THE SOUTH AS REFLECTED IN CERTAIN SELECTED REPRESENTATIVE NOVELS PUBLISHED BETWEEN 1930 AND 1935

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study is an attempt to find in certain selective and representative novels of the South, from 1880 to 1935, a record of important and authentic changes which reflect, in a measure at least, the transition from the Old Traditional South to the New South.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation is to note the extent to which the novels used in this study present and interpret the changing life of the Southern people. History asserts with finality that certain events have come to pass; but trends, reflected by means of the delicate artistry of fiction, are more subtle.

> Literature is the expression of life in words of truth and beauty; it is the written record of a man's spirit, and of his thoughts, emotions, and aspirations; it is the history, and the only history, of the human soul.[1]

Primarily this is a study in American Literature. The discussions of the changing aspects, because of their character, may lead to the fields of history, psychology, and sociology; but there will be no technical interpretation of them as such. This survey has been made with the desire to find to

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[1] William J. Long, English Literature (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1909), p. 8.

what extent the authors of these chosen novels discuss social forces; and to check, in a small measure, the authenticity of fiction against that of history.

Résumé of Historical Facts

This discussion is presented as a means of establishing a standard by which to judge the novels selected for this study. Prior to the Civil War the Southern people, because of certain natural and economic forces, made a decided effort to form a distinctive Southern civilization. Many of the English people who came to the South were of the upper class. Their home life and associations had been of such a nature as to presuppose the mode of living which they established in their new homes.

Beard says that the ease with which the Southern planter made his money coupled with the desirable climatic conditions tended to produce a pleasure and luxury loving people. Their agrarian type of life was lonely, and planned gatherings, such as fox hunts, balls, and dinners were their only means of social contact. From this particular pattern of culture and mode of life there has been drawn the glorified and romantic picture of the Old South.[2]

Montrose J. Moses tells us this was almost the only conception of that part of the country until 1890 or 1895, when the children of the Civil War veterans had reached maturity and viewed affairs from that distance.[3]

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[2] Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), pp. 139-41.

[3] Montrose J. Moses, The Literature of the South (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell and Company, 1910), pp. 295-6.

The ideals and culture of the plantation were founded on slavery and came to their final flowering because of the economic importance of the cotton industry.

> The plantation--with its 'great house' for the master and mistress, its cottage for the overseer, its quarters for scores of negro slaves, its landing on a navigable river, and its barns and tool shops, in short, with its semi-feudal mode of life--became the economic unit of the tide-water region of Virginia and the Carolinas.[4]

With the invention of textile machinery and the development of a great demand for cotton, came what might be called the imperialistic period of the South. The Cotton Kingdom was enlarged; unscrupulous planters were making enormous profits from growing cotton on virgin soil and by means of illegal slave traffic. Some of the more important leaders had visions of extending the slave territory to the Pacific and to the Gulf of Mexico. A great many of the Southern thinkers began to turn to the defense of slavery and to establish political theories with which to justify their peculiar institution.[5]

This semi-feudal aristocracy was very ingrown and narrow of view-point. This wealthy class of planters looked to England for their culture. English plays were presented in a few large Southern cities and were attended by the nobility of the South. In the field of fiction, nearly all reading was confined to books published in the home-land.[6]

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[4] Walter Fuller Taylor, A History of American Letters (Boston: The American Book Company, 1936), p. 214.

[5] Loc. cit.

[6] Taylor, op. cit., p. 217.

Mark Sullivan, in speaking of the Reconstruction period, has made this terse and epigrammatic assertion:

> Prevented by superior force from actual secession, the South sought solace in spiritual secession; completely impoverished, the best of its manhood gone, the one way of life it knew destroyed, the South turned its face backward and created a legend of the past.[7]

There are many other forces to be considered for the background of this study. One of the most important is the racial question, which played a very dramatic part, particularly during the Civil War and the time immediately following. The political and social aspects of this problem are so closely interwoven that they must be discussed as a unit.

"Racial characteristics in thinking are as unchanged by naturalization as are physical characteristics. The melting pot merely obscures, it never obliterates traces of racial development."[8] This definite statement by a man of insight forms an excellent basis for further consideration of the racial problem which has always deeply concerned the South. The ardent abolitionists in their zest for doing what they considered right for the Negro, gave no thought to the black man's lack of preparedness for citizenship. The South knowing the Negro, and understanding his many limitations for such sudden and so-called equality, knew the danger of the Emancipation Proclamation. The fight put up by the Southern people was primarily an economic one; yet, on its social side there remained the integrity of the white race, and its right to

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[7] Mark Sullivan, Our Times, The Twenties (London: Charles Scribner's sons, Ltd., 1935), Vol. II, p. 404.

[8] Russell Blankenship, American Literature As an Expression of the National Mind (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 21.

maintain the ascendancy, at least, until the Negroes were educated and trained for their new freedom.[9]

The plantation South, because of its particular reasoning and interpretation of national issues, always stood for local authority, which they chose to term States Rights. The politicians of the Cotton Kingdom turned their backs on all the Jeffersonian teachings except this one doctrine. The political term, "The Solid South," came from the acceptance of the Democratic party, not the ideal of Democracy, when the Republican party took its strong stand for abolition.[10]

The South, in the early stage of its development, was a strictly agricultural country. A stupendous undertaking for the days of Reconstruction was for the South to educate its people to the new economic order, which was toward industrialism. For the true Southern gentlemen and those closely connected with the landed gentry, to banish from their minds the inborn fear of menial labor and the degradation of the trades was an almost superhuman struggle.[11]

Religion is too large and too powerful an influence to trace its effect throughout this survey; it will be noted only when certain trends can be interpreted in the light of its influence. In passing it is of note that some historians have agreed that the founders of the Southern colonies came in a spirit of exploration and personal gain, which has tended, no doubt, to make religion less potent in the development of the early South than in the New England and the middle colonies. It should be said in justice to the

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[9] Moses, op. cit., p. 208.

[10] Ibid., pp. 130-132.

[11] Ibid., p. 440.

South, that no weakness of character encouraged the conditions of the Colonial South. Any other people would have fallen into the same channels--the soil, climate, and physical demarcations determined the line of least resistance--spiritual requirements seemed secondary to their physical needs.[12]

Between the wealthy Southern aristocracy and the Negroes were the "poor whites" or the "scrub settlers." There have been, and still are, many unkind epithets by which they are called. No study of the fiction of the South would be complete without acknowledging them and their place in the Southern régime. They were, in their early development, a by-product of the manorial system of the Cotton Kingdom. When everything was judged by land owning, their social status was definitely determined by their economic status.[13] These people were for the most part descendants of the indentured white servants who were brought over from England.

Before the Civil War there had been little provision for general education. The wealthy families had tutors for their children, and sometimes for the children of the overseer. No schooling was provided for the slaves. Thus, it was not to be wondered at that the history of general education, after the Civil War, was marked with many conflicts. The Southern whites objected to the reconstruction methods of instruction. Illiterate men with no particular regard for the sensibilities of the South were placed at the head of affairs of such institutions as the Freedman's Bureau. The people recognized the necessity for education of a certain kind for economic adjustment; but they

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[12] Beard, op. cit., p. 143.

[13] Moses, op. cit., p. 171.

wanted it without Northern interference, which interference, in both educational and political affairs, was mostly of the "Scalawag" and "Carpet-bag" variety.[14]

SOURCES OF DATA

The fifteen novels listed below are the primary sources used in this study. Some of the early novels were borrowed from the Library of Congress and the University of Chicago.

The Grandissimes	Cable	1880
The Crisis	Churchill	1901
The Virginian Comedians	Cooke	1854
The Leopard's Spots	Dixon	1902
Sartoris	Faulkner	1929
The Deliverance	Glasgow	1904
Barren Ground	Glasgow	1925
Mamba's Daughters	Heyward	1929
To Have and To Hold	Johnston	1899
Swallow Barn	Kennedy	1851
The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains	Murfree	1885
Red Rock	Page	1898
Scarlet Sister Mary	Peterkin	1928
The Time of Man	Roberts	1926
Unfinished Cathedral	Stribling	1934

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[14] Beard, op. cit., p. 145.

For literary background, the critical material of such authors as Parrington, Van Doren, Quinn, Blankenship, Taylor, Overton, Sullivan, Baldwin, Pattee, and Harkins has been consulted. For biographical sketches, the recent and authoritative Dictionary of American Biography by Johnson and Malone has been used. For the contemporary writers, Living Authors, edited by Dilly Tante, and periodical literature have furnished the data. The Bookman, The American Review of Literature, American Mercury, Saturday Review of Literature, and other reliable sources have been used extensively.

For historical background, the general histories of Beard and Fiske have furnished the data. The New South by Bruce and The Cotton Kingdom; A Chronicle of the Old South by Dodd have been used extensively. Our Times, by Mark Sullivan, which is a critical commentary on the Nineteen Twenties, has given valuable suggestions. Many periodical articles from Scribner's, Harpers, World's Work, New Republic, School and Society, American Review, and The Nation have been used to furnish information concerning recent social and political trends of the South.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The novels for this survey have been selected according to the favorable criticisms and their frequency of mention in book reviews and literature texts. They have been grouped as consistently as possible in chronological order, with the exception of four which are grouped thematically.

