocratic descent and tastes."[1].

But pride does not come through wealth or family alone. Another picture is drawn by Kate Chopin in *A Gentleman of Bayou Têche*,[2]. when the poor Evariste returns two much needed silver dollars to a magazine photographer rather than have his picture taken and exposed to the world—as he supposes—as that of "one dem low-down 'Cajuns o' Bayou Têche."

In a country of flowers and sunshine, among people of French and Spanish extraction, small wonder is it that the emotions and sentiments flame fervently and passionately. The Creole nature is ardent. Doubly intense the Creole's feeling seems, expressed as it is in the patois or dialect filled to overflowing with French softness and musical murmur. In his peculiar mixture of wrongly accented English and French the Creole tells the story of his love, curses his enemies, pours forth his rejoicings, bemoans his losses, and makes his confession to his parish priest. He is easily excited, and in his aroused state talks loudly and threateningly; the storm of words, however, usually passes without violent action.

We may notice a few illustrations of the fervid love of Creole men and women. In Cable's *The Grandissimes* Honoré Grandissime and Aurore Nancanou, in spite of the hostility existing between their families, love and finally marry. Captain Ursin Lemaitre-Vigneville, the pirate in *Madame Delphine*,[3]. reforms on account of his love for the girl Olive. The young Creole, Azenor, in *Love on the Bon-Dieu*,[4]. loves a poor girl, Lalie, and her miserable poverty and the neighbors' scorn of her as "canaille" fail to quench in the least degree his

1. Grace King's *La Grande Demoiselle*, in *Balcony Stories*, page 24.
2. In Kate Chopin's *Bayou Folk*.
3. In George W. Cable's *Old Creole Days*.
4. In Kate Chopin's *Bayou Folk*.

devotion. Nowhere is a better illustration of a Creole's intense passion, fiery hatred of a rival, and saving honor all shown than in Kate Chopin's A No-Account Creole.[1] In this story, Placide Santien, a man of excellent family, finds Euphrasie Manton, his fiancée, in love with another man. In his passion he prepares to kill his rival, but the rival's words, "The way to love a woman is to think first of her happiness," strike home and he rides away, leaving the woman free to marry the man she truly loves.

An expression of the appeal made by feminine beauty to the Creole is in the following quotation: "'But!'—the Creole lads in the street would say—'—her daughter!' and there would be lifting of arms, wringing of fingers, rolling of eyes, rounding of mouths, gaspings and claspings of hands. 'So beautiful, beautiful, beautiful! White? —white like a water lily! White—like a magnolia!'

"Applause would follow, and invocation of all the saints to witness."[2]

The following extract shows the rapid progress of love among the Acadian peasants:

Adorine Mérionaux "was thirteen when she met him. That is the age for an Acadian girl to meet him, because, you know, the large families—the thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, twenty children—take up the years; and when one wishes to know one's great-grandchildren (which is the dream of the Acadian girl) one must not delay one's story.

"She had one month to love him in, and in one week they were to have the wedding. The Acadians believe that marriage must come au point, as cooks say their sauces must be served."[3]

But adoration of the proud, dark-eyed, emotional women of his race is far from being the only phase of the Creole's sentimentality.

1. In Kate Chopin's Bayou Folk.
2. 'Tite Poulette, in George W. Cable's Old Creole Days, pages 214-215.
3. The Story of a Day, in Grace King's Balcony Stories, page 76.

Love of music, natural scenery, and literature—as Narcisse's[1] extravagant admiration of Byron—is likewise an inherent quality of his soul. And the Creole's faith in and devotion to holy things remain very staunch. He is as naturally attached to the Catholic Church as the colonial planter in Virginia was loyal to the Church of England.

With his warm nature the Creole may be expected to be patriotic. He was quick to raise his hue and cry when Louisiana passed from France to the United States in 1803; and old Agricola Fusilier uttered as his last words:

"'Louis—Louisian—a—for—ever!' and lay still.

"They put those two words on his tomb."[2] In the Civil War the Creole marched with proud tread in the Confederate ranks. In Cable's Dr. Sevier the foppish, fawning, unscrupulous clerk, Narcisse, donned the gray and, serving his cause with real chivalry, met a brave soldier's death. The Southern patriotism of three girls; Christine, Régina, and Lolotte, forms the basis for Grace King's story, Bayou L'Ombre.[3] Later, in 1870, the Louisiana French were as partisan, as deeply stirred, and as fiercely hostile in their thoughts of the German victors of Sédan as though they were living in France instead of in America.[4]

The Creoles love pleasure, and the ballroom is a scene of merriment for rich and poor. "Any one who is white may go to a 'Cadian ball, but he must pay for his lemonade, his coffee and chicken gumbo. And he must behave himself like a 'Cadian."[5] The following is descriptive of a dance of the humbler sort:

"The room, crowded with people young and old, was long and low, with rough beams across the ceiling, blackened by smoke and time.

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1. In George W. Cable's Dr. Sevier.
2. George W. Cable's The Grandissimes, page 434.
3. In Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place.
4. See Grace King's In the French Quarter, 1870, in Tales of a Time (and Place.
5. Kate Chopin's At the 'Cadian Ball, in Bayou Folk, page 270.

Upon the high mantelpiece a single coal-oil lamp burned, and none too brightly.

"In a far corner, upon a platform of boards laid across two flour barrels, sat Uncle Ben, playing upon a squeaky fiddle, and shouting the 'figures'.

* * *

"'S'lute yo' partners!' Uncle Ben was thundering forth...

* * *

"'Balancy all! Fus' fo' fo'ard an' back!

* * *

"'Right an' lef' all 'roun'! Swing co'nas!'"[1].

One very interesting weakness of the Creole is his prying curiosity. If some mystery touching a neighbor baffles him, he does not rest until he has attempted a solution. The secret of Jean-ah Poquelin's leprous brother was at last discovered by the relentless neighborhood.[2] And in 'Sieur George[3] Kookoo, the landlord, prying into the mystery of a hair trunk, is overpowered by the same spirit of inquisitiveness. Furthermore, is it not morbid curiosity of a strange form that brings nondescripts from the street into the death-chamber of a stranger in such a scene as the following?—

"It was Sunday, the church bells were calling them all to mass (all except one—one who they remembered had always gone to the earliest mass), slipping along the street masked in veils. It is an old-fashioned creole city, with a pompous funereal etiquette, where no dispensation is sought or given for the visit commanded by the crape scarf. Death himself had unlatched the reserved green doors, and was host to-day. And where Death receives, the house is free to all the 'blanchisseuse en fin', the 'coiffeuse', the 'garde malade', the little hunchback who kept the 'rabais', the passers-by to and from mass, the market-woman with her basket, the paper-boy with his papers—all entered the little chamber, if but for a moment, to say

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1. Kate Chopin's For Marse Chouchoute, in Bayou Folk, pages 214-216.
2. See George W. Cable's Jean-ah Poquelin, in Old Creole Days.
3. In George W. Cable's Old Creole Days.

a little prayer, or bow in respect to the conqueror and the conquered. The old aristocrat lay in her coffin in the bare, unfurnished room, where she had lived with her poverty, her pride, and her griefs, looking up through her mutilations of age and infirmity, through her wrinkles, discolorations, and the stony glaze of death, with the patient resignation of a marble statue looking up through the turbidities of a sluggish stream, while the eyes she had so carefully shunned in life gazed their fill of her."[1].

Creole superstition a century ago credited the negro voodoo with power to exercise his sorcery against the object of his malice. The conjuring of Agricola Fusilier by the quadroon Palmyre and the negress Clemence with the subsequent fate of the latter forms a scene of tense interest in Cable's The Grandissimes. A common superstition among the Creoles, told in Grace King's Madrilène; or, The Festival of the Dead,[2] is that on the Eve of All Saints the dead come out of the tombs, walk down the cemetery paths, and talk with one another.

As time has gone on, the Creoles have remained conservative. They have retained their conventions. They have kept true many of their old ideals. But strong old families, powerful in themselves to mold the life of a community, no longer exist, or, if existing, have lost their sway. The fierce pride of 1803 has been tempered into an altogether different quality. "To-day almost all the savagery that can justly be charged against Louisiana must—strange to say—be laid at the door of the Americain. The Creole character has been diluted and sweetened."[3]. When one reads, therefore, the stories of Creole life, he usually feels that he is reading the sweet old romances of departed years, or narratives of haughty passions that now for a long time have slumbered.

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1. Grace King's Bonne Maman, in Tales of a Time and Place, page 103.
2. In Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place.
3. George W. Cable's The Grandissimes, pages 435-436.

Chapter XI

T H E C R A C K E R

According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, "In the southern states of America, 'cracker' is a term of contempt for the 'poor' or 'mean whites', particularly of Georgia and Florida; the term is an old one and dates back to the Revolution, and is supposed to be derived from the 'cracked corn' which formed the staple food of the class to whom the term refers." There has been, however, something of an expansion in the connotation of the word. Some persons have come to use "cracker" broadly as a nickname for a Georgian of any rank or station. Others continue to limit the word so that it applies merely to the tacky, the "hill-billy", or the generally untutored in Georgia, and perhaps to the same class in neighboring states. Local color fiction of Georgia abounds with graphic pictures of the cracker. Sometimes the author draws the poverty-stricken, hopeless ne'er-do-well, living in squalor and lacking ambition to extricate himself from his misery. In other cases the writer shows the lowly but honest farmer or villager, ignorant to a degree, but honorable, persevering, and worthy of the prosperity which comes from his earnest work.

The cracker's first appearance in literature was in the humorous sketch. Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, Johnson Jones Hooper, William Tappan Thompson, Richard Malcolm Johnston, "Bill Arp", and others found in the cracker's character, manners, and dialect a medium for the expression of their humor. The first specimens of fiction on the unlettered class of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi were thin, and lacking in graphic reflection of life. Gradually the local color assumed a truer tone, until in the last part of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth Joel Chandler Harris, Harry Stillwell Edwards, and Will N. Harben were writing short stories and novels in which the cracker's life and

character were seriously and faithfully depicted.

"Judge Longstreet, the author of 'Georgia Scenes', was first among the writers of the South to seize the comic aspects of Southern life, and turn them to shape, and to give them a local habitation and a name. The volume entitled 'Georgia Scenes: Characters, Incidents, etc. in the First Half Century of the Republic, by a Native Georgian', was published by the Harpers in 1840; but the sketches of which it was composed had appeared in various magazines and newspapers prior to that date."[1] The writer knew his State and its people. Concerning his sketches he stated: "They consist of nothing more than fanciful combinations of real incidents and characters; and throwing into those scenes, which would be otherwise dull and insipid, some personal incident or adventure of my own, real or imaginary, as it would best suit my purpose; usually real, but happening at different times and under different circumstances from those in which they are here represented."[2] His work lacked the vitality which later fiction possessed; yet his sketches marked a beginning of a certain phase of Southern literature.

A crude story of the early cracker is found in Simon Suggs' Adventures by Johnson Jones Hooper. This is a picaresque book, full of horseplay, relating the fortunes of the sharper, Simon Suggs, whose family had moved from Georgia to Alabama, and who lived in the latter State about the year 1833.

A decided advance in local color art is found in William Tappan Thompson's collection of letters entitled Major Jones's Courtship. Colonel Watterson writes:

"In 'Simon Suggs' we have the vulgarian of the South 'done', to use his own elegant phraseology, 'to a cracklin'.' In the amusing,

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1. Henry Watterson's Oddities in Southern Life and Character, page 1.
2. Preface to Augustus Baldwin Longstreet's Georgia Scenes, page III.

amatory adventures of Major Joseph Jones, the reverse side of the picture—homely, not to say rough, but clean—is given us. Here there is nothing equivocal or coarse; not so much as the suspicion of a double entente.

"The 'Major' is a simple, yet shrewd, straightforward, honest Georgia lad, whose migrations have been for the most part from the blue bud to the brown. He loves Mary Stallins, and Mary loves him. The 'old people' favor the match. The young people conspire to bring it about. There is positively no obstruction, no plot, and no villain. But, by a grotesque humor and rustic narrative, composed of ingredients of the most transparent and unambitious description, the author contrives to maintain the interest of the reader throughout. In representative quality, both as to its dramatis personae and its dialect, the story is genuinely racy of the soil. It is distinctively Southern and provincial. If no names were mentioned, its locale could not be mistaken. Its scenes might possibly be laid in Tennessee or Alabama, but not in Virginia or Mississippi....

"But Major Jones is a Georgian. He is well to do, and he knows a thing or two, albeit his education in 'grammer' and 'retorick' has been neglected. His character, like his diction, is homespun. He is a thorough rustic, and belongs to a class which is still very large in the interior of the South."[1]

Joseph G. Baldwin's Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi (1854) touches here and there upon cracker character, but the book adds little to the treatment of the type.

Richard Malcolm Johnston in Georgia Sketches (1864) and Dukesborough Tales (1871) made a distinct contribution to fiction which delineates the cracker. Again we quote Colonel Watterson: "Why it is I know not, but certain it is that Georgia, which is made the scene

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1. Henry Watterson's Oddities in Southern Life and Character, pages 134-135.

of so much of the humor of the South, has furnished a very large proportion of the humorists themselves. The author of 'Dukesborough Tales' is a native Georgian....The sketches of which it is composed are redolent of the rusticity of the South. They breathe the very life of the village, and present us a series of characters both new and naïve, but whimsically true to the quaint, simple, serio-comic existence, that, like a country stream, ran through Dixieland during the years preceding the great war, which, a mere episode in the one section of the Union, was a 'deluge' to the other section."[1.]

But the cracker was not always to be looked upon as a person to be laughed at, nor was he in fiction to be a mere subject for the humorist's pen. After a time native authors began to find in his life much material for serious fiction, and to-day the cracker type is well known from the portraits which Southern artists have created. Will N. Harben chose northern Georgia as a special setting for his stories and novels, while Harry Stillwell Edwards and Joel Chandler Harris have treated the inhabitants of both the northern and the middle sections of their State.

Richard Malcolm Johnston in his Dukesborough Tales was especially concerned with the school children of poor families in middle Georgia. The following is a description of Brinkly Glisson, the hero of The Goosepond School: "He was a raw-boned lad of about fifteen years, with very light coarse hair and a freckled face, sufficiently tall for his years. His figure was a little bent from being used to hard work. He had beautiful eyes, very blue, and habitually sad. He wore a roundabout and trousers of home-made walnut-dyed stuff of wool and cotton, a sealskin cap, and red brogan-shoes without socks."[2.] And we have this picture of the home in which Brinkly and his mother

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1. Henry Watterson's Oddities in Southern Life and Character, page 329.
2. The Goosepond School, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, page 5.

lived: "The widow's house was a single log-tenement, with a small shed-room behind. A kitchen, a meat-house, a dairy, a crib with two stalls in the rear—one for the horse, the other for the cow—were the out-buildings. Homely and poor as this little homestead was, it wore an air of much neatness and comfort. The yard looked clean; the floors of both mansion and kitchen were clean, and the little dairy looked as if it knew it was clean, but that was nothing new or strange. Several large rose-bushes stood on either side of the little gate, ranged along the yard-paling. Two rows of pinks and narcissus hedged the walk from the gate to the door, where, on blocks of oak, rested two boxes of geranium."[1.]