Citations have been given to illustrate the changes which have taken place in the South and to check the authenticity of fiction against that of history. The following specific points have been carefully investigated:

1. Types of characters who appear to be unique or indicative of the South.
2. Racial feelings.
3. Place of the "poor whites."
4. The mention of old families and habits, which show the tendency to retain old traditions.
5. Allusions to education, politics, and religion if they illustrate special trends.
6. Agrarianism versus industrialism.

The United States Catalogue, The Publisher's Trade List Annual, and The Cumulative Book Index have been consulted for extra material. Forty-six novels with annotated bibliography, which could be used supplementary to this study, are offered in the Appendix.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUTH OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Biographical Sketch of Mary Johnston

Mary Johnston's To Have and To Hold with its background of early Colonial days in Jamestown, Virginia, very properly opens this study. Its richness of local color augmented with many accurate historical details makes it an excellent book with which to begin.

Mary Johnston, a daughter of Major W. Johnston of the Confederate Army, was born in Buchanan, Botetourt County, Virginia in the year 1870. Her father's knowledge of the South and of its past fostered her interest in history. No doubt her early historical novels were the direct result. Critics have agreed upon the very fine accuracy of all her historical novels. Her novels combine factual exactness with a romantic treatment, which in the hands of a lesser artist might have been an unfortunate combination. Miss Johnston spent many years in Europe; but whenever she was in the United States, she was at her home near Warm Springs, Virginia. Miss Johnston is not considered a true southern novelist, simply because her heart is there. Her novels of the early South are chosen because of their excellent portrayals of the type of people who settled there.[1]

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[1] John Farrar, The Literary Spotlight (New York: George H. Doran and Company, 1924), pp. 43-50.

To Have and To Hold

This story opens in early colonial days, about 1621, and is concerned with certain historical events which took place in and about Jamestown, Virginia. The plot centers mainly about the sending from England of the ninety maidens, who are purchased for wives. The price of each is placed at one hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco. Captain Ralph Percy chooses for his bride, Jocelyn Leigh, the King's Ward. She has escaped to the colony disguised as her own maid and using the maid's name. Lord Carnal, the King's present favorite, and to whom the King has promised Jocelyn, pursues her to Jamestown. Her hatred of him knows no bounds and she is willing to brave any hardship, even death, to escape from him. Captain Percy, with the help of his devoted friend, Jeremy Sparrow, keeps his wife in defiance of the King's commands and Lord Carnal's plots.

There are three conflicts throughout the story. The first, and of course the outstanding one, is the personal conflict between the two men for the favors of the lovely Jocelyn. Second, there is the continual strife between the Indians and the white settlers. The third, more subtle, is that between those most loyal to England and others who are straining at the bonds which bind them to the Mother country.

Citations from To Have and To Hold

> With an impatient sigh, I swept the letter from the table, and, taking from the shelf that held my meager library a bundle of Master Shakespeare's lays (gathered for me by Rolfe when he was last in London) I began to read; . . .[2]

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[2] Mary Johnston, To Have and To Hold, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1899), p. 7.

"This lady," I said, taking her hand as she stood beside me, "is my true and lawful wife, your mistress, to be honored and obeyed as such. Who fails in reverence to her I hold as mutinous to myself, and I will deal with him accordingly. She gives you to-morrow for holiday, with double rations and to each a measure of rum."[3]

"Before we enter Jamestown, Diccon, we'll pass through a certain field and beneath a certain tree. Do you remember what happened there some years ago?"

"I am not likely to forget it, sir, you saved me from the wheel."

"Upon which you were bound and ready to be broken for drunkeness, gaming and loose living. I begged your life from Dale for no other reason, I think, than that you had been a horse-boy in my old Company in the Low Countries. Got wot, the life was scarcely worth the saving!"

"Dale would not let you go scot-free, but would sell you into slavery. At your own entreaty I bought you, since when you have served me indifferently well. You have showed small penitence for past misdeeds, and your amendment hath been of lesser bulk. A hardy rogue thou wast born and a rogue thou wilt remain to the end of time."[4]

"Our cause is just, My Masters," he cried, "We stand here not for England alone; we stand for the love of law, for the love of liberty . . . This plantation is the leaven which is to leaven the whole lump, and surely he will hide it in the hollow of his hand, and in the shadow of his wing. God of Battles, hear us! God of England, God of America, aid the children of the one, the Saviors of the other."[5]

"I know that if the King's darling should meet death or maiming in this duel, on Virginian soil, the Company already somewhat out of favor, might find some difficulty in explaining things to his Majesty's satisfaction."[6]

The walls were hung with arras, there was a noble carpet beneath as well as upon the table, and against the wall stood richly carved trunks. On the table, beside a bowl of late flowers were a great silver flagon and a number of goblets, some of colored glass, strangely shaped and fragile as an eggshell. The late sun now shining in at the open window made the glass to glow like precious stones.[7]

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[3] Ibid., p. 31.

[4] Ibid., p. 49.

[5] Ibid., p. 64.

[6] Ibid., p. 96.

[7] Ibid., p. 143.

Master Pary pulled the flagon toward him, tilted it, and found it empty. His rueful face made me laugh. My lord laughed too,--somewhat loudly,--but ordered no more wine. "I wish I were at the Mermaid again," lamented the now drunken Secretary. "There we didn't split a flagon in three parts . . . The Tsar of Merscorry drinks me down a quartern of aqua vitae at a gulp,--I've seen him do it . . . I would I were the Bacchus on this cup, with the purple grapes adangle above me . . . Wine and women--wine and women . . . good wine needs no blush . . . good sherries sack" . . . . His voice died into unintelligible mutterings, and his gray unreverend head sank upon the table.[8]

A door opened and Mistress Jocelyn Percy came into the great room, like a sunbeam strayed back to earth. Her skirt was of flowered satin, her bodice of rich taffeta; between the gossamer walls of her French ruff rose the whitest neck to meet the fairest face. Upon her dark hair sat, as lightly as a kiss, a little pearl-bordered cap. A color was in her cheeks and a laugh on her lips. The rosy light of the burning pine caressed her,--now dwelling on the rich dress, now on the gold chain around the slender waist, now on the rounded arms, now on the white forehead below the pearls.[9]

The Governor had brought with him from London, the year before, a set of boxwood bowls, and had made between his house and the fort a noble green. The generality must still use for the game that portion of the street that was not tobacco planted; but the quality flocked to the Governor's green, and here, one holiday afternoon, a fortnight or more from the day on which I had drunk to the King from my lord's silver goblet, was gathered a very great company. The Governor's match was toward ten men to a side, a hogshead of sweet scented to the victorious ten, and a keg of canary to the man whose bowl should hit the jack.[10]

"A mere trick," he said, with his great laugh, "but it has served me well on more occasions than one. It is not known in Virginia, sir, but before ever the word of the Lord came to save poor silly souls I was a player. Once I played the King's ghost in Will Shakespeare's 'Hamlet,' and then, I warrant you, I spoke from the cellarage indeed. I so frighted players and playgoers that they swore it was witchcraft, and Burbage's knees did knock together in good earnest."[11]

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[8] Ibid., p. 147.

[9] Ibid., p. 150.

[10] Ibid., p. 152.

[11] Ibid., p. 168.

"The Governor and the Council sat there, with the Company's letters spread upon the table. I heard the letters read. Sir George Yeardley's petition to be released from the governorship of Virginia is granted, but he will remain in office until the new Governor, Sir Francis Wyatt, can arrive in Virginia. The King hath sent Sir Edwyn Sandys to the Tower. My Lord Warwick waxeth greater every day. The very life of the Company dependeth upon the pleasure of the King; and it may not defy him. You are to be taken into custody within six hours of the reading of the letter, to be kept straitly until the sailing of the Santa Teresa, and to be sent home aboard of her in irons. The lady is to go also, with all honor, and with women to attend her. Upon reaching London you are to be sent to the tower, the lady to Whitehall. The court of High Commission will take the matter under consideration at once. My Lord of Southhampton writes that, because of the urgent entreaty of Sir George Yeardley, he will do for you all that lieth in his power, but that if you prove not yourself comformable, there will be little that any one can do."[12]

"Last year we had a masque at court," she said at length, breaking the long silence. "We had Calisto. The Island was built of boards covered with green velvet, and there was a mound upon it of pink silk roses. There was a deep blue painted sky above. My nymphs danced around the mound of roses, while I sat upon a real rock beside the painted sea and talked with Ulysses.--to wit, my Lord of Buchingham--in gold armor. That was a strange, bright, unreal, and wearisome day, but not so strange and unreal as this."[13]

"She is an English Merchantman," said Paradise. "Look at her colors. A Company ship, probably, bound for Virginia, with a cargo of servants, gentlemen out or elbows, felons, children for apprentices, traders, French Vignerons, glasswork Italians, returning Councilors and heads of hundreds, with their lovely wives and daughters, men servants and maid servants. I made the Virginia voyage once myself, captain."[14]

"He is Jeremy, your Honor, Jeremy who made the town merry at the Blackfriars. Your Honor remember him? He had a sickness, and forsook the life and went into the country. He was known to the Dean of St. Paul's. All the town laughed when they heard he had taken orders."

"Jeremy!" cried the Treasurer. "Nick Bottom! Christopher Sly! Sir Toby Belch! Sir Francis, give me Jeremy to keep in my cabin!"

The Governor laughed. "He shall be bestowed with Captain Percy where he'll not lack for company, I warrant! Jeremy! Ben Johnson loved him; they drank together at the Mermaid."[15]

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[12] Ibid., p. 171.

[13] Ibid., p. 221.

[14] Ibid., p. 228.

[15] Ibid., p. 263.

The nearest if not the merriest thing the prospect had to offer was the pillory. It was built so tall that it was but a little lower than the upper story of the goal, and it faced my window at so short a distance that I could hear the long whistling breath of the wretch, who happened to occupy it. It was not a pleasant sound; neither was the lived face, new branded on the cheek with a great R, and with a trickle of dark blood from the mutilated ears straining the board in which the head was immovably fixed, a pleasant sight. A little to one side was the whipping post: a woman had been whipped that morning, and her cries had tainted the air even more effectually than had the decayed matter with which certain small devils had pelted the runway to the pillory.[16]

I sat and repreated to them the better part of the seventh canto of the second book of Master's Spencer's "Faery Queen." Then I told them the story of the Moor of Venice, and ended by relating Smith's tale of the three Turks heads.[17]

Summary

In To Have and To Hold, Mary Johnston has given a fine portrayal of the characteristics and temperament of the early colonists. In this delineation of character are found the natural reasons which caused them to establish that particular mode of living that has come to be firmly associated with the Old South.

The feeling of aristocracy was deeply imbedded in their natures, and they seemed conscious that they were a class set apart because of their early advantages. To them their manner of living in England had seemed ideal. They came mostly, because they were unhappy from lack of money; they still retained the desire for grandeur. In this story the officers of the colony were nearly all Noblemen. They put into daily practice the habits and customs of the home land. There were great houses, much feasting and drinking, and mulling over of past incidents pertaining to life in London.

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[16] Ibid., p. 264.

[17] Ibid., p. 318.

Biographical Sketch of John Esten Cooke

John Esten Cooke was a true son of the South. His father was John Rogers Cooke, a distinguished lawyer, and his mother was Marie Pendleton Cooke of the famous Pendleton family of Virginia. As a very young boy he lived at Glengary Plantation, then later attended the academy in Richmond. He always tried to write, and his recognition as a writer was nationwide by the time he was thirty.

He was an ardent secessionist, and served through the entire war, surrendering with General Lee at Appomatox. Mary Frances Page, of the well-known Pages of Virginia became his wife. Shortly after their marriage they moved to the Briars. It was there he spent the rest of his days, dividing his time between farming and writing. He was a true cavalier, one who idealized the past, and whose praise for Virginia was without measure![18]

The Virginian Comedians

Champ Effingham, the spoiled son of Squire Effingham, has been educated in London. Shortly after his return to the colony he becomes madly infatuated with Beatrice Hallam, a young actress, with the company known as The Virginian Comedians. She dislikes him and refuses all his attentions. In spite of that fact, he casts off his home ties, and moves to the Raleigh Inn where the company of players is staying. He becomes furious because of many rebuffs and tried to abduct her. She is saved by Charles Waters, whom she

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[18] Samuel Albert Link, Pioneers of Southern Literature. (M. E. Church, South, Publishing House, 1903) Vol. I, pp. 248-269.

later marries. During the abduction Champ Effingham tried to murder his rival. He injures him critically, and as a consequence is forced to flee to England to escape prosecution.

The second volume begins with his return to his old home in Virginia. He has become a very much chastened young man, and broad minded enough to admit his mistakes. His love affairs are finally righted and he marries Clare Lee, his childhood sweetheart, who has waited patiently for him. Much attention is also given to Captain Ralph Waters' clever courtship by means of which he marries Henrietta Lee, a lady supposed to be much above him in rank.

Citations from The Virginian Comedians

> The squire is a gentleman of fifty-five or sixty, with an open, frank, face, clear, honest eyes, and his carriage is bold, free, and somewhat pompous . . . . His broad, fine brow, full of intelligence and grace, is covered by an old cocked hat, which, having lost the loops which held it in the three cornered shape, is now rolled up upon each side; and his manner of walking, speaking, arguing, reading is much after the description of his costume--plain, straightforward, and though somewhat pompous, destitute of finery and ornament. He is the head of a princely establishment, he has thousands of acres, and hundreds of negroes, he is a justice, and has sat often in the House of Burgesses; he is rich, a dignitary, every body knows it,--why should he strive to ape elegancies, and trouble himself about the impression he produces? He is simple, plain, as he conceives, because he is a great proprietor, and can afford to wear rough clothes, and talk plainly.[19]

> "Oh, the 'Gazette' never contains any intelligence; sometimes, it is true, we hear what is going on in Parliament, but it never condescends to afford us any news from Virginia. The tobacco on the south side may all be gone to the devil for anything you read in the 'Gazette'. . . . Ah! I see we are to have a theatrical performance in Williamsbury next week, . . . 'Mr. Hallam and his 'Virginia Company of Comedians'--very politic, that addition of Virginia--' are to perform The Merchant of

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[19] John Esten Cooke, The Virginian Comedians; or Old Days in The Old Dominion (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1854) Vol. 1, p. 22.

Venice, by permission of his worship the Mayor, at the Old Theatre near the Capitol, he announces.' Truly, we are improving: really becoming civilized, in this barbarous terra incognita."[20]

"I very much fear, Squire, that these good old sentiments are becoming obsolete. We men of position and rank in society, born in high social station will have to yield, I fear.--They are talking seriously, I understand, of giving every man in the colony a vote."[21]

He spoke of the Oppressions of the Home Government, said that Virginians would not always be slaves, and broached a plan for thoroughly educating the lower classes.

". . . . Educate the lower classes! Educate my indented servant, and the common tradesman and farmer, and have the knave talking to me of the 'rights of men,' and all the wretched stuff and foolery of the Utopian Castle--builders! You are right, sir, that young man must be watched. Good heavens! how has the Home Government oppressed us? I grant you, there are some laws I would have altered--and others refused us, passed--but is this oppression?. . . . The direct consequences of these fooleries is to abolish our rank--follow these doctrines, and where will be our gentlemen?"[22]

"Let us not criticise the worthy parson's appearance in a play-house too severly, however . . . . If parsons drank deep then, and hunted Reynard, and not unwillingly took a hand at cards,--and they did all this and more--why should they not also go and see the "good old English drama?"[23]

"There is very little popular ignorance in Virginia--"

"Very little!" . . . "You deceive yourself! It is immense! From the indented servant who drives his master's coach, to the yeoman who toils with the sweat running from his brow, all is ignorance, darkness and gloom."[24]

"Well, I think so, too," said the man in the red cloak. "I hope I shall live to see the day when the public journal will be the great

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[20] Ibid., p. 31.

[21] Ibid., p. 34.

[22] Ibid., pp. 34-35.

[23] Ibid., p. 47.

[24] Ibid., p. 104.

speaker of the time--. . . A great daily volume, containing intelligence from every quarter of the world, news upon every subject, comment free from partisan falsehood; and this great organ of thought I sometimes think will, in future, be scattered over the land like the leaves of the autumn forest yonder. When the time comes, mankind will take a great stride onward."[25]

"I understand you to say . . . that this thing we call feudalism--which has come in for so much abuse from you, still exists in a degree? Come; let us see how it looks in Virginia."

"We have but the shadow--thank God, the edifice has crumbled in part; but the flanking towers remain, and that shadow still lies like gloom upon the land. See how human thought is still warped and darkened by it.--how rank and unwholesome weeds possess the earth;"[26]

"Is it not enough, sir, for the Established Church to wring from you, whether you conform or not, support for its ministers--to stuff itself and its tenets down your throat? Is it not bad enough for the House of Burgesses to legislate for the great landed proprietors alone, who form the body, ignoring the very existence of the common man, who has no vote?"[27]

The heavens are dark, the ways we tread devious and full of hidden snares. England, our tender mother, might say, who planted them? For England, from whose loin we sprung, has cursed us!--like a stepmother, she has struck with a bitter and remorseless hatred, those who would be her children; She cursed us with this race of Africans, who are eating us up and ruining us, and some day, in the blind convulsions of her rage, she will taunt us bitterly for asking what we do not grant ourselves--for demanding freedom, when our arms are holding down a race human as ourselves;[28]

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 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

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[25] Ibid., p. 126.

[26] Ibid., p. 185.

[27] Ibid., p. 187.