Harry Stillwell Edwards thus describes Hiram Ard, a cracker of the best sort, an honest, industrious, kind man: "He was tall, and in old age would be gaunt. He was also sunburned, and stooped a little, as from hard labor and long walking in plowed ground or long riding behind slow mules. One need not have been a physiognomist to discover that, although yet young, the storms of life had raged about him. But the lawyer noticed that he was neat, and that his jeans suit was home-made, and his pathetic homespun shirt and sewed-on collar—the shirt and collar that never will sit right for any country housewife, however devoted—were ornamented with a black cravat made of a ribbon and tied like a school-girl's sash."[2.]

For the sake of comparison and contrast let us turn to the following picture of a Georgia "hill-billy", also presented by Harry Stillwell Edwards: "Ezekiel Obadiah Sykes leaned over the tumble-down split-picket fence that had once kept the pigs and chickens from his mother's humble flower-garden, and gazed fixedly at the mountain before him. His was not a striking figure, being lank and somewhat round-shouldered. It was not even picturesque. A pair of worn jean trousers

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1. The Goosepond School, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, page 40.
2. Harry Stillwell Edwards' His Defense, page 2.

covered his lower limbs, and were held in place by knit 'galluses', which crossed the back of his cotton shirt exactly in the middle and disappeared over his shoulders in well-defined grooves. A stained and battered wool hat hung like a bell over his head, which rested by his chin upon a red, rough hand. The face was half covered by a reddish brown beard, the first of his budding manhood. The sun had just sunk beyond the mountain, and the great shadow that crept across the single field of starving corn and the tobacco patch deepened into twilight, and still the young man rested on the picket-fence. Occasionally he would eject into the half-defined road, which came around one side of the mountain and disappeared around the other, a stream of tobacco-juice, and pensively watch it as it lined the gravel and vanished into the soil with something like a human gasp. Once he lifted a bare foot, and with a prolonged effort scratched with its horny toes the calf of the supporting leg. But by no motion did he dissipate the air of listlessness and dependency that hung about him."[1.]

By way of further comparison we may notice Will N. Harben's portrait of Dan Willis, a villainous character in northern Georgia: "He was tall and gaunt and wore a broad-brimmed hat, a cotton checked shirt, jean trousers supported by a raw-hide belt, and a pair of tall boots which, as he stood fiercely eying Garner, he angrily lashed with his riding-whip....His face was slightly flushed from drink, and his eyes had the glare even his best friends had learned to fear and tried to avoid."[2.]

Mr. Harben has possessed the happy faculty of concentrating much graphic description into a few words. We get a fairly distinct idea of a cracker's appearance from such a sentence as this: "His blue jean trousers were carelessly stuck into the tops of his clay-stained boots, and he wore a sack-coat, a 'hickory' shirt, and a leather belt."[3.]

1. An Idyl of "Sinkin' Mount'in", in Harry Stillwell Edwards' Two Runaways and Other Stories, pages 63-64.
2. Will N. Harben's Mam' Linda, page 69.
3. The Heresy of Abner Calihan, in Will N. Harben's Northern

Or a sentence like this: "He threw his tobacco-quid away, noisily washed out his mouth, and took a long drink from the gourd dipper."[1] The following is one of Mr. Harben's crackers a little more in detail: "With his pitchfork on his shoulder, a few minutes later Abner Calihan came up to the back door of his house. He wore no coat, and but one frayed suspender supported his patched and baggy trousers. His broad, hairy breast showed through the opening in his shirt. His tanned cheeks and neck were corrugated, his hair and beard long and reddish brown. His brow was high and broad, and a pair of blue eyes shone serenely beneath his shaggy brows."[2]

Joel Chandler Harris thus delineates the character and appearance of Teague Poteet, a moonshiner of the Hog Mountain Range in Georgia: "By knocking the sheriff of the county over the head with a chair, and putting a bullet through a saloon-keeper who bullied everybody, Poteet won the reputation of being a man of marked shrewdness and common-sense, and Gullettsville was proud of him, in a measure. But he never liked Gullettsville. He wore a wool hat, a homespun shirt, jeans pantaloons, and cotton suspenders, and he never could bring himself into thorough harmony with the young men who wore ready-made clothes, starched shirts, and beaver hats; nor was his ideal of feminine beauty reached by the village belles, with their roach-combs, their red and yellow ribbons, and their enormous flounces. In the mountains, he was to the manner born; in the village, he was keenly alive to the presence and pressure of the exclusiveness that is the basis of all society, good, bad, or indifferent; and it stirred his venom."[3]

About Teague's wife Mr. Harris writes: "Whatever was feminine about her was of that plaintive variety that may be depended upon to tell the story of whole generations of narrow, toilsome, and unprofitable lives."[4] Further she is seen: "As for Puss Poteet, she sat and

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1. The Heresy of Abner Calihan, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches, page 258.
2. Ibid., page 270.
3. At Teague Poteet's, in Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, and Other (Sketches in Black and White, page 43.
4. Ibid., page 45.

rocked herself and rubbed snuff, and regarded her daughter as one of the profound mysteries. She was in a state of perpetual bewilderment and surprise, equalled only by her apparent indifference."[1].

A cracker woman is thus described by Will N. Harben in the beginning of one of his stories: "Lucinda Gibbs stood in the corner of the rail fence behind her cottage. Her face was damp with perspiration, and her heavy iron-gray hair had become disarranged and hung down her back below the skirt of her gingham sun-bonnet. She was raking the decayed leaves and dead weeds from her tender strawberry sprouts and mentally calculating on an abundant crop of the luscious fruit later in the spring."[2].

We are introduced to a lowly home in the mountains of Georgia by Joel Chandler Harris in the following paragraphs:

"Presently you will hear a cowbell jingling somewhere in the distance, and ten to one you will meet a ten-year-old boy in the road, his breeches hanging by one suspender and an old wool hat flopping on the back of his head. The boy will conduct you cheerfully if not gayly along the road, and in a little while you will hear the hens cackling in Mrs. Pruett's horse lot. This will give the lad an excuse to run on ahead of you. He will exclaim, with as much energy as his plaintive voice can command:—

"'Oh, Lordy! them plegged dogs is done run the ole dominicker hen off'n the nest.'

Whereupon he will start to running and pretend to go to the horse lot. But it is all a pretense, for when you come in sight of the house you will see three or four, maybe a half-dozen, white-headed children on the fence watching for you, and if you have said a kind word to the boy who volunteered to be your guide, Mrs. Pruett herself will be standing on the porch, the right arm stretched across her

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1. At Teague Poteet's, in Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White, page 54.
2. A Rural Visiter, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches,

ample bosom, so that the hand may serve as a rest for the elbow of the left arm, which is bent so that the reed stem of her beloved pipe may be held on a level with her good-humored mouth. You will have time to notice, as your horse ascends the incline that leads to the big gate, that the house is a very comfortable one for the mountains, neatly weather-boarded and compactly built, with four rooms and a kitchen. Two boxwood plants stand sentinel inside the gate, and are, perhaps, the largest you have ever seen. There is also a ragged hedge of privet, which seems to lack thrift.

"Mrs. Pruett will turn first to the right and then to the left. Seeing no one but the children, she will call out, in a penetrating, but not unpleasant, voice:—

"'Where on the face of the yeth is Sary's Tom?' Forth from the house will come the boy you met on the road. 'Can't you move?' Mrs. Pruett will say. 'Yander's the stranger a-wonderin' an' a-reck'nin' what kind of a place he's come to, an' here's ever'body a-standin' aroun' an' a-star-gazin' an' a-suckin' the'r thumbs. Will you stir 'roun', Tom, er shill I go out an' take the stranger's hoss? Ax 'im to come right in—an', heer! you Mirandy! fetch out that big rockin'— cheer! '"[1].

There is a great difference in the dwellings and ways of living of various individuals and families who may be dubbed with the epithet of cracker. Will N. Harben describes a room in the home of a poor cracker family thus: "The room was nothing but a lean-to shed walled with upright slabs and floored with puncheons. The bedstead was a crude wooden frame supported by perpendicular saplings fastened to the floor and rafters. The cracks in the wall were filled with mud, rags, and newspapers. Bunches of dried herbs hung above his head, and piles of old clothing and agricultural implements lay about indiscriminately. Disturbed by the light, a hen flew from her nest behind

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1. The Cause of the Difficulty, in Joel Chandler Harris's Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War, pages 347-349.

a dismantled loom, and with a loud cackling went out at the door."[1]. From this scene of squalid poverty let us turn to the home of a prosperous cracker farmer, which the same author describes: "Calihan's house was a four-roomed log building which had been weather-boarded on the outside with upright unpainted planks. On the right side of the house was an orchard, and beneath some apple-trees near the door stood an old-fashioned cider-press, a pile of acid-stained rocks which had been used as weights in the press, and numerous tubs, barrels, jugs, and jars, and piles of sour-smelling refuse, over which buzzed a dense swarm of honey-bees, wasps, and yellow-jackets. On the other side of the house, in a chip-strewn yard, stood cords upon cords of wood, and several piles of rich pine-knots and charred pine-logs, which the industrious farmer had on rainy days hauled down from the mountains for kindling-wood. Behind the house was a great log barn and a stable-yard, and beyond them lay the cornfields and the lush green meadow, where a sinuous line of willows and slender cane-brakes marked the course of a little creek."[2].

A familiar object in cracker fiction is the country store. The following is a typical one: "It proved to be a fair location, for there was considerable travel along the two main roads, and as Filmore was postmaster his store became the general meeting-point for everybody living within ten miles of the spot. He kept for sale, as he expressed it, 'a little of everything, from shoe-eyes to a sack of guano'. Indeed, a sight of his rough shelves and unplaned counters, filled with cakes of tallow, beeswax and butter, bolts of calico, sheeting and ginghams, and the floor and porch heaped with piles of skins, cases of eggs, coops of chickens, and cans of lard, was enough to make an orderly housewife shudder with horror."[3].

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1. The Tender Link, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches, page 290.
2. The Heresy of Abner Calihan, in Will N. Harven's Northern Georgia Sketches, page 267.
3. Ibid., page 256.

From the earliest accounts of the cracker in fiction, there has been some kind of provision made for the education of the children. At first the schoolhouses and courses of instruction were derived from crude ideas and productive of strange results. The Turn Out in Longstreet's Georgia Scenes relates how the school master, Michael St. John, had to battle his way into his schoolhouse or yield a holiday to the urchins who defended the building from the master like knights defending a stronghold. A large portion of Johnston's Dukesborough Tales is about the education of the young Georgian before the war. The author has produced an effective contrast between the tyrannical rule of the ignorant schoolmaster, who loomed large with hickory in hand, and the sane, sympathetic instruction later given by a capable, conscientious teacher. Under the former method boys and girls alike were whipped for missing their recitations; and inflicting the punishment apparently gave the schoolmaster keen delight. Mothers and fathers upheld the system. "Parents in those days loved their children, as well as now; but they had some strange ways of showing their love. The strangest of all was the evident satisfaction which the former felt when the latter were whipped at school. While they held a notion that education was a thing desirable, it was believed that the impartation of it needed to be conducted in mysterious ways."[1].

The following paragraphs show cracker children in the old-fashioned school:

"The teacher was sitting in his chair looking through the window in a musing mood. Suddenly a little girl cried out: 'Mist' Ove't'n, can't you make Abel Kitch'n quit a-keepin' a-constant a-makin' mouths at me with his ole nose?'

"Overton started. Abel immediately responded:

"'I ain't a-doin' no sich thing, Mist' Ove't'n, and the gal know

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1. How Mr. Bill Williams Took The Responsibility, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, pages 50-51.

I ain't. I wer jis' a-settin' here and a-gittin' my lessin, and I wa'n't a-studyin' about the gal.'

"'He know he wern't,' she replied; 'he wer a-makin' mouths at me with his ole nose.'

"Abel persisted in denying the charge; but it occurred to him to endeavor to divert the master's attention from himself, or at least to have others joined in the punishment.

"'I never done no sich thing,' he insisted; 'and Asa Boatright he cussed, he did; and Bill Jones and Sam Pate they been a-fightin' down to the spring.'"[1.]

Modern fiction about the cracker shows how ideas concerning education have advanced. Will N. Harben's Abner Daniel, for instance, illustrates how the best cultural training has been afforded the sons and daughters of parents who themselves had of necessity struggled without many advantages besides character.

Southern fiction represents Georgia as the home of genuine democracy. Character not wealth determines the intimacy existing between neighboring families. This spirit is illustrated in the following words of Joel Chandler Harris: "As may be supposed, Aunt Sally and little Billy didn't wear fine clothes nor put on any airs. Living in middle Georgia (the most democratic region, socially, in the world), they had no need for either the one or the other."[2.] And R. M. Johnston says of a certain class in Georgia, "There was ever among these poor a sense of dignity that is not always to be seen elsewhere."[3.] The same democratic spirit commented upon by Harris is still further seen in Will N. Harben's Abner Daniel and Mam' Linda.

Georgia authors have loved the cracker's traits of neighborliness, sympathy, and kindness of heart. Mr. Harben in Jim Trundle's Crisis has told the story of a shiftless vagabond, negligent of his wife and

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1. Old Friends and New, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, page 157.
2. A Bold Deserter, in Joel Chandler Harris's Tales of the Home Folks (in Peace and War, page 186.
3. Old Friends and New, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough

children's happiness, who nevertheless has real love and tenderness in his soul and who is finally awakened to a realization of his own better nature. Sister Todhunter's Heart, by Harry Stillwell Edwards, has as its theme the kindness of a big, rough-speaking cracker woman, displayed in the way in which she applies her simple remedies to save a sick baby's life. Mrs. Parsons, a cracker woman in Harben's Mam' Linda, feeling sure that a young negro is innocent of a murder which he has been arrested for, holds the deputy sheriff until the negro escapes. A neighborly habit in northern Georgia, mentioned by Mr. Harris, is that of the women who live some distance apart "'picking up' their work and spending the day with each other."[1] The same writer stresses family loyalty as being among the Georgia mountaineers the same as other writers have shown it to be among the mountaineers of Tennessee and Kentucky.