[28] Ibid., p. 191.

puffs and furbelows and flounces; see, above all, their gracious smiles, as they flirt their fans and dart their fatal glances at the magnificently clad gentlemen . . . .[29]

The sentiment of religion is so high and pure, depends so completely upon the untrammelled operation of the human heart, that any legislation which tends to circumscribe and reduce it to rule must eternally fail, and operate wofully for the great interest of mankind. This sentiment, sir, must be permitted to be a law unto itself; nothing can direct it; nothing should interfere with it. Especially and terribly unjust are those laws which say to the follower of Christ 'you shall not worship at any shrine but one and that shrine you must support'. . . . I am compelled to say, that I believe religious toleration the first and most important duty of a state."[30]

"Ah! not a palace of education like the European Academies," he said, "and even not quite equal to 'William and Mary' in the town yonder . . . . It seems to me there is a large amount of excellent information to be acquired in these log houses . . . . I have a notion that the colony of Virginia will some day turn out a number of distinguished men,--at least it is probable; and then the Old Field School will be rendered honorable, as the forest lyceum where the young patriots drank in their first ideas."[31]

Summary

Mr. Cooke's own version of his literary aspirations is apropos:

"My aim has been to paint the Virginia phase of American society, to do for the Old Dominion what Cooper has done for the Indians, Simms for the Revolutionary drama in South Carolina, Irving for the Dutch Knickerbockers, and Hawthorne for the weird Puritans of New England."[32]

In this aspiration, authorities have agreed that he was truly successful. It is said that he chose to write of the period from 1763 to the

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[29] Ibid., p. 261.

[30] Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 93-4.

[31] Ibid., p. 194.

[32] Link, op. cit., p. 253.

outbreak of the Revolution because he considered it the period in which the features that distinguished the Virginians were seen at their best.

No doubt, it is significant that he chose four of his main characters from the middle and lower classes. He combined with rare ability the romance and the psychology that went into the making of the Revolution. The reader can sense, beneath the social splendor, the spirit of determination which has always been evident in the men of the South. The man in the red cloak appears throughout the story, giving many stirring speeches to spur the people on to revolution. At the end of the story in a dramatic manner his identity is disclosed. He is Patrick Henry.

John Esten Cooke has handled very effectively in his novel the two points of view concerning the revolutionary movement. He has depicted the irony of the situation, that the upper class Virginians wanted their freedom from England only to establish there the same tyranny they themselves had rejected. This book has fine examples of the typical characters of the Old South, their traditions and family feeling, which for many years kept the South an unprogressive unit of civilization.

In general summary, concerning these two books it may be said that their main contribution is in establishing the background for this survey of Southern fiction. These books rather definitely picture the type of early colonists who settled in the South and founded the plantation mode of living. This manner of life came to be associated with the traditional South, although the great plantations were mostly confined to the Virginias and the Carolinas. The other parts of the South continued for many years to be mostly frontier and consequently the living conditions there were lacking in the refinements which characterized this particular section.

CHAPTER III

THE SOUTH OF THE EARLY NATIONAL PERIOD

Swallow Barn, which was written in 1832 by John Pendleton Kennedy concerning the first twenty-five years of the Nineteenth Century, is very suitable for the continuation of this interpretive study of certain Southern novels. The Grandissimes by George W. Cable, which is also presented in this chapter, is of equal importance in the portrayal of the highly aristocratic Creole civilization of the far South.

Biographical Sketch of John Pendleton Kennedy

John Pendleton Kennedy was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1795. His mother was Nancy Pendleton of Virginia and through her he was related to many of the distinguished families of the South. He was a first cousin of John Esten Cooke. With his mother he made many trips to Virginia and became very familiar with the country and people. At Baltimore College he gained prominence as a debater. He studied law, just as all the sons of prominent families did. While he did not practice much, his interest in law is shown by the fact that he never failed to have a lawyer character in each of his books.

At the age of nineteen young Kennedy began to take an active part in all the political affairs of the South. His knowledge and observations of that section are accurate. Link says, "No historian can afford to neglect the pages of Swallow Barn; as it lacks nothing to complete the picture of

the high hopes and the perennial mirth of the Old Dominion."[1] It is interesting to note that Kennedy tried sincerely to prevent secession, and when that proved futile he supported the Union cause. After the conflict ended he expressed himself in this manner. "I believe in amnesty and forgiveness to the weak and foolish who have erred, charity for their faults, and brotherly assistance to all who repent."[2]

Swallow Barn

This book was written in 1832 by Joseph Pendleton Kennedy and published under the assumed name of Mark Littleton. It was revised slightly before the second edition. The author, in the preface to the second edition of Swallow Barn, has given a good review of it. He expresses it very cleverly:

> "I wish it to be noted that Swallow Barn is not a novel in the true sense . . . . It was begun on the plan of a series of detached sketches linked together by the hooks and eyes of a traveller's notes; and although the narrative does run into some by-paths of personal adventure, it has preserved its desultory, sketchy character to the last. It is, therefore, utterly unartistic in plot and structure, and may be described as variously and inter-changeably partaking of a complexion of a book of travels, a diary, a collection of letters, a drama, and a history,--and this, serial or compact, as the reader may choose to compute it."[3]

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[1] Samuel Albert Link, Pioneers of Southern Literature (Nashville, Tennessee: Publishing House, M. E. Church, South, 1903), Vol. I, p. 240.

[2] Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928-1936), Vol. X, p. 333.

[3] J. P. Kennedy, Swallow Barn or A Soujourn in The Old Dominion (New York: George Putman, 1851), pp. 10-11.

The very small plot of Swallow Barn concerns the affairs of two families. The Meriwethers, of Swallow Barn, and the Traceys, their neighbors at The Brakes, are intimate friends. It is true that they are engaged in the settlement of a boundary line dispute, which has claimed the attention of the families for over fifty years; yet the litigation is of a decidedly amicable nature. During the two days of the final settlement, while the lawyers and justices are there, the contestants have pleasant social intercourse. On the first day they all gather for dinner at The Brakes, and on the following day the celebration is at Swallow Barn. In fact, when the affair is settled, all seem unhappy and wonder what they can find to be interested in next. Along with this amusing and delightful situation runs the love story of the young and idle Ned Hazard and Bel Tracy, the high-spirited daughter of the neighboring family.

Citations from Swallow Barn

> There is not a by-path in Virginia that will take a gentleman, who has time on his hands, in a wrong direction. This I say in honest compliment to a state which is full to the brim of right good fellows.[4]

> A landed proprietor, with a good house and a host of servants, is naturally a hospitable man. A guest is one of his daily wants. A friendly face is a necessity of life, without which the heart is apt to starve, or a luxury without which it grows parsimonious. Men who are isolated from society by distance, feel these wants by an instinct, and are grateful for the opportunity to relieve them. In Meriwether, the sentiment goes beyond this. It has, besides, something dialectic in it. His house is open to everybody, as freely almost as an inn.[5]

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[4] Ibid., p. 20.

[5] Ibid., pp. 33-4.

He thinks lightly of the mercantile interest, and, in fact, undervalues the manners of the large cities generally. He believes that those who live in them are hollow-hearted and insincere, and wanting in the substantial intelligence and virtue, which he affirms to be characteristic of the country . . . .

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. There is nothing more conclusive than a rich man's logic anywhere, but in the country, among his dependents, it flows with the smooth and unresisted course of a full stream irrigating a meadow, and depositing its mud in fertilizing luxuriance.[6]

The school-house has been an appendage to Swallow Barn ever since the infancy of the last generation. Frank Meriwether has, in his time, extended its usefulness by opening it to the accommodation of his neighbors; . . . . This little empire is under the dominion of parson Chub . . . He is a good scholar, and having confined his reading entirely to the learning of the ancients, his republicanism is somewhat after the Grecian mould.[7]

In Virginia it is a feature of her education and policy to hold all other interests subordinate to her own. Her wealth is territorial; her institutions all savor of the soil; her population consists of landholders, of many descents, unmixed with foreign alloy. She has no large towns where men may meet and devise improvements or changes in the arts of life. She may be called a nation without a capital. From this cause she has been less disturbed by popular commotions, less influenced by popular fervors, than other communities. Her laws and habits, in consequence, have a certain fixedness, which even reject many of the valuable improvements of the day. In policy and government she is, according to the simplest and purest forms a republic; in temper and opinion in the usages of life, and in the qualities of her moral nature, she is aristocratic.[8]

The air of contentment and good humor and kindly family attachment, which was apparent throughout the Quarters, and the familiar relations existing between them and the proprietor struck me very pleasantly . . . . The contrast between my preconceptions of their condition and the reality which I had witnessed, has brought me a most agreeable surprise.

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[6] Ibid., p. 35.

[7] Ibid., pp. 64-66.

[8] Ibid., p. 71.

> I will not say that, in a high state of cultivation and of such self-dependence as they might possibly attain in a separate national existence, they might not become a more respectable people; but I am quite sure they could never become a happier people than I find them here . . . . In short, I think them the most good-natured, careless, light-hearted, and happily-constructed human beings I have ever seen: Having but few simple wants, they seem to me to be provided with every comfort which falls within the ordinary compass of their wishes.[9]

> "Has any sensible man, who takes a different view of this subject, ever reflected upon the consequences of committing two or three millions of persons, born and bred in a state so completely dependent as that of slavery--so unfurnished, so unintellectual, so utterly helpless, I may say--to all responsibilities, cares and labors of a state of freedom?"[10]

Summary

Swallow Barn presents a picture of the scenery, manners, and rural life of Virginia during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. According to this author, during the early National Period all the Southern planters exhibited a real paternalistic attitude toward their slaves. It is a story which truly exalts the virtues of the South. Beautiful women, interest in English literature, and the conservation of all the courtly chivalric habits are stressed in the highest degree.

This novel well depicts that period of great contentment, before the shadow of the Civil War darkened the horizon. All is mellowed, idealized, and romantically treated at the hands of John Pendleton Kennedy, whose artistry is exceptional. It gives to literature the first of the plantation

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[9] Ibid., pp. 452-455.

[10] Ibid., p. 456.

traditions in fiction, and establishes a style which was utilized by most all writers of Southern fiction until late in the nineteenth century.[11]

Biographical Sketch of George Washington Cable

George Washington Cable was born in the charming old city of New Orleans in 1844. He had little opportunity for schooling, and at the age of fourteen he was forced by his family's finances to take a position in the Customs House. From 1865 to 1873 he was employed as a clerk, journalist, and surveyor. Many of the incidents which came to his notice in connection with his various occupations incited in him a deep interest in the lore of the creoles. This desire to know more of their strange history and their romantic traditions led him to delve into the musty old records of the Spanish, French and American city.

There was an old world atmosphere about New Orleans, and the city had a true culture. The city enjoyed grand opera, concerts, and ballet dancing at the very time that much of the rest of the country was finding its recreation in the spelling bee, the singing school, and the revival meeting. Cable's rare ability as an artist, coupled with such wealth of material, put him among the foremost in the field of American fiction.[12] When The Grandissimes first made its appearance in the North, Cable was called the

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[11] Russell Blankenship, American Literature (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 209.

[12] Fred Lewis Pattee, The Development of the Short Story (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1923), pp. 255-256.

first literary voice of the New South. In spite of his New England ancestry he was truly Southern, for when he left the South, he lost the very zest or flavor for which he has been famous.

The Grandissimes

The Grandissimes is an epic of old Creole days. The story begins in the year of 1803 in Nouvelle Orleans, Louisiana, which is now called New Orleans. The great family of Brahmin Mandarin Fusilier de Grandissime is the very core of this novel. The pride of the family in its traditions and honor knows no bounds. No member of the family either questions his right to be considered of the first family, or allows others to question that right.

Joseph Frowenfeld, a young German, has come with his family from Pennsylvania to make their home in Nouvelle Orleans. All of the family are stricken with yellow fever and Joseph is the sole survivor. There are many strange stories, habits, and customs for this young man to learn about his adopted country. The story is told in a unique manner. It comes to the reader, bit by bit, just as it comes to the understanding of the young apothecary. He learns about distant family connections, various intrigues, and begins to sense the deep current of racial feeling. He is subjected, at first, to unkind persecution because of his occupation. Many of the people think one who deals in drugs to be a practitioner of voodism. Later, some of his erstwhile enemies come to approve of him and his beliefs, and he is accepted in the city.

Another fine old family is the Demosthenes de Grapions. They have not been as prolific a family as the Grandissimes, and they have suffered finan-

cial losses to their rivals. Many years before the opening of the story one of their plantations had come into the hands of the Grandissimes, when young de Grapion had staked all on a gambling debt and lost.

Honore Grandissime is considered the head of the clan. He has been schooled in Europe and is considered worthy of administering their vast possessions, which have come to them by means of both Spanish and French Royal grants. After many years, even though it impoverishes many of his cousins, he restores the De Grapion plantation to the almost penniless widow and daughter. Then to recoup the crumbling fortune he combines forces with the quadroon, Honore Grandissime, his half brother. The quadroon has made much money in the mercantile business, and of course is delighted with their recognition.

A tale of disgrace, black magic, and torture runs throughout the story. This phase is centered about Philophe, the quadroon psychic; Bras-Coupe, a true son of Africa; and Clemence, the rice-cake vender.

In the fine old romantic way, many of the difficulties are washed away. Honore Grandissime, the white grandee, marries Aurora De Grapion Nancanou, the vivacious widow. Joseph Frowenfeld takes as his bride the lovely Clotilde, her daughter.

Citations from The Grandissimes

> "Their name is De Grapion--oh, De Grapion, says I! their name is Nancanore. They are without exception, the finest women--the brightest, the best and the bravest--that I know in New Orleans." . . . ."Best blood of the Province; almost as good as the Grandissimes. Blood is a great thing here, in certain odd ways,. . ."very curious sometimes". . . . "At a grand ball about two months ago, where I had a bewildering fine time with those ladies, the proudest old turkey in the theater was an

old fellow whose Indian blood shows in his very behavior, and yet--ha, ha! I saw that same old man, at a quadroon ball a few years ago, walk up to the handsomest, best dressed man in the house, a man with a skin whiter than his own,--a perfect gentleman as to looks and manners,--and without a word slap him in the face."

"You laugh?" asked Frowenfeld.

"Laugh? Why shouldn't I? The fellow had no business there. Those balls are not given to quadroon males, my friend. He was lucky to get out alive, and that is about all he did."[13]

"I have these facts," it was Agricola Fusilier's habit to say, "by family tradition; but you know, sir, t-tradition is more authentic than history!"[14]

Zephyr Grandissime, married, still later, a lady of rank, a widow without children, sent from France to Biloxi under a lettre de cahet. . . Once the leisurely Zephyr gave them a start, generation followed generation with a rapidity that kept the competing De Grapins incessantly exasperated, and new-made Grandissime fathers continually throwing themselves into the fond arms and upon the proud neck of congratulatory grandsires.[15]

"There are so many Grandissimes," said the weary-eyed Frowenfeld, "I cannot distinguish between--I can scarcely count them."

"Well, now," said the doctor, "let me tell you, don't try. They can't do it themselves. Take them in the mass--as you would shrimps."[16]

"Did she sign the paper?" asked Joseph.

"She? wait till you know her! No, indeed: They had the true scorn. She and her father sent down another and better title. Creole-like they managed to bestir themselves to that extent and there they stopped.

. . . . . .

"Did you ever hear of a more perfect specimen of Creole price? That is the way with all of them. Show me any Creole, or any number of Creoles, and right down at the foundation of it all, I will find that same

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[13] George W. Cable, The Grandissimes (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1880), p. 19.

[14] Ibid., p. 24.

[15] Ibid., p. 28.

[16] Ibid., p. 36.

preposterous, apathetic, fantastic, suicidal pride. It is lethargic and ferocious as an alligator. That is why the creole almost always is (or thinks he is) on the defensive. See those De Grapions' haughty good manners to old Agricole; yet there wasn't a Grandissime in Louisiana who could have set foot on the De Grapion land but at the risk of his life . . . . He must have left everything smothered in debt; for, like his race, he had stuck to indigo because his father planted it, and it is a crop that has lost money steadily for years."[17]

"You must get acclimated," responded the Creole; "not in body only, that you have done; but in mind--in taste--in conversation--and in convictions too, yes, ha, ha! They all do it--all who come. They hold out a little while--a very little; then they open their stores on Sunday, they import cargoes of Africans, they bribe the officials, they smuggle goods, they have coloured housekeepers. My--de seh, the water must expect to take the shape of the bucket; eh?"[18]

"Oh yes, Frowenfeld," said Doctor Keene, with a little laugh, as the three sat down, "I'd a'most as soon trust that woman as if she was white."

"How free," said Agricola, beginning with a meditative gaze at the sky without, and ending with a philosopher's smile upon his two companions,--"how free we people are from prejudice against the negro!"

"The white people," said Frowenfeld, half abstractedly, half inquiringly.

"H--my young friend, when we say 'we people' we always mean we white people. Now the mention of color always implies pure white; and whatever is not pure white is to all intents and purposes pure black. When I say the 'whole community' I mean the whole white portion; when I speak of the 'undivided public sentiment,' I mean the white population. What else could I mean . . . . Not that there is any prejudice against the negro. By no means. Wherever he can be of any service in a strictly menial capacity we kindly and generously tolerate his presence."[19]

The old man gave a look of stern interrogation.

"Governor Claiborne."

"Ye-e-e gods! Claiborne! Claiborne! Why he is a yankee!"[20]

"Your principal danger--at least, I mean difficulty--is this; that the Louisianians themselves, some in pure lawlessness, some through loss of office, some in a vague hope of preserving the old condition of things

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[17] Ibid., p. 40.

[18] Ibid., p. 46.

[19] Ibid., pp. 73-4.

[20] Ibid., p. 109.

will not only hold off from all participation in your government, but will make all sympathy with it, all advocacy of its principles, and especially all office-holding under it, odious--disreputable--infamous.

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The governor said something often heard, before and since, to the effect that communities will not sacrifice themselves for mere ideas.

"My-de-seh," replied the Creole, "you speak like a true Anglo-Saxon; but, sir! how many, many communities have committed suicide. * * *

"Well," said the governor, smilingly, "you have pointed out what you consider to be the breakers, now can you point out the channel?"