In the earliest cracker fiction there is a lavish bestowal of titles upon characters. "Colonel" is well enough known as a merely honorary title in a number of the Southern States. "Major" and "squire" are likewise found as favorites among the crackers. William Tapnan Thompson's Major Jones—a lover, not a soldier—is a noted example of the holder of the former. The following quotation from A. B. Longstreet makes clear the use of the latter: "Archibald had been a justice of the peace in his day (and where is the man of his age in Georgia who has not?); consequently, he was called 'Squire Sims. It is the custom in this state, when a man has once acquired a title, civil or military, to force it upon him as long as he lives; hence the countless number of titled personages who are introduced in these sketches."[2]

The cracker's lovemaking scenes in Southern fiction are amusing and entertaining. And R. M. Johnston states, "A country wedding in Georgia, in the times whereof I write, was a thing worth going to."[3]

1. At Teague Poteet's, in Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White, page 82.
2. The Shooting-Match, in Augustus Baldwin Longstreet's Georgia Scenes, page 200.
3. Old Friends and New, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, page 237.

Further, he writes concerning the supper and dance following the marriage: "All the neighbors were invited, men, women, and children; and most of them went. Pig, lamb, turkey, chicken, duck, pea-fowl, goose, partridge, pigeon, cake, syllabub."[1]

Longstreet in his Georgia Scenes mentions dancing, gander pulling, and shooting for beef as forms of recreation among the crackers before the war. The dance has survived, but the cruel sport of gander pulling does not appear in stories of modern Georgia. It has either disappeared or remains only in remote mountain sections.

The cracker as a rule is strictly religious. He attends revivals, and the emotionalism to be found in them appeals to him. The camp-meeting is a big occasion. In the country churches the women sit on one side of the aisle and the men on the other. The preacher is usually considered an authority not to be disputed. As the church allegiance of the tidewater aristocrat is Episcopal and the Creole Roman Catholic, the prevailing religious influence of the cracker is Methodist or Baptist. We find in stories of the cracker some characters who, lax in many respects, maintain a regard for their relation to the meeting-house and the Scriptures. For example, Uncle Jake, in Joel Chandler Harris's At Teague Poteet's, drinks his moonshine constantly, but has a decided respect for St. Paul, whom he repeatedly misquotes. Elder Brown's Backslide by Harry Stillwell Edwards is a story of a cracker church-worker who yields to the temptation of drink and falls from grace.

Equally firm as his own belief is the cracker's insistence upon his brethren in the faith holding steadfast to the dogmas of the meeting-house—the accepted orthodoxy of the community. Will N. Harben's novel, Abner Daniel, and short story, The Heresy of Abner Calihan, contain illustrations of this. In the former, the genial old friend

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1. Old Friends and New, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, page 238.

of the whole community, Abner Daniel, is threatened with explusion from the church. The first charge is "his remark about the stars havin' people on 'em ever' bit an' grain as worthy o' salvation as us all."[1] The second charge is profanity:

"'Brother Daniel ,' the preacher began, suddenly, 'charges has been preferred agin you on the score that you are a profane man. What have you got to say on that line?'

"Abner bent his head and spat down into the hopper-shaped box in the aisle.

"'I hardly know, brother Dole,' he said. 'It's all owin' to what profanity is an' what it hain't. I don't know that I ever used but one word out o' the general run, an'that is "dern". I don't believe thar's any more harm in sayin' "dern" than "scat", ur gruntin' when thar's no absolute call fer it. I don't know as anybody knows what it means. I don't. I've axed a number o' times, but nobody could tell me, so I knowed it wasn't patented anyway. Fer a long time I 'lowed nobody used it but me. I met a feller from up in Yankeedom that said "darn", an' another from out West that said "dang", so I reckon they are all three in a bunch.'"[2]

The third charge uttered by the preacher is: "A report has gone round among the members that you said that red-handed murderer who killed a man over in Fannin' an' was hung, an' passed on without a single prayer fer pardon to his Maker—that he'd stand a chance fer redemption. In all my experience I've never heerd sech a dangerous doctrin' as that, brother Daniel—never, as I myself hope to be redeemed."[3]

The sterling character of a Georgia farmer and his wife is shown when Mr. And Mrs. Bishop, in Abner Daniel, are unwilling to practice

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1. Will N. Harben's Abner Daniel, Page 107.
2. Ibid., pages 109-110.
3. Ibid., pages 110-111.

deception on the New England purchaser of their timber lands. Mr. Bishop says, "I want money to help me out o' my scrape, but I don't want to trick no man, Yankee or what not, into toatin' my loads."[1].

Not all crackers, however, are so scrupulous. Shrewdness is a characteristic of many. The horse-swap between the boy Blossom and old man Peter Ketch, related in Longstreet's Georgia Scenes, in which the boy gives his horse Bullet, with its sore back well concealed, for old Kit, that turns out to be both blind and deaf, illustrates the cracker's readiness to turn a trick in trade. Will N. Harben's unkempt character, Pole Baker, in the novels, Abner Daniel, Pole Baker, and Mam' Linda, abounds with native shrewdness and executive ability. Joel Chandler Harris's cracker, Billy Sanders, in Gabriel Tolliver and The Shadow Between his Shoulder Blades, is shrewd to the point of being a genius.

Possession of physical prowess and love of displaying it may be found among the qualities of the cracker as he is represented in fiction. The Fight, in Longstreet's Georgia Scenes, draws its theme from the old-fashioned doting on the community bully. In modern stories, such characters as Teague Poteet and Pole Baker continue to uphold the honor of champions who make their personal power felt.

In direct contrast with the landed aristocrat of the South the cracker has usually maintained a strong aversion to the negro. Either without enough wealth to own slaves or without a desire to own them, the cracker before the Civil War saw the negro from a different point of view from that of the landed aristocrat. Joel Chandler Harris's darky, Mingo, says about a cracker woman: "Miss F'raishy she hate de common run er niggers like dey wuz pizen."[2]. In the same story we are given the reason why one particular cracker was not a slaveholder:

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1. Will N. Harben's Abner Daniel, page 153.
2. Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, page 26.

"Hit useter be a common sayin' in Jones, an' cle'r 'cross into Jasper, that pa would 'a' bin a rich man an' 'a' owned niggers if it hadn't but 'a' bin bekase he sot his head ag'in stintin' of his stomach."[1]. Harben's A Humble Abolitionist is a story which shows the cracker's unfitness by nature and breeding, for becoming an owner of slaves. Pete Gill, a cracker, was given a negro slave in settlement of a mortgage. "'Big Joe might do a sight wuss'n to belong to me,' he said warmly. 'I don't know as we-uns'll have any big hall for 'im to cavort about in, nur anybody any wuss'n yore sort to come to see us, but we pay our debts an' have a plenty t'eat.'"[2]. But he did not know what to do with the negro, until he solved his perplexing problem by freeing him.

The feeling of the cracker toward the slave was reciprocated by the latter. Thus Joel Chandler Harris refers to the attitude of Mom Bi, a slave woman in South Carolina: "The 'sandhillers'—the tackies—that marketed their poor little crops in and around the village, were the special objects of her aversion, and she lost no opportunity of harassing them."[3].

In districts well removed from negro homes may be found the intensest feeling against the blacks. The "hill-billies" of north Georgia are easily stirred up against them. Other crackers are more tolerant. For example, we have these words from Mr. Harris's story, The Old Bascom Place: "'Well,' said Mr. Grissom, stroking his unshorn face, 'you know what the sayin' is: Niggers'll be niggers even ef you whitewash 'em twice a week.'"[4].

It is a mistaken idea that supposes the average poor man in the Southern States to be an oppressor of the negro. He is willing enough to grant the negro just rights. But he stops at the point where the

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1. Joel Chandler Harris's Mingo, page 13.
2. A Humble Abolitionist, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches, page 18.
3. Mom Bi, in Joel Chandler Harris's Balaam and his Master, and Other Sketches, page 175.
4. The Old Bascom Place, in Joel Chandler Harris's Balaam and his

granting of undue privileges will work harm to both races. Abner Daniel voices the cracker's sentiment—and the sentiment of most Southerners—on the subject of negro education when he says, "I wisht I could meet some o' them durn big Yankees that are a-sendin' the'r money down heer an' buildin' fine schools to educate niggers an' neglectin' the'r own race beca'se it fit agin 'em. You cayn't hardly beat larnin' into a nigger's head, an' it ud be only common-sense to spend money whar it ud do the most good. I 'ain't got nothin' agin a nigger bein' larnt to read an' write, but I cayn't stomach the'r bein' forced ahead o' deservin' white folks sooner'n the Lord counted on. Them kind o' Yankees is the same sort that makes pets o' dogs, an' pampers 'em up when pore white children is in need of food an' affection."[1].

The man expressing these sentiments had acquired his ideas from experience. He had seen slavery in existence, had served in the Confederate army, and had remained in Georgia after the war. Many of his class had followed careers similar to his own. Without slave property, they had, at the outbreak of the Civil War, volunteered from sheer principle and had fought under the Confederate colors. Joel Chandler Harris's stories furnish a number of examples. Little Billy in A Bold Deserter,[2]. Mr. Billy Sanders in The Shadow Between His Shoulder Blades, and Bill Chadwick in A Conscript's Christmas[3]. are some of them. The crackers, however, were not unanimous in their support of the Confederacy. Especially in the mountain districts there was much lukewarmness and some open hostility to the cause of secession. Will N. Harben's The Courage of Ericson is a story of a cracker in the Confederate army whose sweetheart's relatives were Unionists. We perceive the division of sympathies in northern Georgia

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1. Will N. Harben's Abner Daniel, pages 77-78.
2. In Joel Chandler Harris's Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War.
3. In Balaam and his Master, and Other Sketches.

from the words of Ericson about his sweetheart: "Her folks wuz Union... Her'n tuk one side, an' me an' mine t'other. The cabin she used to live in is jest beyond them woods at the foot o' the fust mountain, 'Old Crow'. She's thar yit. A feller that seed 'er a week ago told me. She 'lowed ef I jined the Confederacy I needn't ever look her way any more. Her father an' only brother went to the Union side, an' she blamed me fer wantin' to go with my folks. She is as proud as Lucifer. I wisht we'd parted friendlier. I hain't been in a single fight without wantin' that one thing off my mind."[1] Desertion was frequent among the "hill-billies". Israel Spurlock in Harris's A Conscript's Christmas is a Confederate deserter. And the same writer shows in The Cause of the Difficulty[2] how Georgia mountaineers dodged Confederate conscription in 1863. Still further Mr. Harris reveals the attitude of a certain class in the war: "The truth is, the Poteets and the Pringles and the Hightowers of Hog Mountain had their own notions of what constituted Union men. They desired to stay in the United States on their own terms. If nobody pestered them, they pestered nobody."[3]

Withal, the cracker is characterized by a distinct crudeness. In manners, appearance, speech, actions, and ideas a certain rawness is evident. This fact made the cracker a proper subject for the humorists' pens. In Dukesborough Tales Mrs. Williams's intercession with her son Bill's sweetheart for Bill's restoration to his lady's favor will illustrate slightly: "Ah, my dear Karline, you don't know that child. Yes; hit's you that broke it [Bill's heart]. He's a-dyin' for you day by day. He jes' goes about, and goes about. He ain't got no stomach for his vittals. His westcoats has had to be

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1. The Courage of Ericson, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches, page 230.
2. In J. C. Harris's Tales of the Home Folks in Peace and War.
3. At Teague Poteet's, in J. C. Harris's Mingo, and Other Sketches in Black and White, page 52.

tuck up two blessed times; and he don't, and I sometimes think he can't, tie his shoes. He scacely ever says anything to me nor nobody else; and my feelin's is powerful, that, without some change, and that soon, the poor child is a-goin' to lose of his senses. Hit was only last night when I was a-tryin' to 'courage him up a leetle bit, says he to me, says he, 'Let me alone, mammy, I'm moloncholly,' and then he got up and tried to sing that hime—

'An' let this feebyul body fail,
An' let it faint or die;'

and he broke down befo' he got through the very first veerse, and went 'long off to bed. Oh, my goodness blessed me!"[1.]

The cracker's dialect is decidedly crude. It is distinct from the negro's dialect, but like the latter it is chiefly the product of ignorance and carelessness. The modern writers of fiction who have treated the cracker have given tone to their work by a discreet use of the natural phraseology of the class they have tried to represent. Various quotations used in this chapter have already served as fair specimens of the cracker's unadorned speech.

The Tender Link, a story by Mr. Harben, shows the absence of all expression of sentiment among relatives of the poorer class in northern Georgia. The plot is shaped on the return of a son who had gone from his poor home and achieved success. We thus see the returned son with his mother: "He took one of her hard, thin hands and bent over her. Should he kiss her? She had not taught him to do so when he was a child, and he had never kissed her in his life, but he had seen the world and grown wiser. He turned her face toward him and pressed his lips to hers. She was much surprised, and drew herself from him and wiped her mouth with a corner of the sheet, but he knew she was pleased."[2.] In this respect the inhabitant of the northern Georgia mountains is very similar to the mountaineer of Kentucky and Tennessee.

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1. Old Friends and New, in Richard Malcolm Johnston's Dukesborough Tales, pages 234-235.
2. The Tender Link, in Will N. Harben's Northern Georgia Sketches,

In fact, the type that most resembles the cracker is the Tennessee mountaineer. The homely appearance, the crude speech, and the restricted life of each type invites the comparison. Yet the difference is wide. Fiction usually represents the cracker in middle Georgia, and often in northern Georgia, as good-humored and jovial —not morose like the mountaineer across the State boundary; industrious, enterprising, shrewd, and capable—not torpid and indolent. Many crackers have been made of the stuff which produces human success. They have risen to higher levels, made comfortable homes, and reared their children to be in a position to cope with men of all ranks. Members of the younger generation from the best parents, like Alan and Adele Bishop in Abner Daniel, have been able to discard the careless dialect of their fathers, to know and appreciate the cultural value of things, and to broaden their horizon of life. This result has come because the basic qualities inherited from their forefathers were sound.

Chapter XII

THE MOUNTAINEER; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE VIRGINIA—KENTUCKY BORDER

The most romantic type of to-day in Southern fiction is the mountaineer. And the most romantic representatives of this type are found on the borderland of Virginia and Kentucky, "two sister States, whose skirts are stitched together with pine and pin-oak along the crest of the Cumberland."[1].

To John Fox, Jr. belongs the undisputed honor of putting the Virginia-Kentucky mountaineer into literature. In the words of Thomas Nelson Page: "To describe his work justly it should be said that he chose, or possibly was chosen by the most picturesque and romantic phase of American life still remaining on the continent and pictured it with such unconscious art that we know instinctively that his pictures are true. He had at once the sense of proportion and the instinct for form."[2]. Still further Page says of Fox: "He has presented well-nigh in its entirety the life of the people in which the primeval passions may still flame, but above which rule the primeval virtues—of the people whose women are still feminine and alluring, and whose men are still gallant and high-spirited; amid whom chivalry still survives and men 'kneel only to women and to God.'"[3].