"Channel? There is none! And you, nor I, I cannot dig one. Two great forces may ultimately do it, Religion and Education."[21]

"But there is a slavery that no legislation can abolish,--the slavery of caste. That like all the slaveries on earth, is a double bondage. And what a bondage it is which compels a community in order to preserve its established tyrannies, to walk behind the rest of the intelligent world! What a bondage is that which incites a people to adopt a system of social and civil distinctions, possessing all the enoimities and none of the advantages of those systems which Europe is learning to despise! This system, moreover, is only kept up by a flourish of weapons. We have here what you called an armed aristocracy. The class over whion these instruments of main force are held is chosen for its servility, ignorance, and cowardice; hence, indolence in the ruling class. When a man's social or civil standing is not dependent on his knowing how to read he is not likely to become a scholar."[22]

"But after all," persisted the Creole, "the greater part of our troubles comes from---"

"Slavery," said Frowenfeld, "or rather caste."

"Exactly," said M. Grandissime.

"You surprise me, sir," said the simple apothecary. "I supposed you were--"

"My-de'-seh," exclaimed M. Grandissime, suddenly becoming very earnest, "I am nothing, nothing! There is where you have the advantage of me. I am but a dilettante, whether in politics, in philosophy, morals or religion. I am afraid to go deeply into anything lest it should ruin my name, my family, and my property."[23]

"The shadow of the Ethiopian," said the grave apothecary.

M. Grandissime's quick gesture implied that Frowenfeld had said the very word.

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[21] Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[22] Ibid., p. 184.

[23] Ibid., p. 198.

"Ah! my-de'-seh, when I try sometimes to stand outside and look at it I am ama-aze at the length, the blackness of the shadow!" (He was so deep in earnest that he took no care of his English.) "It is the Ne'me'sis wish, instead of coming afteh, glides along by the side of this moral, political, commercial, social mistake! It blanches my-de'-seh, ow whole civilization! It drlegs us a century behind the rhes' of the world! It retahds and poisons everhy industry we got!--Mos' of all our h--immense agricultu'e! It breeds a thousan' cusses that nev'a leave home but jus' flutter--h--up and rhoost, my-de'-seh, on ow heads; and we nevva knows it!--yes, sometimes some of us know it."[24]

Among these stood the great mother-Mansion of the Grandissimes. . . The round, white-plastered buck pillars which held the house up from the reeking ground and rose on loftily to sustain the great overspreading roof or clustered in the cool, paved basement; the lofty halls, with their multitudinous glitter of gilded brass and twinkle of sweet smelling wax candles; the immense encircling veranda, where twenty Creole girls might walk abreast; the great front stairs, descending from the veranda to the garden, with a lofty palm on either side, on whose broad steps forty Grandissimes could gather on a birthday afternoon; and the belvidere, whence you could see the cathedral, the Ursulines', the governor's mansion, and the river, far away, shining between the villas of the Tchoupitoulas Coast--. . . ."[25]

The guests stood for an instant as if frozen, smitten stiff with the instant expectation of insurrection, conflagration and rapine . . ., while single-handed and naked-fisted in a room full of swords, the giant stood over his master, making strange signs and passes and rolling out in wrathful words of his mother tongue what it need no interpreter to tell his swarming enemies was a voudou malediction.

"Nous sommes grigis!" screamed two or three ladies, "We are bewitched!"

"Look to your wives and daughters!" shouted a Brahmin--Mandarin.

"Shoot the black devils without mercy!" cried a Mandarin-Fusilier, unconsciously putting into a single outflash of words the whole Creole treatment of race troubles.[26]

"My-de'-seh, recollect that to us the Grandissime name is a treasure. And what has preseved it so long? Cherishing the unity of our family; that has done it; that is how my father did it. Just or

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[24] Ibid., p. 198.

[25] Ibid., p. 203.

[26] Ibid., pp. 235-6.

unjust, good or bad, needful or not, done else where or not, I do not say; but it is a Creole trait . . . . "Creoles, some Grandissimes among them, evading the United States revenue laws and even beating and killing some of the officials: Well! Do the people at large repudiate those men? My-de'-seh, in no wise, seh! No; if they were Americans--but a Louisianian--is a Louisianian; touch him not; when you touch him you touch all Louisiana! So with us Grandissimes; we are legion, but we are one. Now, my-de'-seh, the thing you ask me to do is to cast over-board that old traditional principle which is the secret of our existence."[27]

"Oh," she resumed, as soon as she could be heard, "white folks is werry kind. Dey wants us to b'lieb we happy--dey wants to b'lieb we is w'y, you know, dey 'blieged to b'lieb it--fo' dey own cyumfut. 'Tis de sem wah wid de preache's; dey buil' we ow own sep'ate meet'n-houses; dey b'lieb us lak it de bess, an' dey knows dey lak it de bess."[28]

But the feelings handed down to Clemence had come through ages of African slavery; through fires that do not refine, but that blunt and blast and blacken and char; starvation, gluttony, drunkenness, thirst, drowning, nakedness, dirt, fetichism, debauchery, slaughter, pestilence and the rest--she was their heiress; they left her the cinders of human feelings. She remembered her mother. They had been separated in her childhood, in Virginia, when it was a province. She remembered, with pride, the price her mother had brought at auction, and remarked, as an additional interesting item, that she had never seen or heard of her since.[29]

"After all," pursued Clotilde, "what troubles us is not how to make a living, but how to get a living without making it."[30]

You may see their grandchildren today anywhere within the angle of the old Rues Desplanade and Rampart, holding up their heads in unspeakable poverty, their nobility kept green by unflinching self-respect, and their poetic and pathetic pride revelling in ancestral, perennial rebellion against common sense.[31]

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[27] Ibid., pp. 289-290.

[28] Ibid., p. 330.

[29] Ibid., p. 331.

[30] Ibid., p. 336.

[31] Ibid., p. 372.

Summary

Before summarizing this book, it seems appropriate to give a definition of Creole; as the term so often is interpreted incorrectly. Webster says: "a white descendant of the French or Spanish settlers of Louisiana or some of the gulf states, preserving their speech and culture." He also says: "A person of mixed Creole and negro blood, speaking a dialect of French and Spanish."

The author has used the first definition in his interpretation of the Creole peoples. This local colorist had wonderful and romantic material from which to draw upon for his fiction. The romantic treatment is so stressed that the reader might be lead to doubt the authenticity of any part of it. Blankenship says the following concerning this point:

> Cable was a true artist. His exotic background, his characters alien to American ways, and the dramatic incident required by the taste of the time all were combined into the very effective stories that lacked little of possessing great power . . . . The action of his stories is direct, swift, and not so obviously manufactured as it was with so many of the local colorists.[32]

There are a few definite facts which this book portrays very clearly; that in the mingling of the Creole blood with the aristocracy from the other countries, there resulted that particular fusion of character and ideals, which most naturally formed the Southern Dominion; that it was the deliberate policy of those people to stay apart from the North, and to close as nearly as possible all avenues of communication by which any complaint of their institution of slavery could reach them; and that illiteracy

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[32] Russell Blankenship, American Literature; as an Expression of the National Mind (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 442.

was encouraged, lest by means of reading, some of its people might become enlightened concerning its problems. The book illustrated well the Southern conception of menial labor, and the amazing lengths to which the impoverished gentility would go to escape it. It is true that this book is sectional; yet it appears to interpret in a clear manner all the traditions which have gone into the formation of the Old South.

The main importance of Swallow Barn and The Grandissimes is to lend emphasis to the facts which have already been stated concerning the particular Southern civilization of the early days. These books stress the fact that the wealthy people lived in semi-feudal elegance, which produced the ideas of grandeur their descendants have always fondly cherished.

Charles R. Beard explains that the South never really possessed a good social cultural background as did the European countries. He speaks of the culture of the South as one of leisure brought about with slave labor and made conspicuous by lavish expenditure for articles of refinement which were made in other countries. However, he admits that other parts of the country accepted this idea of the South's cultural mode of existence. Thus, the people who lived outside this section helped by means of this erroneous conception to idealize and carry on the legend of the Old South.[33]

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[33] Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), pp. 402-3.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOUTH OF THE CIVIL WAR AND EARLY RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

In continuity of time, The Crisis, Red Rock, and The Leopard's Spots, are next in order. The Crisis concerns the actual years of the Civil War, while the other two books are about Reconstruction days.

Biographical Sketch of Winston Churchill

Winston Churchill was born in St. Louis, November 10, 1871. His father was from Maine, and his mother was Emma Bell Blaine of St. Louis. On his father's side he was descended from Jonathan Edwards and from the Dwights, two of whom were presidents of Yale. It seems with this inheritance that he might have been an entirely different sort of person, but he was reared by his aunt and grandfather on his mother's side of the family. They resided in St. Louis and their leaning was toward the South. He lived the greater part of his adult life in New Hampshire; yet he never lost the type of mind that is usually associated with the Southern people.

Charles C. Baldwin nicely interprets the character of Winston Churchill when he says:

> But Mr. Churchill is all for escaping life. He early discovered that life as he encountered it every day, at home, in the classroom, on the streets, was a vain and, seemingly, an empty business. It was not satisfying. Too often you had to go without. And it was drab. There was no fine raiment, no color, no cloaks flung carelessly across the shoulder; banners did not float from battlements above a lily-padded moat; gracious women did not smile down upon the head the bowed to kiss them. He had been born out of his due time and into a commercial age.

> And so he ran away. He re-created out of the crumbling ruins of the past a fairy world where he could play a more heroic part than that in which, by chance, he had been cast.[1]

The Crisis

In The Crisis, Winston Churchill paints the picture before and during the Civil War in Missouri and especially in St. Louis. He used St. Louis as the setting because it represented at that time a point of convergence for the two opinions concerning slavery. The geographical position of St. Louis practically determined that. The hero, Stephen Brice, and the villain, Eliphalet Hopper, are Englanders and represent the Yankee viewpoint. Virginia Carvel, the heroine, is a true daughter of the South. Clarence Colfax, who is Brice's rival for her affections, is an officer in the Confederate army.

Judge Whipple, a strong Union man, and Colonel Carvel, a rank secessionist, are great friends. The author makes their friendship, in spite of their political differences, a thing of great beauty. Stephen Brice meets President Lincoln, through Judge Whipple's influence, and as a result he becomes a strong Union Leader and a devoted admirer of Lincoln.

Citations from The Crisis

> "I tell you what, Colonel," said he; "I have to have hands, of course. But somehow I wish this business of slavery had never been started!"

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[1] Charles C. Baldwin, The Men Who Make Our Novels (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1919), pp. 99-100.

"Sir," said the Colonel, with some force, "God made the sons of Ham the servants of Japheth's sons forever and ever."[2]

". . . . I hope the Southerners will be more considerate. I believe they will," he added.

"They are very proud," said his mother, "a wonderful people--born Aristocrats . . . ."[3]

"And you are from New England?" he said.

Mr. Hopper laughed.

"Tarnation!" said he, "you get used to it. When I come here, I was sort of an Abolitionist. But after you've lived here awhile you get to know that niggers ain't fit for freedom."[4]

"Jinny, ain't I nussed you always? Ain't I come upstairs to quiet you when yo' mammy ain't had no power ovah yo'? Ain't I cooked fo' yo', and ain't I followed you everywheres since I quit ridin' yo' pa's hosses to viot'ry? Ain't I one of de fambly? An yit yo' ax me to call yo' Miss Jinny."[5]

"Why do you listen to Clarence's horse talk?" said Virginia. "Why don't you make him go to work?"

"Mercy!" said Mrs. Colfax, laughing, "What could he do?"

"That's just it," said Virginia. "He hasn't a serious interest in life."

Clarence looked sullen. And his mother, as usual, took his side. "What put that into your head, Jinny," she said. "He has the place to look after, a very gentlemanly occupation. That's what they do in Virginia."

"Yes," said Virginia, scornfully, "We're all gentlemen in the South. What do we know about business and developing the resources of the country? Not that"

. . . . . .

"But if we are going to get ahead of the Yankees, we shall have to think. It was all very well to be a gentleman in the days of my great-grandfather. But now we have railroads and steamboats. And who builds them? The Yankees. We of the South think of our ancestors, and drift

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[2] Winston Churchill, The Crisis (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1901), p. 7.

[3] Ibid., p. 30.

[4] Ibid., pp. 36-7.

[5] Ibid., p. 65.

deeper and deeper in debt. We know how to fight, and we know how to command. But we have been ruined by--" here she glanced at the retreating form of Alfred, and lowered her voice, "by niggers."[6]

"The welfare of the whole South, as matters now stand, depends on slavery. Our plantations could not exist a day without slave labor. If you abolished that institution, Judge Whipple, you would ruin millions of your fellow countrymen,--. . . . All, sir, for the sake of a low breed that ain't fit for freedom. You and I, who have the Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence behind us . . ., may well establish a Republic where the basis of stability is the self-control of the individual--As long as such men as you and I form its citizens . . . . And the minute you and I let in niggers, who haven't any more self-control than dogs, on an equal basis, with as much vote as you have,--Niggers, sir, that have lived like wild beasts in the depths of the jungle since the days of Ham,--What's going to become of our Republic?"

"Education," cried the judge.

But the word was snatched from his mouth.

"Education isn't a matter of one generation. No sir, nor two, nor three, nor four. But of centuries."

"Sir," said the judge, "I can point out negroes of intelligence and learning."

"And I reckon you can teach some monkeys to talk English, and recite the catechism, and sing emotional hymns, if you brought over a couple of Million from Africa," answered the Colonel, dryly, . . ."[7]

"Shucks!" exclaimed Mr. Carvel, with amusement. "The Black Republican Party, made up of old fools and young Anarchists, of Dutchmen and nigger-worshippers. Why, Whipple, that party's a joke. Where's your leader?"

"In Illinois," was the quick response.

"What's his name?"

"Abraham Lincoln, sir," thundered Mr. Whipple. "And to my way of thinking he has uttered a more significant phrase on the situation than any of your Washington statesmen. 'This government,' said he to a friend of mine, 'cannot exist half slave and half free.'"[8]

"Marse Comyn, you know what I done promise young Miss long time ago, befo'--befo' she done left us?"

"Yes, Ephum."

"Marse Comyn, won' you give Ephum a pass down river ter fotch Cap'n Lige?"

"Ephum," said the Colonel sadly, "I had a letter from the Captain

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[6] Ibid., p. 71.

[7] Ibid., pp. 75-6.

[8] Ibid., p. 77.

yesterday. He is at Cairo. His boat is a Federal transport, and he is in Yankee pay."

Ephum took a step forward, appealingly, "But de Cap'n's yo' friend, Marse Comyn. He ain't never fo'get what you done fo' him, Marse Comyn. He ain't in de army, suh."

"And I am the Captain's friend, Ephum," answered the Colonel, quietly. "But I will not ask aid from any man employed by the Yankee Government. No--not from my own brother, who is in a Pennsylvania regiment."[9]

"If we should have more victories like Bull Run, prosperity will come back with a rush," said the son of Massachusetts. "Southern Confederacy, with Missouri one of its stars--industrial development of the South--fortunes in cotton."[10]

The General laughed. "I know the breed," he said. "I'll bet he didn't thank you."

"No, sir, he didn't."

"I like his grit," said the Colonel, emphatically. "These young bloods are the backbone of the rebellion, Brice. They were made for war. They never did anything except horse-racing and cock-fighting. They ride like the devil, fight like the devil, but don't give a picayune for anything. Walker had some of 'em. Crittenden had some. And, good Lord, how they hate a Yankee . . . ."[11]

"Mr. Lincoln," she faltered, "I did not know when I came here. I should have known you, for I heard him--I heard Major Brice praise you. "Oh," she cried, "how I wish that every man and woman and child in the South might come here and see you as I have seen you today. I think--I think some of their bitterness might be taken away."[12]

Summary

In The Crisis, Winston Churchill describes remarkably well two distinct types of people. He handles the opinions of both the North and the South in a strictly impartial manner. Churchill brings out clearly the fact

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[9] Ibid., p. 345.

[10] Ibid., p. 358.

[11] Ibid., p. 432.

[12] Ibid., p. 506.

that the early South developed naturally into a particular type of civilization, because her ancestors were mainly Cavaliers; while the North because of her ancestory became the Puritan stronghold. He presents with fine ability the Southerners somewhat controlled by their emotions and the hard-fisted Yankees controlled by their intellect.

Certain of his Southern characters speak of changes which will come eventually as a result of the war, but they seem to sense these conditions more as onlookers because the changes have been forced upon them. Nearly all of the characters in The Crisis are from the upper class, which fact limits, to a certain extent, the value of the interpretation. The author's presentation of the great historical characters of Lincoln, Grant, and Sherman represents the finest contribution of the book. These men are portrayed with intimate glimpses into their real character and consequently seem very human and natural.

Biographical Sketch of Thomas Nelson Page

The birthplace and early home of Thomas Nelson Page was "Oakland," a plantation near Beaver Dam, Virginia. Throughout the Civil War, his father was a prominent Southern officer. The Page family was related to the Randolphs, Pendeltons, Carters, and Lees. Thomas was a descendant of Thomas Nelson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. After the completion of his law training at the University of Virginia, he practiced at Richmond. He became a noted man in the civic affairs there, and later was the representative from the United States to Italy.

The years which he spent in the scenes of war and reconstruction so impressed him as to color his whole thinking in after life. By his friends,

Thomas Nelson Page was considered a most worthy representative of the Virginia aristocracy. Throughout his life he held fast to the beliefs and the standards of conduct acquired in his boyhood. He always listened with great interest to the tales of the "Golden Age" in Virginia. These things explain the qualities which are found in his literary works. At heart he was a romancer, and he tended to over-emphasize the attractive side of all situations. He presented faithfully the conception of the feudal splendor of the Ante-bellum South. To him the passing of the Old Dominion was the greatest calamity that has yet befallen the human race.[13]

Red Rock

In the preface to this book the author says the following concerning the setting for this novel:

> It need only to be said that it lies in the South, somewhere in that vague region partly in one of the old Southern States and partly in that yet vaguer land of Memory. It will be spoken of in this story, as Dr. Cary, General Legaie, and the other people who used to live there in old times, spoke of it, in warm affection, as 'the old County,' or, the 'Red Rock section,' or just 'my country, sir.'