Into his stories of the Cumberland Mountains Mr. Fox has infused a sentiment that was the natural product of his narrative art. Truth to the actual mountain conditions and characters, however, was never forgotten. The general opinion of those who know the Virginia-Kentucky border is plainly that he did his subjects justice. Fox knew

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Trail of the Lonesome Pine, page 369.
2. Thomas Nelson Page's John Fox, in Scribner's Magazine, December, 1919, page 679.
Ibid., pages 682-683.

his places and his people; he painted his portraits from life. "He...wrote of the 'little race' shut in with gray hill and shining river, with 'strength of heart and body and brain taught by Mother Nature to stand together, as each man of the race was taught to stand alone; protect his women; mind his own business; think his own thoughts, and meddle not at all'...He always declared that he could write only in the mountains, and, indeed, the great volume of his work was created amid the towering and inspiring mountains of his love."[1.]

It may be felt that the words of the author referring to his sister and to his friend, "the Blight", apply to his readers in general when he says; "I was taking them, according to promise, where the feet of other women than mountaineers had never trod—beyond the crest of the Big Black—to the waters of the Cumberland—the lair of moonshiner and feudsman, where is yet pocketed a civilization that, elsewhere, is long ago gone."[2.]

Among the rhododendron-clad mountain spurs, shut out by mountain walls from the rush of America's commercial life, are descendants of the hardy pioneers who struck west from the tidewater and Piedmont sections of Virginia and halted before reaching the bluegrass region of Kentucky. They are men and women of the Anglo-Saxon race, with some of the virtues of that race preserved, though narrowed and pinched by the limitations which their environment has imposed. The country itself, usually rocky and sterile, has yielded a meager existence. The elements in the pioneers' character which halted them in the mountain fastnesses have in large amount been transmitted to their offspring; while the progressive spirit of the westward moving men has been allowed to lie dormant through generations.

A glance into a mountaineer's cabin will reveal the narrow life

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1. Thomas Nelson Page's John Fox, in Scribner's Magazine, December, 1919, page 679.
2. John Fox, Jr.'s A Knight of the Cumberland, page 4.

into which he is born and the crude circumstances amid which he is reared. "There, all in one room, lighted by a huge wood-fire, rafters above, puncheon floor beneath—cane-bottomed chairs and two beds the only furniture—'pap', barefooted, the old mother in the chimneycorner with a pipe, strings of red pepperpods, beans and herbs hanging around and above, a married daughter with a child at her breast, two or three children with yellow hair and barefeet—all looking with all their eyes at the two visitors who had dropped upon them from another world."[1].

The mountaineer's primitiveness in its many aspects is well described in the following paragraph:

"Many times Hale went over to Lonesome Cove and with every visit his interest grew steadily in the little girl and in the curious people over there, until he actually began to believe in the Hon. Sam Budd's anthropological theories. In the cabin on Lonesome Cove was a crane swinging in the big stone fireplace, and he saw the old step-mother and June putting the spinning wheel and the loom to actual use. Sometimes he found a cabin of unhewn logs with a puncheon floor, clapboards for shingles and wooden pin and auger holes for nails; a batten wooden shutter, the logs filled with mud and stones and holes in the roof for the wind and the rain. Over a pair of buck antlers sometimes lay the long heavy home-made rifle of the backwoodsman—sometimes even with a flintlock and called by some pet feminine name. Once he saw the hominy block that the mountaineers had borrowed from the Indians, and once a handmill like the one from which the one woman was taken and the other left in biblical days. He struck communities where the medium of exchange was still barter, and he found mountaineers drinking metheglin still as well as moonshine. Moreover, there were still log-rollings, house-warmings, corn-shuckings, and quilting

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s A Knight of the Cumberland, page 29.

parties, and sports were the same as in pioneer days—wrestling, racing, jumping, and lifting barrels. Often he saw a cradle of bee-gum, and old Judd had in his house a fox-horn made of hickory bark which even June could blow. He ran across old-world superstitions, too, and met one seventh son of a seventh son who cured children of rash by blowing into their mouths. And he got June to singing trans-atlantic songs, after old Judd said one day that she knowed the 'miserablest song he'd ever heerd'—meaning the most sorrowful. And, thereupon, with quaint simplicity, June put her heels on the rung of her chair, and with her elbows on her knees, and her chin on both bent thumbs, sang him the oldest version of 'Barbara Allen' in a voice that startled Hale by its power and sweetness. She knew lots more 'song-ballets', she said shyly, and the old man had her sing some songs that were rather rude, but were as innocent as hymns from her lips."[1].

Clan spirit is a natural product of the primitive and narrow life of the mountaineer. Family ties count for everything. The head of a clan, usually a grey-haired, grey-bearded old patriarch, has his sons and nephews and grandsons at his beck and call, as obligated to do his bidding, be it fair or foul, as was ever vassal bound to serve the will of his overlord in mediaeval times. In The Trail of the Lonesome Pine Devil Judd Tolliver and old Buck Falin, and in The Heart of the Hills old Jason Hawn and old Aaron Honeycutt are typical clan leaders.

A feud lasts long. At some remote time perhaps, a trifle has started a quarrel between families. A member of one family is murdered; a kinsman of the murdered man retaliates. Truces are called, but the feudal bitterness lingers, and when opportunity offers, the bloodshed begins anew. The mountaineer is born into an atmosphere of

1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Trail of the Lonesome Pine, pages 98-100.

hatred. He "hates as long as he remembers and—he never forgets."[1] The manner of waging feudal warfare is barbarous in the extreme. Out of the laurel the rifle of some ambuscaded feudsman flashes; the victim, who, all unconscious of any lurking danger, has been toiling slowly up a rocky path, falls and is left to die alone.

A sort of hard fatalism results from such a barbaric system. And the natures of the women too become hardened, for it is their lot to sit silently by the corpse of murdered father or husband and dry-eyed to follow the rude pine coffin to the little burial place on the ridge. The women not only submit to the old system of revenge, but, when they have suffered a personal loss, they encourage brother or son to become the avenger.

The Civil War produced a division in the Kentucky mountains just as it did in the Kentucky bluegrass section. In The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come Joel Turner and his sons supported the cause of the Confederacy, while Chad Buford, representing a large number of the Cumberland mountaineers, took the side of the Union. Intensity of feeling sometimes divided families, an extreme illustration being Rebel Jerry and Yankee Jake, the giant Dillon brothers, each of whom throughout the course of the Civil War sought the other's life.

The individual mountaineer is generally pictured to us in the pages of fiction as a solemnly severe man, robust in stature, fierce if his wrath is kindled, ignorant of the outside world, and suspicious of the "furriners" who come from that world into his own domain.

Ardor characterizes the mountaineer in love or hate. If he is once a friend, he is always a friend, unless his confidence is betrayed. If he has cause to feel himself aggrieved, his passion smoulders, kindles, and bursts into flame. This trait is splendidly illustrated in the character of young Dave Tolliver. Dave loved his cousin June,

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Trail of the Lonesome Pine, page 159.

and when she bestowed her affections upon Jack Hale, he swore desperate revenge. It was not so much the depth of Dave's love for June that caused his outbursts of anger as the fact that another man was winning the prize which by all the rights and precedents of his folk should have been his.

One does not wonder when he finds the mountaineer jealously guarding what he considers his rights. And in his mind his rights embrace most things that his will decress. Distilling liquor from the corn which he raises on his own patch of land is, in his judgment, entirely his own business. Consequently the revenue officer is his enemy and deserves an enemy's fate. Immediately we can see a cause for the mountaineer's suspicion of strangers and a reason for the stranger's being halted and forced to tell his name and business before he may proceed on his way.

The women of the Virginia-Kentucky mountains are the real characters that allure the readers of novels dealing with their life. Though they become old and haggard very quickly and are too frequently mere drudges in the homes of their husbands, the mountain women when young are said to possess an abundance of natural beauty. Thomas Nelson Page considers Fox's descriptions of his heroines "among the most charming pictures in our literature."[1] When we think of June Tolliver, Mavis Hawn, and Melissa, we are quite ready to believe that their charms rival those of bluegrass heroines such as Marjorie Pendleton and Margaret Dean.

The young folk of the mountain novels give the books their vigor and life, prophesying as they do the possibilities that lie in the mountaineer's character whenever it gets its opportunity to expand. The following description of June Tolliver, still a child, is a fair portrait of the mountain girl:

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1. Thomas Nelson Page's John Fox, in Scribner's Magazine, December, 1919, page 682.

"Hale watched her while she munched a striped stick of peppermint. Her crimson bonnet had fallen from her sunlit hair and straight down from it to her bare little foot with its stubbed toe just darkening with dried blood, a sculptor would have loved the rounded slenderness in the curving long lines that shaped her brown throat, her arms and her hands, which were prettily shaped but so very dirty as to the nails, and her dangling bare leg. Her teeth were even and white, and most of them flashed when her red lips smiled. Her lashes were long and gave a touching softness to her eyes even when she was looking quietly at him, but there were times, as he had noticed already, when a brooding look stole over them, and then they were the lair for the mysterious loneliness that was the very spirit of Lonesome Cove. Some day that little nose would be long enough, and some day, he thought, she would be very beautiful."[1].

The most famous child hero of the Cumberlands is Chad Buford in The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come. The following comment is very just: "The story of 'Chad' adds another to our gallery of boys who belong to our national literature and to our personal memory, and in all the shining list there is none superior to this clear-eyed, solemn, simple, gallant mountain boy, drawn from the depths of a true artist's imagination and given to the world as at once the exponent and the paladin of the section of our race that represents the basic passions and principles of the Anglo-Saxon civilization."[2].

Charles Neville Buck, a Kentucky author, is John Fox's disciple in putting the Kentucky mountaineer into fiction. Samson and Sally South in Buck's The Call of the Cumberlands may well be compared with Jason and Mavis Hawn in Fox's The Heart of the Hills. Their traits are very similar. And Bad Anse Havey in Buck's The Battle Cry is as capable a clan leader as the more familiar Devil Judd.

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s The Trail of the Lonesome Pine, pages 81-82.
2. Thomas Nelson Page's John Fox, Jr. in Scribner's Magazine, December,

Always in novels and short stories the characters are best revealed in their own speech. Furthermore, for the most life-like results the author must put into the mouths of his heroes and heroines the language that is natural to them. Thus dialect comes into literature to give tone and completeness. The mountaineer's dialect is said to be "the decayed product of the language used by the Scotch-Irish about the time of the Revolutionary War." There is something very fascinating in the antiquated expressions and crude phraseology. Ignorance and indifference may account in part for the dialect, but isolation is at least equally responsible.

A discussion of the Virginia-Kentucky mountaineer would not be complete without mention of some of his social relations, his pleasures, his religion, and his virtues, however they may be revealed.

There is a distinct regard for the property rights of neighbors. When a feudsman is killed, his enemies do not try to despoil his goods. His wife and children are unmolested. In like manner the moral code of the mountains is generally represented as a very worthy one, worthily observed.

The fashion of courting in the Cumberlands is unique, and like other customs is the result of a narrow environment. The following account, in a mountaineer's dialect, explains the delicate process:

"Now, I hain't been a-raftin' logs down to the settlemints o' Kaintuck fer nigh on to twenty year fer nothin'. An' I know gallivantin' is diff'ent with us mountain fellers an' you-furriners, in the premises, anyways, as them lawyers up to court says; though I reckon hit's purty much the same after the premises is over. Whar you says 'courtin'', now, we says 'talkin' to'. Sallie Spurlock over on Fryin' Pan is a-talkin' to Jim Howard now. Sallie's sister hain't nuver talked to no man. An' whar you says 'making a call on a young lady', we says 'settin' up with a gal'! An', stranger, we does it.

We hain't got more'n one room hardly ever in these mountains, an' we're jes obleeged to set up to do any courtin' at all.

"Well, you go over to Sallie's to stay all night some time, an' purty soon atter supper Jim Howard comes in. The ole man an' the ole woman goes to bed, an' ef you keeps one eye open, you'll see Jim's cheer an' Sallie's cheer a-movin' purty soon, till they gets plumb together. Then, stranger, hit begins. Now I want ye to understand that settin' up means business. We don't low no foolishness in these mountains; an' 'f two fellers happens to meet at the same house, they jes makes the gal say which one she likes best, an' t'other one gits! Well, you'll see Jim put his arm 'round Sallie's neck an' whisper a long while—jes so. Mebbe you've noticed whut fellers we mountain folks air fer whisperin'. You've seed fellers a-whisperin' all over Hazlan on court day, hain't ye? Ole Tom Perkins 'll put his arm aroun' yo' neck an' whisper in yo' year ef he's ten mile out'n the woods. I reckon thar's jes so much devilment a-goin' on in these mountains, folks is naturally afeered to talk out loud.

"Well, Jim lets go an' Sallie puts her arm aroun' Jim's neck an' whispers a long while—jes so; an' 'f you happen to wake up anywhar to two o'clock in the mornin' you'll see jes that a-goin' on. Brother, that's settin' up."[1].

In the midst of the serious, sombre existence which is the mountaineer's lot there comes now and then a certain amount of funmaking and recreation, though this like other facts among the mountain people is of the crudest kind. Hilarity of the wilder sort attends occasions like the following: "Christmas is 'new Christmas' in Happy Valley. The women give scant heed to it, and to the men it means 'a jug of liquor, a pistol in each hand, and a galloping nag'. There had been target-shooting at Uncle Jerry's mill to see who should drink old

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1. Courtin' on Cutshin from John Fox, Jr.'s A Knight of the Cumberland and other stories, pages 203-205.

Jeb Mullins's moonshine and who should smell, and so good was the marksmanship that nobody went without his dram."[1].

Sometimes family and friends gather in a cabin, and, as the fiddle squeaks, the young men lead their partners forth on the puncheon floor. However, there is much conscientious objection to this form of amusement. "The word 'dance' is taboo among these Calvinists of the hills. They 'run sets' and 'play plays'—and these are against the sterner morals that prevail—but they do not dance."[2]. The following conversation between a young school teacher from the outside world and *Pleasant Trouble, a one-legged moonshiner,* illustrates the sentiment:

"'Pleasant,' said Miss Mary, 'you drink moonshine, don't you?'

"'Yes'm.'

"'You sometimes make it, don't you?'

"'I've been s'picioned.'

"'You were turned out of church once, weren't you, for shooting up a meeting?'

"'Yes,' was the indignant defense, 'but I proved to 'em that I was drunk, an' they tuk me back.' The girl had to laugh.

"'And yet you think dancing wrong?'

"'Yes'm.'

"The girl gave it up—so perfunctory and final was his reply."[3].

The mountaineer's religion is that which is brought to him by the circuit rider. The latter is always a power among his people. He finds a welcome at the homes, journeys with safety among opposing feudsmen, and preaches forcefully and fearlessly against the evils that are so easily perceived. His sermons flash with fire and savor of brimstone. The preacher, as in the case of Parson Small,[4]. may be a fighter as well as an exhorter and maker of prayers. Or, like

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1. John Fox, Jr.'s In Happy Valley, page 35.
2. Ibid., page 67.
3. Ibid., pages 68-69.
4. In John Fox, Jr.'s In Happy Valley.

Red Fox,[1] he may be a fanatic and deep-dyed villain. Usually, however, his words carry sincerity of feeling and a desire to do good.

Stoicism is almost as natural to the mountaineer as it was to the Indian. Hard though his lot may be, he is not the person to make idle complaint. The mountain woman is like her husband in the possession of this quality, and the children seem to be born with their parents' stoicism and fatalism.

An outstanding virtue of the mountaineer is his "unlimited hospitality". The statement, "Well, nobody air ever turned out'n doors in these mountains",[2] rings with literal truth. "'Take out, stranger,' said one old fellow, when there was nothing on the table but some bread and a few potatoes, 'have a tater. Take two of 'em —take damn nigh <u>all</u> of 'em.'"[3]

Perhaps the strongest thing to be remembered about the mountain character is that fiction pictures it as capable of great cultural training and development. The scion of feuds may in time be a leader among his people in prosperity and peace or he may go forth into the world and compete successfully with those who grew in the midst of luxury and refinement. The mountain girl may doff the homespun and grace the drawing room in neatly fitting satin. The sturdy racial qualities are the mountaineer's; contact with enlightening influences brings out the fact that he is no less a man than his brethren of the broad, outer spaces.

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1. In John Fox, Jr.'s <u>The Trail of the Lonesome Pine</u>.
2. <u>The Passing of Abraham Shivers</u>, from John Fox, Jr.'s <u>A Knight of the Cumberland</u> and other stories, pages 239-240.
3. John Fox, Jr.'s <u>The Trail of the Lonesome Pine</u>, page 100.

Chapter XIII

THE MOUNTAINEER; THE LOCAL COLOR OF THE TENNESSEE CUMBERLANDS

The Cumberland Mountains, that hold the border line of Virginia and Kentucky, extend in a southwesterly direction into eastern Tennessee. Moreover, this range in its Tennessee stretch has furnished scenes for novels and short stories as truly as have the mountains of the Virginia-Kentucky line. While the fiction of the Tennessee mountains possesses less of the feud glamor than the fiction of the Kentucky part of the range, the pen of Miss Mary N. Murfree ("Charles Egbert Craddock") has found among the Tennessee coves and settlements and has transferred to her pages characters that are now assured a firm place in American literature.

Montrose J. Moses, in The Literature of the South, writes: "Another phase of Southern life that has received treatment has been the poor white of the mountain, whom Charles Egbert Craddock (Mary Noailles Murfree) made her own pioneer province. For, while in the novels of Simms and Kennedy and Beverley Tucker, the class pushed from the tide-water district was occasionally referred to, there was no human sympathy bestowed upon the picture. From the time Mr. Howells and Mr. Aldrich, as editors of the Atlantic Monthly, mistook their contributor, under her nom de plume, for a man, until the present, Miss Murfree has never forsaken the essential outlines of her locality. If her types are contrasted with those of John Fox, Jr., who is as much her follower as Miss King is of Mr. Cable, it will be seen how different the pioneer mountain life is already from the mountain folk who have in general become accustomed to the presence of law, and who are beginning, with the approach of education, to recognize the necessity for order. The moonshiners, the peculiar supremacy of the circuit rider, the isolated blacksmith, the crossroads

shopkeeper, are changing, but not before Charles Egbert Craddock has caught a likeness on a canvas which adds distinction to American letters, no less than to Southern literature."[1].

In the Library of Southern Literature the following is said of Miss Murfree's work: "With fine narrative art, with intense dramatic power, and with the touch of keen human sympathy, she has given an insight into the lives, customs, traditions, superstitions, struggles, loves and longings of a curiously quaint, yet sturdy people, who, at least before the inroads of modern enterprise had brought them into a closer contact with a progressive civilization, were singularly separate from the unfamiliar world outside their restricted environment. It must be said, however, that Miss Murfree has taken an author's license, and, by confining her delineations of character and conduct to the more uncouth representatives of the mountain people, has given the impression that there is a more general and unvarying class life than actually exists. Her characters, while in many instances subtly portrayed and differentiated, are in the main of such a uniform type that they all appear, as another writer has said, to be drawn from the same model. Nevertheless, the fact that she deals with a community class which, because of the peculiarities of its environment and mode of life, is distinct from like grades of people in districts more accessible to educational and refining influences, only emphasizes the author's art and resources. Out of the monotony of general awkwardness and uncouthness, the overshadowing pervasiveness and sameness of the mountain impression, and the drawl of persistent and unchanging dialect, she has cleverly fashioned personalities, incidents, plots, and dénouements, with scenic settings that are marvelous in their picturesqueness and variations. Her heroes, whether they be tillers of the scantily productive hillsides, or

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1. Montrose J. Moses' The Literature of the South, pages 465-466.

whether they be 'moonshiners', herders, blacksmiths, traders, fanatical preachers, or refugees from justice, are given individualities that are clearly asserted in their rude manners and conduct under the influences of motives and passions that appeal to a common human nature."[1].

The Tennessee mountaineer as represented in the fiction of Miss Murfree is different from the Kentucky mountaineer as portrayed by Fox in three noticeable ways: he is more completely buried in his native environments, confining his loves and hates, his beliefs, desires, and deeds, to the fellow denizens of his mountain villages and communities; he is less bloodthirsty and feud-minded; and he is more prosaic.

Some appreciative critic of Thomas Hardy once wrote that in The Return of the Native "the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath" was the real hero of the novel, because the country so completely molded the characters and shaped the destinies of its inhabitants. One can make the same kind of statement about the settings of Miss Murfree's fiction. The influencing factor, directing or retarding the lives of the Tennessee mountaineer, is the country in which he dwells—the powerful Nature of which he is a part. The following, among many descriptions, is a typical setting:

"High above Lost Creek Valley towers a wilderness of pine. So dense is this growth that it masks the mountain whence it springs. Even when the Cumberland spurs, to the east, are gaunt and bare in the wintry wind, their deciduous forests denuded, their crags unveiled and grimly beetling, Pine Mountain remains a sombre, changeless mystery; its clifty heights are hidden, its chasms and abysses lurk unseen. Whether the skies are blue, or gray, the dark, austere line of its summit limits the horizon. It stands against the west like a barrier."[2].

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1. Article on Mary Noailles Murfree, by C. H. Baskette, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 3724.
2. Drifting Down Lost Creek, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the

Another scene, with its spell-binding effect as felt by a mountaineer, may here be viewed:

"That finite quality of the mind, aptly expressing itself in mensuration, might find a certain relief in taking note of the curious 'bald' itself,—seeming some three or four hundred bare acres on the summit. Wild grass grows upon its gradual slope; clumps of huckleberry bushes appear here and there; occasional ledges of rock crop out. A hardy flower will turn a smiling face responsive to the measured patronage of the chilly sunshine in this rare air. The solemnity of the silence is broken only by the occasional tinkling of cow-bells from the herds of cattle among the woods lower down on the mountain side.

"'I never kin git used ter it,' said Mink, desperately. 'I never kin git used ter hevin' sech dumbness about me an' seein' the time go so slow. 'Pears ter me some fower or five hundred year sence we eat brekfus',—an' I ain't hongry, nuther....Them cur'ous leetle woods air enough ter make a man 'low he hev got the jim-jams ez a constancy. I dunno what's in 'em! My flesh creeps whenever I go through 'em. I always feel like ef I look right quick I'll see suthin' awful,—witches, or harnts, or —I dunno! '"[1].

Again solemn surroundings are seen to influence the mountaineer: "There was an expression of settled melancholy on his face very usual with these mountaineers, reflected, perhaps, from the indefinable tinge of sadness that rests upon the Alleghany wilds, that hovers about the purpling mountain-tops, that broods over the silent woods, that sounds in the voice of the singing waters."[2].

Let us look at one of the homes in the Tennessee mountains. "A little log house surmounted the slope. It was quaintly awry, like most of the mountaineers' cabins, and the ridgepole, with its

1. Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Clouds, page 10.
2. A-Playin' of Old Sledge at the Settlemint, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, page 90.

irregularly projecting clapboards serrating the sky behind it, described a negligently oblique line. Its clay chimney had a leaning tendency, and was propped to its duty by a long pole. There was a lofty martin-house, whence the birds whirled fitfully. The rail fence inclosing the dooryard was only a few steps from the porch. There rested the genial afternoon sunshine. It revealed the spinning-wheel that stood near the wall; the shelf close to the door, with a pail of water and a gourd for the incidentally thirsty; the idle churn, its dasher on another shelf to dry; a rooster strutting familiarly in at the open door; and a newly hatched brood picking about among the legs of the splint-bottomed chairs, under the guidance of a matronly old 'Dominicky hen'."[1].

Another mountain home is thus described: "The little log cabin, set among its scanty fields, its weed-grown 'gyarden spot', and its few fruit-trees, was poor of its kind. The clapboards of its roof were held in place by poles laid athwart them, with large stones piled between to weight them down. The chimney was of clay and sticks, and leaned away from the wall. In a corner of the rickety rail fence a gaunt, razor-backed hog lay grunting drowsily. Upon a rude scaffold tobacco leaves were suspended to dry. Even the martin-house was humble and primitive: merely a post with a cross-bar, from which hung a few large gourds with a cavity in each, whence the birds were continually fluttering. Behind it all, the woods of the steep ascent seemed to touch the sky. The place might give a new meaning to exile, a new sentiment to loneliness."[2].

The interior of another cabin presents this picture: "A hickory fire dispensed alike warmth and light. The musical whir of a spinning-wheel added its unique charm. From the rafters depended numberless strings of bright red pepper-pods and ears of pop-corn;

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1. Drifting Down Lost Creek, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, pages 40-41.
2. Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Clouds, pages 36-37.

hanks of woolen and cotton yarn; bunches of medicinal herbs; brown gourds and little bags of seeds. On rude shelves against the wall were ranged cooking utensils, drinking vessels, etc., all distinguished by that scrupulous cleanliness which is a marked feature of the poor hovels of these mountaineers, and in striking contrast to the poor hovels of lowlanders. The rush-bottomed chairs, drawn in a semicircle before the rough, ill-adjusted stones which did duty as hearth, were occupied by several men, who seemed to be making the blacksmith a prolonged visit; various members of the family were humbly seated on sundry inverted domestic articles, such as wash-tubs, and splint-baskets made of white oak. There was circulating...a flat bottle, facetiously denominated 'tickler', readily emptied, but as readily replenished from a keg in the corner. Like the widow's cruse of oil, that keg was miraculously never empty. The fact of a still near by in the wild ravine might suggest a reason for its perennial flow. It was a good strong article of apple-brandy, and its effects were beginning to be distinctly visible."[1]

The men of the Tennessee mountains are represented as being rough, ungainly, hard featured. They move around with a lazy slouch and speak in a lazy drawl. They are ever ready to stop whatever little occupation they may be engaged in to hear a bit of news or to talk about any matter that may enter their minds. Their awkward appearance is not improved by their brown jeans clothes; nor is neatness added by their habit of almost constant tobacco-chewing. Representing the Tennessee mountaineer in his various pursuits are such men as the following: Jubal Perkins, proprietor of a tanyard, and Andy Byers, his helper; Ben Doaks, a herder; Old Man Griff, a miller; Jake Jessup, an indolent farm dweller; Tad Simpkins and 'Lijah Price, "idjit" boys; Birt Dicey, an industrious youth;

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1. The Star in the Valley, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, pages 137-138.

Gid Fletcher and Jerry Shaw, blacksmiths; Nathan Hoodendin, a lazy storekeeper, with the tyrannized boy Jer'miah doing his work; Pa'son Hiram Kelsey and Brother Jake Tobin, mountain preachers; 'Cajah Green, sheriff, and Jubal Tynes, constable; Bob Harshaw, country lawyer; Rick Tyler, Ruben Crabb, and Mink Lorey, refugees; Groundhog Cayce, with his five giant sons, and Sam Marvin, "Hongry Jeb" Peake, Dick Oscar, and Jack Boddy, moonshiners; Lame Jerry, an informer to the still hunters.

The last three of the above named characters are the creations of Sherwood Bonner, another Southern authoress who knew something of the lives of the Tennessee mountaineers. Five of her stories from her Dialect Tales are laid in the same country which furnished Miss Murfree with settings. The former's treatment of mountain conditions, however, is very meager.

Among the girls of the Tennessee mountains one of striking charm is now and then found, though the writer of fiction, to preserve the truth, must allow many homely female characters to play their parts. A description of Alethea Sayles, the heroine of In the Clouds, presents the mountain girl of the best sort: "Alethea looked speculatively down at the limited section of the cove visible from the Hollow above. Her hazel eyes were bright, but singularly grave. The soft sheen of her yellow hair served to definitely outline the shape of her head against the brown logs of the wall. The locks lay not in ripples, but in massive undulations, densely growing above her forehead, and drawn in heavy folds into a knot at the back of her head. She had the delicate complexion and the straight, refined lineaments so incongruous with the poverty-stricken mountaineer, so commonly seen among the class. Her homespun dress was of a dull brown. About her throat, of exquisite whiteness, was knotted a kerchief of the deepest saffron tint. Her hands and arms—for her sleeves were

rolled back—were shapely, but rough and sunembrowned. She had a nearly deliberate, serious manner that very approached dignity."[1].

And as Nature sometimes endowed the mountain girl with soft features, a beneficent Providence likewise could grant her the finest grained conscience and moral fiber. Alethea Sayles, just described, was a girl with an unusually acute sense of right. And Celia Shaw, the daughter of a drunken blacksmith, tramping fifteen miles to warn men she scorned that others were coming to shoot them, is the embodiment of altruism.

Celia is described thus: "No creature could have been more coarsely habited: a green cotton dress, faded to the faintest hue; rough shoes, just visible beneath her skirts; a dappled gray and brown calico sun-bonnet, thrown aside on a moss-grown bowlder near at hand. But it seemed as if the wild nature about her had been generous to this being toward whom life and fortune had played the niggard. There were opaline lights in her dreamy eyes which one sees nowhere save in sunset clouds that brood above dark hills; the golden sunbeams, all faded from the landscape, had left a perpetual reflection in her bronze hair; there was a subtle affinity between her and other pliant, swaying, graceful young things, waving in the mountain breezes, fed by the rain and the dew."[2].

Let us contrast this picture of a mountain girl with that of an average middle-aged mountain woman: "...she was tall and lank, and with such a face as one never sees except in these mountains,—elongated, sallow, thin, with pathetic, deeply sunken eyes, and high cheek-bones, and so settled an expression of hopeless melancholy that it must be that naught but care and suffering had been her lot; holding out wasted hands to the years as they pass,—holding them out always, and always empty. She wore a shabby, faded calico, and

1. Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Clouds, page 37.
2. The Star in the Valley, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, page 131.

spoke with the peculiar expressionless drawl of the mountaineer."[1].

The above words are not applied to an exceptional case, for the women, losing their bloom of youth, quickly grow old. The usual picture of a mountain woman is a toothless old crone, crouching over the hearth, with snuff-stick or pipe in her mouth, dressed in slatternly homespun, weighted down with the cares of family and poverty.

The simple homelife of the mountains in itself would furnish very little material for a novel of thrilling interest, but one especial occupation for which the mountaineer is far and wide famous or infamous—moonshining—has been the subject of many a plot. Little does it matter to the mountaineer if the law says that he must not distill liquor from the corn or fruit that he raises on his own thin acres. Revenue officers may threaten; his illicit business goes on. His own preachers in their homely dialect may hurl their diatribes against his ways; the jug of moonshine whiskey is as steadily replenished as before. If the revenue officers venture upon a raid, the mountaineer tries to elude them. If they press him too closely, he defends himself with whatever weapons he may have at hand. And woe betide him who reveals to the revenue men the location of a still, for the ferocity of the moonshiner awakens and the most merciless torture may be inflicted upon the wretched betrayer. Treachery to kin or friends there may be at times, but the mountain nature revolts against it.

A moonshiner's still, hidden in a cave, receives the following description: "A rude furnace made of fire-rock was the prominent feature of the place, and on it glimmered the pleasing rotundities of a small copper still. The neck curved away into the obscurity. There was the sound of gurgling water, with vague babbling echoes; for the never-failing rill of an underground spring, which rose among

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1. The Dancin' Party at Harrison's Cove, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, page 217.

the rocks, was diverted to the unexpected purpose of flowing through the tub where the worm was coiled, and of condensing the precious vapors, which dripped monotonously into their rude receiver at the extremity of the primitive fixtures. The iron door of the furnace was open now as Ab Cayce replenished the fire. It sent out a red glare, revealing the dark walls; the black distances; the wreaths of smoke, that were given a start by a short chimney, and left to wander away and dissipate themselves in the wide subterranean spaces; and the uncouth, slouching figures and illuminated faces of the distillers. They lounged upon the rocks or sat on inverted baskets and tubs, and one stalwart fellow lay at length upon the ground. The shadows were all grotesquely elongated, almost divested of the semblance of humanity, as they stretched in unnatural proportions upon the rocks. Amos James's horse cast on the wall an image so gigantic that it seemed as if the past and the present were mysteriously united, and he stood stabled beside the grim mastodon whom the cave had sheltered from the rigors of his day long before Groundhog Cayce was moved to seek a refuge. The furnace door clashed; the scene faded; only a glittering line of vivid white light, emitted between the ill-fitting door and the unhewn rock, enlivened the gloom."[1.]

While the mountaineer's life, like the Nature around him, is nearly always dull, the exception to the rule has its place. But the pleasures of the Tennessee mountaineer are not always innocently mirthful. For instance, the cruel sport of gander pulling is engaged in with much zest. A "gaynder" is tied securly to a limb of a tree within reach of a man seated on horseback. Then in turn those who have entered the contest ride fast around the tree, reach out for the head of the dodging fowl, and, when once the head or neck is clutched, try to pull it from the body."[2.]

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1. Charles Egbert Craddock's The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains, pages 150-151.
2. See Chapter V of Charles Egbert Craddock's The Prophet of the

This heartless practice, however, does not receive the censure that the occasional dance calls down upon itself. Some family may have temerity enough to give a dance within its doors. Then the mountain folk who have been awaiting the opportunity fill the house. The following is said about such an occasion: "It certainly had not the gay and lightsome aspect supposed to be characteristic of such a scene of sin: the awkward young mountaineers clogged heavily about in their uncouth clothes and rough shoes, with the stolid-looking, lack-lustre maids of the hill, to the violin's monotonous iteration of The Chicken in the Bread-Trough, or The Rabbit in the Pea-Patch, —all their grave faces as grave as ever. The music now and then changed suddenly to one of those wild, melancholy strains sometimes heard in oldfashioned dancing tunes, and the strange pathetic cadences seemed more attuned to the rhythmical dash of the waters rushing over their stone barricades out in the moonlight yonder, or to the plaintive sighs of the winds among the great dark arches of the primeval forests, than to the movement of the heavy, coarse feet dancing a solemn measure in the little log cabin in Harrison's Cove."[1].

How strange is a mountaineer's ethical code! "Such trifles as killing a man in a quarrel, or on suspicion of stealing a horse, or wash-tub, or anything that came handy, of course, does not count; but a dancing party! Mrs. Harrison could only hold her idle hands, and dread the heavy penalty that must surely follow so terrible a crime."[2].

Superstitions fill the mind of the mountaineer. Men, women, and children alike believe in "harnts". Old traditions about the ghosts that walk abroad are often repeated and universally credited.[3].

It is not strange that the superstitious mind is also a religious mind in the sense that it seeks religion of an emotional nature.

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1. The Dancin' Party at Harrison's Cove, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, pages 227-228.
2. Ibid., page 227.
3. See The "Harnt" that walks Chilhowee, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains.

Moreover, the mountain preacher, with his reputation for prophecy and his power of holding in awe his hearers, feeds ready fuel to the flame of emotionalism. "'Come! come! ' cried the old man sonorously over the singing. 'Delay not! My brethren, I hev never seen a meetin' whar the devil held sech a strong hold! Come! Hell yawns fur ye! Come! Yer time is short! Grace beckons! Come! The fires o' perdition air kindled! The flames air red! '"[1]. Grave concern is felt among the mountain folk for that one of their lot—and there is commonly one—who, feeling no movement of the spirit within him, obdurately refuses to obey the exhorter's summons.

Sometimes the mountain preacher, in spite of his ignorance, crudities, and appearance of fanaticism, is at heart ready to exemplify the sermon he preaches. Such a man was Parson Kelsey, "the prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains", who, racked with doubts of his soul's final salvation, gave his life to save an evil man. In his life he had been bold to denounce his fellows' vices; in his death he paid for his fellowman the Christ-like ransom.

Like his brother of the Virginia-Kentucky border the Tennessee mountaineer is hospitable to the limit of his possessions. Neighbor or stranger is welcome to whatever of food or shelter or meager comfort the cabin can possibly provide. The following sentence will illustrate: "Jerry Shaw hastened to abdicate and offer one of the rush-bottomed chairs with the eager hospitality characteristic of these mountaineers,—a hospitality that meets a stranger on the threshold of every hut, presses upon him, ungrudgingly, its best, and follows him on his departure with protestations of regret out to the rickety fence."[2]. The children are taught this ungrudging willingness to share, just as they are taught the necessity of obeying the commands of their elders and maintaining a respect for their authority.

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1. Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Clouds, page 105.
2. The Star in the Valley, in Charles Egbert Craddock's In the Tennessee Mountains, page 139.

In his thoughts, actions, and general trend of life the mountaineer is thoroughly independent. He is a democratic creature. He has no consciousness of social inequalities when persons of culture from beyond his hills come to his home. Americanism, undiluted by conventions or comparisons, is in this respect his. The free atmosphere of his lofty crags, which he has so long breathed, has simply become a part of him or has deposited with him its freedom.

Chapter XIV

THE CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

It has been truthfully said that "literature loves a lost cause, provided honor was not lost." One needs to look no further than the literature based on the War between the States to substantiate the thought. "The war", as it will perhaps always be known in the South, supplied history with one of its most remarkable pages. But history by itself, while stating events of the conflict, has not been able to render intelligible the whole story. Historical fiction has been the medium through which the spirit of the South in entering the contest, the heart of the South bleeding through the struggle, and the soul of the South, imperishable, can best be felt and understood. Novels and short stories in large numbers have been written by Southern authors about the Civil War, and, though many of the narratives seem drenched in tears, there is a nobility about them that demands the love or respect of all. In Southern fiction of the Civil War the Confederate soldier assumes larger proportions than a mere combatant. From a human being in whatever sphere of life before the war he undergoes a transformation: he becomes a type. It will be the purpose of this chapter to view the Confederate soldier as a type which circumstances suddenly created and to look for the effects of that type upon the future life of the South.

The reasons why the Confederate soldier was a more romantic figure than the Federal soldier during the war are evident. The Southerner went into the war with more enthusiasm and personal feeling than the Northerner; the war for him was a defense of his own fireside; from the beginning the odds were against him; and finally his patriotism and steadfastness were tested by the gall of defeat. Then it is not surprising that the story of the Civil War has been told best in

Southern literature. No apology is offered in Southern stories of the war. There could be none. The stories merely reëcho the heart throbs of a people giving everything they possessed in the defense of a principle.

The words of William Gilmore Simms in justification of the colonist's taking up arms against his British king might be applied as well to the Southerner's attitude in 1861: "The true loyalty is to the soil or rather to the race. I am persuaded that one is never more safe in his principles than when he takes side with his kindred."[1]

The response made by men and women when the war-cry resounded through the various states has been recorded in the fiction of such writers as John Esten Cooke, Thomas Nelson Page, and Mary Johnston in Virginia; John Fox, Jr. in Kentucky; Joel Chandler Harris in Georgia; Sherwood Bonner in Mississippi; and George W. Cable in Louisiana.

Cooke and Cable have idealized the Confederate soldier— and yet their idealization has come forth from the realism of their own experiences in the Confederate army. Cooke was an officer in Lee's Virginia forces; Cable was in the Fourth Mississippi Cavalry. What the former relates especially, is the observation of an eye witness. Much in Cooke's novels— as the words of the Virginia generals— is historically accurate, since the author took notes and carried on his literary work during the war. In his Surry of Eagle's Nest, Mohun, and Hilt to Hilt he gives convincingly the enthusiasm and hopes, the brilliant arrays and reviews, the dusty marches and bloody encounters, the chivalry and romance, the weakening and despair of the Confederacy. The romance and tragedy of the struggle are presented by one who had actually followed Lee's standard and watched the last sword gleam of his paladins. The personal sketches, such as those of Ashby,

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1. See page 58.

Pelham, Jackson, and Stuart, are excellent, and make us feel that we know those characters as we should never have known them from a work purporting to be mere history.

Miss Johnston in writing The Long Roll and Cease Firing attempted to produce works fraught with realism. Her characters are flesh and blood people. In The Long Roll we are made to feel the gruelling monotony of marches, the despairing energy of battles, the daily fatigues and human longings. In Cease Firing a realistic account of the defense of Vicksburg is given and a fearless portrayal of the ruthless, barbarous work of Sherman's army in its march through Georgia and South Carolina.

The Civil War has been a favorite background for much of Page's fiction. In Two Little Confederates, The Burial of the Guns, Little Darby, Marse Chan, Meh Lady, A Captured Santa Claus, and other stories Page has drawn vivid war scenes. "Marse Chan is said to be the best story that has been written about the War between the States." [1]

When the war began, it called forth from the various Southern states men of all classes and phases of society. We see in Fox's The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come old General Dean, the bluegrass aristocrat, his son Harry, and gallant Richard Hunt of Morgan's command, saying farewell to loved ones as they set out for the Confederate army, and we find the Turner boys and Rebel Jerry Dillon leaving their simple mountain homes for the same duty. In Page's Marse Chan the only son of a fine old Virginia family departs; Little Darby, by the same author, shows the readiness of the poor squatters of the backwoods district to fight for their State. Miss Johnston's The Long Roll calls the simple dwellers of Thunder Run to don the gray as quickly as the wealthy landowners. Joel Chandler Harris in

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1. Mildred Lewis Rutherford's The South in History and Literature, page 524.

The Shadow Between his Shoulder Blades sketches the adventure of Billy Sanders, a Georgia cracker, who served with Forrest. George W. Cable in The Cavalier, Kincaid's Battery, and Dr. Sevier pictures the mustering of the Creoles and their neighbors, and their subsequent service.

At the call to arms many a plantation became a military camp. The owner's office in the yard was made a recruiting station; men from miles around came to enlist and drill; the plantation fields and kitchen furnished rations; supplies were gathered; and usually the plantation owner took command of the company when it was organized and equipped for action.

The Colonel in Page's The Burial of the Guns is a typical Virginia soldier. "Although he had bitterly opposed secession, and was many years past the age of service when the war came on, yet as soon as the President called on the State for her quota of troops to coerce South Carolina, he had raised and uniformed an artillery company, and offered it, not to the President of the United States, but to the Governor of Virginia.

"It is just at this point that he suddenly looms up to me as a soldier; the relation he never wholly lost to me afterward, though I knew him for many, many years of peace. His gray coat with the red facing and the bars on the collar; his military cap; his gray flannel shirt— it was the first time I ever saw him wear anything but immaculate linen— his high boots; his horse caparisoned with a black, high-peaked saddle, with crupper and breast-girth, instead of the light English hunting-saddle to which I had been accustomed, all come before me now as if it were but the other day." [1.]

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1. Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns, pages 5-6.

In Little Darby Page shifts his scene to the humblest folk, whose loyalty to their State made them leave their rude cabins in the pine-barrens just as the tidewater slaveholder left his manor. When the Mills boys had left their home for the army, their old father sat silent and thoughtful. And we have this scene:

"Presently she [Mrs. Mills] could stand it no longer. 'I de-clar, Vasti,' she said, 'I believe your pappy takes it most harder than I does.'

"The girl made some answer about the boys. It was hardly intended for him to hear, but he rose suddenly, and walking to the door, took down from the two dogwood forks above it his old, long, single-barreled gun, and turning to his wife said, 'Git me my coat, old woman; by Gawd, I'm a-gwine.' The two women were both on their feet in a second. Their faces were white and their hands were clenched under the sudden stress, their breath came fast. The older woman was the first to speak.

"'What in the worl' ken you do, Cove Mills, ole an' puny as you is, an' got the rheumatiz all the time, too?'

"' I ken pint a gun,' said the old man, doggedly, 'an' I'm a-gwine.'" [1]

Among Virginians who had never owned a slave and never expected to own one, the sentiment was that which Bub Williams of Little South Mountain expressed, in Frances Courtenay Baylor's Behind the Blue Ridge: "The case looks to me this way. Ef old Virginny was to say go, I'd go. She knows what's right, and she'll do what's right every time, en ef she called I'd have to light out and do the best I could for her. Fair and square and softly sez I ef you kin, and when you kain't, give the other side Hail Columbia.. The Yankees

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1. Little Darby, in Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns and other stories. pages 81-82.

ain't done nothin' to me as I knows on, but ef they tech Virginny I'm there!" [1].

When the conflict came on, the men went.

"It was a representative body enough then gathered there, and it must be confessed that in variety of costume and eccentricity of accoutrement it was a remarkable one; so much so, indeed, that it is doubtful whether Alcibiades would have cared to put himself at their head, as John Shore did when the last lingering farewells had been taken, and quite certain that many a European martinet would have disputed their claim to be considered soldiers at all. But brave hearts were beating under those 'butternut' coats. Gold lace and broadcloth, pipe-clay and blacking, do not the hero make, and before the war was over, Mars himself would not have been ashamed to own the little cavalcade that now set off of men mounted for the most part on the sorry Rosinantes of the farm, with frying pans tied to their saddle-bows, calico 'comforts' strapped behind them with odd bits of rope, and arms that were only equalled by the gun Rip Van Winkle carried on his famous expedition, or that other 'queen's arm that Gran'ther Young fetched back from Concord busted.'" [2].

In G. W. Cable's Kincaid's Battery, a novel of Louisiana at war, we see the "flower of the Crescent City's youth and worth" going away: the Washington Artillery, the "Continentals", the Zouaves, and the Louisiana Foot-Rifles. There was gayety enough as the New Orleans girls watched the young soldiers.

"Anna, Anna! what a brave and happy half-and-half of Creoles and 'Americans' do your moist eyes beam down upon: here a Canonge and there an Ogden— a Zacherie— a Fontennette— Willie Geddes—

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1. Frances Courtenay Baylor's Behind the Blue Ridge, page 56.
2. Ibid, page 64.

Tom Norton— a Fusilier! Nat Frellsen— a Tramontana— a Grandissime— and a Grandissime again! Percy Chilton— a Dudley— Arthur Puig y Puig— a De Armas— MacKnight— Violett— Avendano— Rob Rareshide— Guy Palfrey— a Morse, a Bien, a Fuentes— a Grandissime once more! Aleck Moise— Ralph Fenner— Ned Ferry!— and lo! a Raoul Innerarity, image of his grandfather's portrait— and a Jules St. Ange!— a Converse— Jack Eustes— two Frowenfelds! a Mossy! a Henner— Bartie Sloo— McVey, McStea, a De Lavillebuevre— a Thorndyke-Smith and a Grandissime again!" [1].

There was a great deal of song and quick heart-beats at first. We quote Cable again:

"It tells— this book compiled largely from correspondence of persons well known to you and me— of the first 'eight-days' crawl that conveyed the chaffing, chafing command up through Mississippi, across East Tennessee into south-east [south-west?] Virginia and so on through Lynchburg to lovely Richmond; tells how never a house was passed in town or country but handkerchiefs, neckerchiefs, snatched-off sunbonnets, and Confederate flags wafted them on. It tells of the uncounted railway stations where swarmed the girls in white muslin aprons and red-white-and-red bows, who waved them in as they came, and unconsciously squinted and made faces at them in the intense sunlight. It tells how the maidens gave them dainties and sweet glances, and boutonnières of tuberoses and violets, and blood-thirsty adjurations, and blarney for blarney; gave them seven wild well-believed rumors for as many impromptu canards, and in their soft plantation drawl asked which was the one paramount 'ladies' man', and were assured by every lad of the hundred that it was himself. It tells how, having heard in advance that the more authentic one was black-haired,

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1. George W. Cable's Kincaid's Battery, page 57.

handsome, and overtowering, they singled out the drum-major, were set right only by the roaring laughter, and huddled backward like caged quails from Kincaid's brazen smile, yet waved again as the train finally jogged on with the band playing from the roof of the rear car,—

'I'd offer thee this hand of mine
If I could love thee less!'" [1].

Cable in another novel has given the beginning of the war in Louisiana thus:

"The bugle rings, the drums beat; 'tramp, tramp,' in quick succession, go the short-stepping, nimble Creole feet, and the old walls of the Rue Chatres ring again with the pealing huzza, as they rang in the days of Villeré and Lafrénière, and in the days of the young Galvez, and in the days of Jackson.

"The old Ponchartrain cars move off, packed. Down at the 'Old Lake End' the steamer for Mobile receives the burden. The gong clangs in her engine-room, the walking-beam silently stirs, there is a hiss of water underneath, the gang-plank is in, the wet hawser-ends whip through the hawse-holes,— she moves; clang goes the gong again— she glides— or is it the crowded wharf that is gliding?— No.— Snatch the kisses! snatch them! Adieu! Adieu! She's off, huzza— she's off!

"Now she stands away. See the mass of gay colors— red, gold, blue, yellow, with glitter of steel and flutter of flags, a black veil of smoke sweeping over. Wave, mothers and daughters, wives, sisters, sweethearts— wave, wave; you little know the future!" [2].

As the months and years of war slowly wore on, the glitter and glamor passed away; instead there settled into the hearts of the Southern people a grim determination and devoted faith. In the Con-

1. George W. Cable's Kincaid's Battery, page 161.
2. George W. Cable's Dr. Sevier, pages 470-471.

federate army former social castes passed out of existence. Men from all classes of society were equal when they were battling for their cause. Shoulder to shoulder stood all who wore the gray. In victory they rejoiced together; down in the trenches and on their last retreat they bled and starved and died together. Miss Johnston writes, "Dreadful as was this war, it had as a by-product the lessening of caste. Men came together and worked together as men, not as conventions." [1].

The Civil War was a melting pot, and into it the South poured her gold. The dross might have lurked under a gilded coating before the struggle, and much gold might have remained hidden from view; but the heat of war cleared away the one and refined the other. From the Confederate armies men came with hearts and souls laid bare. The Confederate soldier that stood the test, whatever his condition might have been prior to the struggle, shone forth as a man.

The leveling influence of war is illustrated in Joel Chandler Harris's A Bold Deserter, a story of little Billy, a poor boy of middle Georgia, who rose to be a Confederate colonel and after the war married the cultured daughter of Major Goolsby.

The Southern soldier had in his natural make-up a blending of the finest qualities, the natural instincts of the gentleman. For example, Miss Johnston in Cease Firing portrays the chivalrous attitude of Confederate officers and men to Northern noncombatants on the march into Pennsylvania in 1863. A general tone of culture is expressed in the fact that in the cold winter days Confederate privates read with appreciation masterpieces of literature. In the Petersburg trenches Hugo's Les Miserables (then just published in Virginia) was a favorite, and the ragged, hungry soldiers began to dub themselves Lee's Miserables. [2].

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1. Mary Johnston's Cease Firing, page 49.
2. Told in John Esten Cooke's Mohun.

The following conversation between plain Confederate soldiers indicates the idealism which dominated their souls:

"Yes, it is lovely,' said the warehouse man. 'I used to think a deal about beauty.'

"'Woman's beauty?'

"'No. Just plain beauty. Cloud or sea or face or anywhere you found it. At the end of every furrow, as Jim might say.'

"Jim, who was the sergeant, shook out rings of smoke. 'It ain't only at the end of the furrow. I've seen it in the middle.'" [1.]

When one speaks of abstract principle, one finds analysis of human actions a difficult thing. It is better sometimes to study the actions than to delve into psychological reasons. The Confederate soldier was inspired by a principle, and the same binding influence held Harris's plain, simple cracker as held Cooke's knightly Virginian; Cable could paint the rough Arkansan Colonel and the chivalrous lieutenant, Ned Ferry, battling with equal bravery for the same cause. [2]

"The confederate soldiery," writes Page,"had no honors save the approval of their own consciences and the love of their own people." [3.] The keynote is here struck, and the type which was shaped in the heat of battle but which could retain its ideals has been a blessing and an example to all future generations of Southerners. Every war that is fought for a principle stirs up a wave of emotionalism and romance. And no man ever carried with him the love of his people more than the soldier who defended the South from '61 to '65. The mothers and sweethearts, as fiction truthfully relates, sent their heroes to the battle in the old Spartan manner and bore their part with the greatest sacrifice and devotion. It may be the sentiment of beautiful May

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1. Mary Johnston's Cease Firing, page 49.
2. See George W. Cable's The Cavalier.
3. Little Darby, in Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns and other stories, page 90.

Beverley for Colonel Surry; [1] of dignified Judith Cary for Richard Cleave; [2] of faithful Mrs. Talbot for her husband; [3] or of loyal Vashti Mills for Little Darby—[4] the love story at its core is the same. Vashti Mills, representing the poor, backwoods class, was as devoted a patriot as a Southern woman of any social sphere when in a letter to her lover she "scrawled across the coarse, blue Confederate paper: 'Don't come without a furlough; for if you don't come honorable I won't marry you.'" [5].

The spirit of resistance welded the people of the South into a unit, which not even the blow of defeat could break. We read in novels like Cooke's Mohun or stories like Page's The Burial of the Guns the pathos of Lee's final efforts. And then the tragedy of the four long years is over. But though the Confederacy as a nation is lost, the surviving ragged veterans have a heritage garnered from the ordeal to transmit to their sons. Some survivors return to the ruins of broad estates; others who left little return to the remnant of that little.

To some the end of the war was like the following:

"It came with tears. But, ah! it lifted such an awful load from the hearts even of those who loved the lost cause. Husbands snatched their wives once more to their bosoms, and the dear, brave, swarthy, rough-bearded, gray-jacketed boys were caught again in the wild arms of mothers and sisters. Everywhere there was glad, tearful kissing. Everywhere? Alas for the silent lips that remained unkissed, and the arms that remained empty! . . .

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1. See John Esten Cooke's Surry of Eagle's Nest.
2. See Mary Johnston's The Long Roll and Cease Firing.
3. See Grace King's The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard.
4. See Thomas Nelson Page's Little Darby, in the Burial of the Guns and other stories.
5. Little Darby, in Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns and other stories, page 103.

"Sister Jane bowed to the rod of an inscrutable Providence. She could not understand how the Confederacy could fail, and justice still be justice; so, without understanding, she left it all to Heaven, and clung to her faith. Her brother-in-law never recovered his fortunes nor his sweetness. He could not bend his neck to the conqueror's yoke; he went in search of liberty to Brazil— or was it Honduras? Little matter which, now, for he died there, both he and his wife, just as their faces were turning again homeward, and it was dawning upon them once more that there is no land like Dixie in all the wide world over." [1].

Or the defeat was to many as it was to the surviving soldiers of South Mountain:" . . . at the end of four years fifteen tattered, bronzed, indomitable veterans came straggling in, one by one, into the Red Lane, so slow of gait and sore at heart that they would have cried out in biblical speech for the mountains to fall upon them and the hills to cover them if they could have expressed defeat and despair at all adequately. The war was over, and the Mountain had got the worst of it." [2].

The Confederate woman still bore her part of her country's distress. An old Creole woman's spirit, as revealed by Miss Grace King, is typical of the spirit manifested by the women throughout the South: "As it was, when her commission-merchant came to her with a statement, she frankly and firmly acknowledged that she could not rightfully claim an acre of her possessions. They came in a royal grant; they went in a royal cause. There were law quibbles; but was she one to lose a creed to grovel for coppers? She might have gone to France, as it was supposed she had done; and desert the country for which her only son had died? But after the war she was less than ever a French-

1. George W. Cable's Dr. Sevier, pages 470-471.
2. Frances Courtenay Baylor's Behind the Blue Ridge, page 65.

woman, more than ever an American. At bay, every nerve tingling with haughty defiance at the taunts and jeers of despairing conquerors, every heart-throb beating accusations of womanly weakness and grief, what more effective answer to the challengers of her blood and country, what nobler one to herself, than bravely to assume the penalty she had dared? As the men had fought, let the women suffer against overpowering odds." [1].

The younger generations of the South have a love for the Confederate veteran that time has only strengthened. Southern writers have incorporated in their fiction stirring accounts of the old wearers of the gray. In Henry Sydnor Harrison's Queed and in Thomas Nelson Page's The Gray Jacket of "No. 4" soul-inspiring pictures are presented of reunions years after the Civil War. The undying love for the Confederate veteran, and the South's appreciation of his sacrifice appear in this description: "The gaily decorated streets, in all the bravery of fluttering ensigns and bunting; the martial music of many bands; the constant tramp of marching troops; the thronged sidewalks, verandas, and roofs; the gleam of polished arms and glittering uniforms; the flutter of gay garments, and the smiles of beautiful women sweet with sympathy; the long line of old soldiers, faded and broken and gray, yet each self-sustained, and inspired by the life of the South that flowed in their veins, marching under the old Confederate battle-flags that they had borne so often in victory and in defeat— all contributed to make the outward pageant a scene never to be forgotten. But this was merely the outward image; the real fact was the spirit. It was the South. It was the spirit of the South; not of the new South, not yet merely of the old South, but the spirit of the great South. When the young troops from every Southern State marched by in their fresh uniforms, with well-drilled battalions, there were huzzas, much

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1. Bonne Maman, in Grace King's Tales of a Time and Place, pages 86-87.

uniforms, with well-drilled battalions, there were huzzas, much

applause and enthusiasm; when the old soldiers came there was a tempest: wild cheers choking with sobs and tears, the well-known, once-heard-never-forgotten cry of the battling South, known in history as 'the rebel yell'. Men and women and children joined in it. It began at the first sight of the regular column, swelled up the crowded streets, rose to the thronged housetops, ran along them for squares like a conflagration, and then came rolling back in volume only to rise and swell again greater than before. Men wept; children shrilled; women sobbed aloud. What was it! Only a thousand or two of old or aging men riding or tramping along through the dust of the street, under some old flags, dirty and ragged and stained. But they represented the spirit of the South; they represented the spirit which when honor was in question never counted the cost; the spirit that had stood up for the South against overwhelming odds for four years, and until the South had crumbled and perished under the forces of war; the spirit that is the strongest guaranty to us to-day that the Union is and is to be; the spirit that, glorious in victory, had displayed a fortitude yet greater in defeat. They saw in every stain on those tattered standards the blood of their noblest, bravest, and best; in every rent a proof of their glorious courage and sacrifice. They saw in those gray and careworn faces, in those old clothes interspersed now and then with a faded gray uniform, the men who in the ardor of their youth had, for the South, faced death undaunted on a hundred fields, and had never even thought it great; men who had looked immortality in the eyes, yet had been thrown down and trampled underfoot, and who were greater in their overthrow than when glory poured her light upon their upturned faces." [1].

To the modern Southerner the surviving Confederate soldier— as

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1. The Gray Jacket of "No. 4", in Thomas Nelson Page's The Burial of the Guns and other stories, pages 234-236.

he appears in life, as he appears in fiction— bequeathes a legacy of patriotism, devotion, sacrifice. And the memories of those who died in the service of the Lost Cause— memories which our literature has enshrined— are a blessing from an epoch that valued honor. The spirit which pervades Southern fiction of the Civil War is in keeping with the tenor of Timrod's lines:

"Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
  There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
  By mourning beauty crowned!"

Chapter XV

THE MODERN SOUTHERNER

Out of the crucible of the Civil War came, tested, refined, beautified, certain qualities which had been cultivated in the Old South. Just as certain institutions in the South had been swept away by the war, so certain social classes had passed forever. But the old régime handed down much to the new, and the modern Southerner has found himself the possessor of qualities which he may keep with pride and use to the good of his people. The Civil War proved that the Southerner had the capacity to bear noble pain; it made natural and usual the virtue of self-sacrifice; it revealed that, with even civilization toppling, Southern honor could remain unsullied.

Some writers who still love best to look back over the romance of ante-bellum and Civil War days have also found in the life of the modern Southerner material for fiction of a high order. For instance, Thomas Nelson Page's hero in Gordon Keith inherits from his father, General Keith, the grace, valor, and chivalry of the Old South and possesses in his own individual personality the energy, perseverance, and courage of the New. The position of the typical modern Southerner has not been an easy one. He has had to place himself squarely before the eyes of the nation and the world in order to show his own right to power and in order to justify the character of his fathers' civilization.

Young novelists of the South have known by experience the problems of their generation, with the result that various works of theirs have framed living examples of Southern character as it has been modeled in the last four decades. Henry Sydnor Harrison has done a notable work in this respect. His Dr. V. Vivian in V.V.'s Eyes,

forgetful of self, loving much and trusting always, giving his whole life in the service of the needy, is representative of the highest possible qualities in Southern manhood. V. V.'s Eyes introduces the new-rich class of the South, social climbers and believers in the power of wealth. But Cally Heth, daughter of such a family, has within her the spark which, when kindled by another's example, bursts into a flaming realization that she must do something worthy in life. The novel is a sermon, revealing how the finesse of the old Southern culture energized to meet modern human need gives the most splendid type of American. The same author in Queed pictures Charlotte Lee Weyland as a model Southern girl, whose inherited culture is a help, not a hindrance, in twentieth century life, and who bravely makes her living, commanding the admiration of all who know her.

Miss Ellen Glasgow has known the spirit of her native State since the war. Her Virginia, with its scene laid in Petersburg, Virginia, gives the local color of Southern motherhood in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. This novel shows the materialism which could intoxicate a man, and the inherited refinement and unselfishness which could keep Virginia Pendleton thus: "With her sweetness, her humility, her old-fashioned courtesy and consideration for others, she belonged still in the honey-scented twilight of the eighties."[1].

The Deliverance, by the same writer, strongly reviews the transformation of a family from ante-bellum wealth to a condition of poverty. Christopher Blake, the hero, possessing the strong passions and prejudices of aristocratic forbears, has a saving sense of justice, and evolves, through conscientious self-sacrifice, into a true man. Christopher's young sister Lila stands unashamed as a modern American who values a man simply for his own worth. "The stern class-distinc-

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1. Ellen Glasgow's Virginia, page 467.

tions...troubled the younger sister not at all. She remembered none of the past grandeur, the old Blake power of rule, and the stories of gallant indiscretions and powdered beaux seemed to her as worthless as the moth-eaten satin rags which filled the garret. She loved the familiar country children, the making of fresh butter, and honest admiration of her beauty; and except for the colourless poverty in which they lived, she might easily have found her placid happiness on the little farm."[1] And Lila Blake says frankly concerning Jim Weatherby, her lover: "I don't care one bit what his grandfather was or whether he ever had any or not!..."[2] We admire honest, unassuming Jim Weatherby, the kind of son upon whom the New South has built her hopes. Christopher Blake, retaining some family prejudices against Lila's marrying Jim, is promptly answered. "'I know,' finished Jim quietly and without resentment; 'it's my grandfather. Your sister, Cynthia, told me, and I reckon it's all natural, but somehow I can't make myself ashamed of the old man—nor is Lila, for that matter. He was an honest, upright body as ever you saw, and he never did a mean thing in his life, though he lived to be almost ninety.'"[3]

The true modern Southerner is democratic. The disappearance of barriers that had once stood insurmountable between classes, just seen in Miss Glasgow's The Deliverance, is found in other Southern fiction as well. Types could be blended, where there was no difference of race to keep them forever separate. In John Fox, Jr.'s The Heart of the Hills is seen the blending of mountain feudalism and blue-grass aristocracy in the new generation at the University of Kentucky. Mrs. Ruth McEnery Stuart in the lower South has done a memorable work. In Sonny she depicts the plain Arkansas farmer. "Mrs. Stuart's best work," remarks one critic, "is her portraits of the poorer class; she

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1. Ellen Glasgow's The Deliverance, page 117.
2. Ibid., page 245.
3. Ibid., page 280.

has been called 'the laureate of the lowly'."[1] And the Library of Southern Literature states: "The wealthy slave owner of the former time was now in poverty, without the experience of labor with his hands. He had brains, culture, statesmanship and the heroic will that would in a few years assert themselves; and he is in every way an interesting and dominating figure; but Deuteronomy Jones, the drawling, unlearned, but pious, earnest and hard-working backwoods farmer, whose life and character are so clearly read in his exquisite monologues about Sonny, was, in fact, the type of citizen whose simple life and humble labors were to become important factors in the new structure of Southern life."[2] Sonny's father strikes the keynote of Southern democracy when he says, "It's the 'Well done' we're all a-hopin' to hear at the last day; an' the po' laborer thet digs a good ditch'll have thess ez good a chance to hear it ez the man that owns the farm."[3]

The modern Southerner is thoroughly American. Henry Sydnor Harrison has one of his characters state at a Confederate reunion in a Southern city that "there isn't a State in the country that is raising better Americans than we are raising right here in this city."[4] James Lane Allen attempts to trace the American's evolution by a description of a series of portraits in a Kentuckian's home:

"One portrait represented the first man of his family to scale the mountains of the Shield [Kentucky] where its eastern rim is turned away from the reddening daybreak. Thence he had forced his way to its central portions where the skin of ever living verdure is drawn over the rocks: Anglo-Saxon, backwoodsman, borderer, great forest chief, hewing and fighting a path toward the sunset for Anglo-Saxon women and children. With his passion for the wilderness—its game,

(page 541.

1. Mildred Lewis Rutherford's The South in History and Literature,
2. Article on Ruth McEnery Stuart, by Edwin Lewis Stevens, in the Library of Southern Literature, page 5147.
3. Ruth McEnery Stuart's Sonny, page 91.
4. Henry Sydnor Harrison's Queed, page 268.

enemies, campfire and cabin, deep-lunged freedom. This ancestor had a lonely, stern, gaunt face, no modern expression in it whatsoever —the timeless face of the woods.

"Near his portrait hung that of a second representative of the family. This man had looked out upon his vast parklike estates in the central counties; and wherever his power had reached, he had used it on a great scale for the destruction of his forests. Woods-slayer, field-maker; working to bring in the period on the Shield when the hand of a man began to grasp the plough instead of the rifle, when the stallion had replaced the stag, and bellowing cattle wound fatly down into the pastures of the bison. This man had the face of his caste—the countenance of the Southern slave-holding feudal lord. Not the American face, but the Southern face of a definite era—less than national, less than modern; a face not looking far in any direction but at things close around.

"From a third portrait the latest ancestor looked down. He with his contemporaries had finished the thinning of the central forest of the Shield, leaving the land as it is to-day, a rolling prairie with remnants of woodland like that crowning the hilltop near this house. This immediate forefather bore the countenance that began to develop in the Northerner and in the Southerner after the Civil War: not the Northern look nor the Southern look, but the American look—a new thing in the American face, indefinable but unmistakable."[1].

Americanism at war with autocracy is found in Miss Glasgow's recent novel, The Builders, the setting of which is Richmond, Virginia, 1916-1918. Feeling in the State of Virginia about entering the war against Germany is here given: "Suddenly, in a night, as it were, the war spirit in Virginia had flared out. There was not the

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1. James Lane Allen's The Bride of the Mistletoe, pages 87-88.

emotional blaze—the flaming heat—older men said—of the Confederacy; but there was an ever-burning, insistent determination to destroy the roots of this evil black flower of Prussian autocracy. There was no hatred of Austria—little even of Turkey. The Prussian spirit was the foe of America and of the world; and it was against the Prussian spirit that the militant soul of Virginia was springing to arms. Men who had talked peace a few months before—who had commended the nation that was 'too proud to fight', who had voted for the President because of the slogan 'he kept us out of war'—had now swung around dramatically with the volte-face of the Government."[1].

The typical modern Southerner is in politics a staunch adherent to the Democratic Party. Father has handed down to son his political allegiance and the son has found ample reason to accept the father's faith. Joel Chandler Harris in Gabriel Tolliver makes a fiery editorial of the Reconstruction period prophesy the spirit of the"Solid South": "Let the radicals do their worst; on the old red hills of Georgia, the camp-fires of Democracy have been kindled, and they will continue to burn and blaze long after the tyrants and corruptionists have been driven from power."[2]. Miss Glasgow makes David Blackburn in The Builders, looking back over a period of more than fifty years since the Civil War, explain the reason for Democratic supremacy in the South: "The Republican Party was then [immediately after the Civil War] in control, and its leaders resisted every effort of the South to re-establish the supremacy of the white race, and to reassert the principles of self-government. We had the Civil Rights Act, and the Federal Election Laws, with Federal supervisors of elections to prevent the white people from voting and to give the vote to the negroes. Even when thirty years had passed, and the South had gained control of its local governments, the

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1. Ellen Glasgow's The Builders, pages 268-269.
2. Joel Chandler Harris's Gabriel Tolliver, pages 432-433.

Republicans attempted to pass an election law which would have perpetuated negro dominance."[1] A typical example of the young Southerner in politics is Carson Dwight running for the Georgia legislature in a Democratic primary as Will N. Harben presents him in Mam' Linda.

When the Civil War left the South blighted, nothing but the Southerner's unconquerable spirit could have raised an optimistic civilization from the ashes of all that had been held sacred. The fact that such a spirit existed explains the position of the South and the Southerner to-day. An ex-Confederate soldier shortly before his death said to his daughter, "I haven't much to leave you, daughter, but I leave you one good thing—courage. Never forget that it isn't the victory that matters, it is the fight."[2] And that daughter, later facing the crisis of another woman's false accusation, could staunchly feel, "I am poor and unknown, and I work for my living, but the world is mine as much as hers, and I will not give in. I will not let life conquer me."[3] In the same novel the same kind of spirit is shown in another character: "She was a stately, white-haired woman, who had once been beautiful and was still impressive —for adversity, which had reduced her circumstances and destroyed her comfort, had failed to penetrate the majestic armour of her manner. In the midst of drudgery and turmoil and disaster, she had preserved her mental poise as some persons are able to preserve their equilibrium in a rocking boat."[4]

While the modern Southerner has been forced to cope with materialistic circumstances, and has succeeded in meeting the world's requirements, we like to think of him as possessing that finer essence

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1. Ellen Glasgow's The Builders, page 117.
2. Ibid., page 16.
3. Ibid., page 300.
4. Ibid., pages 340-341.

in his fiber which has kept him from becoming a materialist. We like to think of the Southern man as James Lane Allen says of Dr. Birney: "...the very secret of his immense influence being some charm of mystery, as there is mystery in all the people that win us and rule us and hold us; as though we pressed our ear against this mystery and caught there the sound of a meaning vaster than ourselves —not meant for us but flowing away from us along the unbroken channels of the universe: still to be flowing there long after we ourselves are stilled."[1] The modern Southerner in fiction is sometimes the product of such a training as a Kentucky breeder gave a colt and a nephew alike: "And the five great things I tried to teach him are: to develop his will, to develop his speed, to develop his endurance and perseverance, to develop his pride, and to develop his affection; he is a masterpiece."[2]

And though the Southern girl of our fiction, like Sharlee Weyland in Queed or Caroline Meade in The Builders, is often compelled to rely upon her own efforts in the busy throng of humanity, usually fiction represents her as still possessing the sweet, feminine qualities that had made her mother a lovely creature in the older days. F. Hopkinson Smith's Ruth McFarlane, a modern Maryland girl, may represent her type throughout the South:

"There was, too, about her a certain gentleness, a certain disposition to be kind, even when her inherent coquetry—natural in the Southern girl—led her into deep waters; a certain tenderness that made friends of even unhappy suitors (and I heard that she could not count them on her fingers) who had asked for more than she could give —a tenderness which healed the wound and made lovers of them all for life.

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1. James Lane Allen's The Doctor's Christmas Eve, pages 72-73.
2. Ibid., page 136.

"And then her Southern speech, indescribable and impossible in cold type. The softening of the consonants, the slipping away of the terminals, the slurring of vowels, and all in that low, musical voice born outside of the roar and crash of city streets and crowded drawing-rooms with each tongue fighting for mastery."[1].

We have not undertaken to consider the modern Southerner in our fiction as a type that writers have pictured distinctly and accurately like some of the types of the past. Such an attempt would be futile. It may be asserted by some that the characters that we have included under the epithet, the modern Southerner, constitute no type at all. Whether belonging to a type or not, they do occupy an important place in our modern literature. The student of the future may perhaps more properly classify them.

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1. F. Hopkinson Smith's Peter, page 120.

Chapter XVI

C O N C L U S I O N

In the opening chapter of this dissertation the statement was made that through Southern fiction there has been a movement from romanticism to realism, from triviality of details to essentiality and import, from provincialism to Americanism. In conclusion we may see how these facts are true.

The style of the pioneer writers of Southern fiction was usually the style of Sir Walter Scott. Simms and Kennedy and Cooke seemed unconscious that a novel could be written that was not over-colored with romantic hues. Southern fiction will doubtless always have its romantic tone, but there is a wide space between the romanticism and sentimentalism of the above named writers and the realistic portrayal of modern human life by Ellen Glasgow and Henry Sydnor Harrison or the realistic exposure of human emotions by James Lane Allen.

For a long time there was an entire lack of restraint in the structure of novels. Extravagant and meaningless conversations went through many pages; descriptions were drawn out with a writer's whim; the effect of climax was unattained. Edgar Allan Poe set a standard for prose composition which has stood the test of years. "In ideals of craftsmanship the newer writers have been followers of Poe, the result being carefulness of structure and regard for distinction of style."[1] "The difference between the old and the new fashion in fiction was expressed in the remark of John Esten Cooke, shortly before his death, about the new school: 'They see, as I do, that fiction should faithfully reflect life, and they obey the law, while I was born too soon, and am now too old to learn my trade anew.'"[1]

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1. Maurice Garland Fulton's Southern Life in Southern Literature, page 511.

The provincial spirit and narrow interest of early Southern literature have in great part passed away. Local color is stronger than ever, but it is a local color which appeals to the whole reading nation. The success of stories by Page, Harris, Gordon, Harben, Edwards, Fox, Miss Murfree, Mrs. Stuart, and many others, in America's best magazines, testifies that the stories are of interest to people all over the country. Modern Southern novels also have made a nation-wide appeal. The simple fact is that Southern literature to-day is a big part of American literature, of genuine interest to American people. No one can ask that this literature be decolorized. "No national point of view," writes Montrose J. Moses, "should take from the South its characteristics or individuality, due to environment and inheritance; the broader culture should only deepen and enrich those permanent traits which must be protected and nurtured for years to come."[1].

One truth that must stand out prominently from a study of Southern social types is that the actual life in the various parts of the South has been brought to light more clearly, sympathetically and effectively by fiction than could have been done in any other manner. History would have fallen short of what novels and stories have done. Essays would have failed to gain many readers. But in the broad expanse of Southern fiction the daily lives of men, women, and children of different classes, in different localities—their toils, their joys, their problems and sorrows, their political and religious views, their local philosophies of existence—have been reflected. A section's life is thus found in this particular phase of its literature, and it is safe to predict that a substantial part of Southern fiction will endure.

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1. Montrose J. Moses' The Literature of the South, page 474.

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