Red Rock is a chronicle of the Reconstruction days. The story opens with the men going to war. The author devotes only a little space to that. Then he traces their hardships and defeats after their return from the war. Mr. Page pictures with realism the years of pathetic adjustment to the intolerable conditions in the South. The Grays and the Carys are the two important families. Nearly all the others who play important parts in the

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[13] Charles C. Baldwin, The Men Who Make Our Novels, (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1924), pp. 415-16.

action of the story are related to them. Four lovely romances run throughout the story, all of which end happily; but to reach that stage the participants go through many struggles, because of the intensity of the political partisanship of that period.

The family of Major Welch comes from the North to make their home at Red Rock. At first Mrs. Welch makes many enemies because of her charity work for negroes. Finally, however, the entire family are won over to the Southern viewpoint. Hiram Still is the overseer of Red Rock and Birdwood, the two plantations which belong to the Grays and the Carys. Through political and personal dishonesty he takes the two places from their owners. This is very galling to them, but they refuse to acknowledge defeat. Naturally the trickery of Still and Jonah Leech, of the Freedman's Bureau, is discovered. The land is restored to its rightful owners, and there is happiness with the aristocrats again in the ascendancy.

Citations from Red Rock

> Mr. Welch asked if he knew where they could find a night's lodging.
> "Why, at every house in the state, sir, I hope," said Dr. Cary; for it was he. "Certainly, at the nearest one. Drive right in. We are going to our cousins, and they will be delighted to have you. You are just in time; for there is to be quite a company there to-night." And refusing to listen for a moment to Mr. Welch's suggestion that it might not be convenient to have strangers, Dr. Gray held the gate open for them to pass through.
> "Drive in, sir," he said in a tone of gracious command. "I never heard of its being inconvenient to have a guest," and in they drove.[14]

> "Yes, of course I was not talking about you; but I wouldn't have said anything about Massachusetts if I had known you came from there. I wouldn't like anybody to say anything about my state . . . I think Massachusetts is the best of the Northern States--anyhow--" . . . .

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[14] Thomas Nelson Page, Red Rock (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1898), p. 17.

This apology, sincerely given, with a certain stress on the word Northern, amused Mr. Welch, and even Middleton, to whom it presented, however, an entirely new view.

"Aren't they funny?" asked Middleton of his cousin, after their young host had left them. "You know I believe they really think it."

"Larry, you have understated it. They think they know it."[15]

"Away down South in Dixie, away, away--
In Dixie land, I'll take my stand,
To live and die for Dixie land--
Away, away, away down south in Dixie."

It was a burst of genuine feeling, universal, enthusiastic, that made the old walls resound. Even the young couples came from their secluded coverts to join in. It was so tremendous that Dr. Cary, who was standing near Mr. Welch, said to him gravely:

"A gleam of the current that is dammed up."

"If the bank ever breaks what will happen?" asked Mr. Welch.

"A flood."

"Then the right will survive."

"The strongest," said Dr. Cary.[16]

"Why sir, I have just prepared a paper which my friends think establishes incontrovertibly that Slavery is based on the Scriptures, and is, as it were, a divine institution.". . .

"It is written, 'A servant of servants shall be he.' You will not deny that?" asked the old preacher. . . .[17]

"No war?" We are at war now--with the greatest power on earth: the power of universal progress. It is not the North that we shall have to fight, but the world. Go home and make ready. If we have talked like fools, we shall at least fight like men."[18]

"And Jacquelin," he said, "keep the old place. Make any sacrifice to do that. Landholding is one of the safe-guards of a gentry. Our people, for six generations, have never sold an acre, and I never knew a man who sold land that throve."[19]

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[15] Ibid., p. 21.

[16] Ibid., p. 26.

[17] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[18] Ibid., p. 41.

[19] Ibid., p. 47.

"Our first reunion," said Mrs. Cary, smiling, and she began to give what she called her ménu, in which, cornbread, dried fruit, black-eyed peas, the welcome figured as the principal dishes. She laughed at her husband's dumb amazement.

"Bess," said the Doctor, humbly, "I retract what I said a little while ago about our having fought a fourth of the war--it was the speech of a braggart."[20]

"You haven't any master now," he said.

The old servant looked at him.

"I ain't?" Does you think I'se a free nigger?" he asked sharply, "Cause I ain't!"

"Yes, but I mean we've taken your master prisoner."

"You is?" He looked at him again keenly. "Nor, you ain't. It'll teck a bigger man 'n you to teck my master prisoner--And he ain' big as you nuther," he said, with a snap of his eyes. "He ain't de kind dat s'renders."[21]

". . . They have done their worst; they have invaded us, and taken our negroes from us. Let them bear the responsibilities they have assumed."

It was easy to see,from the enthusiasm which greeted the General, on which side the sympathy lay.

"The worst! General Legaie?" exclaimed Dr. Cary. "The worst will be coming for years. 'After the sword comes the cankerworm.' Mark my words: the first terms offered are always the best. I should not be surprised if you were to live to see negroes invested with the elective franchise."

"Impossible! Preposterous! Incredible!" declared General Legaie, his words being echoed by most of those present.[22]

Still was equal to the emergency. "These quality-niggers ain't used to bein' talked to so," he explained to Leech; "and they won't stand it from nobody but quality. They're just as stuck up as their masters, and you can't talk to 'em that way. You got to humor 'em. The way to manage 'em is through their preachers."[23]

"We're all right. We've got 'em down, and we mean to keep 'em down, too by ——!" . . . .

"Yes, the bottom rail is on top, and we mean to keep it so till the fence rots down, by ——!" . . . "You jest stick to me and Leech, and we'll bring

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[20] Ibid., p. 61.

[21] Ibid., p. 67.

[22] Ibid., p. 81.

[23] Ibid., p. 129.

you to the promised land. Yas, we're in the saddle, and we mean to stay there. We've got the Gov'ment behind us, and we'll put a gun in every colored man's hand and give him not a mule, but a horse to ride, and we'll dress his wife in silk and give her a carriage to ride in, same's my wife's got."

"Ummh! heah dat! Yes Lord! Dat's what I want," . . . .

"A mule's good 'nough for me--I b'lieve I ruther have mule 'n hoss, I'se fotched up wid mules," . . . .[24]

"She's gin them niggers the best clo'es you ever see--coats better than me or you or anyone aroun' heah has seen since the war. What's ourious to me is that though she don't seem to like niggers and git along with 'em easy--like and nat'ral as we all do, in another way she seems to kind o' want to like 'em. It reminds me of takin' physic: she takes 'em with sort o' gulp, but wants to take 'em and wants to make everybody else do it."[25]

He had prepared himself with great care, and was dressed with the utmost scrupulousness--a black frock coat, white trousers, a high stock, and immaculate linen--. . . . He presented a striking figure. The gravity of the occasion spoke in every line of his weather-beaten, high-bred face. To his mind it was not a mere question of title to property he was to argue; it was the question between the old and the new--it was a civilization that was on trial.[26]

The two words heard were "the Government" and "Leech." Suddenly the two had become one. Leech was the Government, and the Government was Leech; no longer merely the State--the Carpetbag Government--but the Government.[27]

Summary

The reader in summarizing Red Rock is impressed most with one thought that the Southern aristocrats idealize the past, and they are firmly convinced it is the only truly happy mode of living. Even the young people hold to that conviction. Very few of them are able to look forward to industrialism

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[24] Ibid., pp. 322-3.

[25] Ibid., p. 345.

[26] Ibid., p. 468.

[27] Ibid., p. 490.

as the answer to a part of the South's problem. They still seem to feel that the South's destiny lay in the reorganization of agriculture.

Thomas Nelson Page's devotion to the South is touching and sincere. He paints with true chivalry the valor and beauty of his women characters. He also shows with much skill the old time happy relationship between the Master and Mistress and their slaves. The planter and his family, according to Page, feel a deep responsibility for their slaves, and the slaves in turn put great dependence and trust in them. It is evident to inspire the love and loyalty many of the old slaves feel for their owner that there must be kind treatment and honest devotion for the slaves on the part of the Master. Red Rock is a novel which seems able to really impress people with the rightness of the institution of slavery.

Biographical Sketch of Thomas Dixon, Jr.

Thomas Dixon, Jr., was born in Shelby, North Carolina, in 1864. He was the son of a prominent Baptist minister. After he was graduated from Wake Forest College in his own state, he entered Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. He was a special student in history and political science. It is an odd fact that from 1884 to 1886 he was a member of the State Legislature of North Carolina, although he was only twenty years of age and unable to vote. In 1886 he was graduated from the Greensboro Law School. He was admitted to the bar with the privilege of practicing in the highest courts, but he gave up law within a few months to enter the ministry.

During the period that he was minister of the People's Temple in New York City, he gained much renown. He was a clear and decisive thinker, and dared to express himself freely. The books which he wrote at this time dealt

with religious and social problems. After he left the ministry he lectured for a while and then started work on The Leopard's Spots. He knew accurately the history and understood the great significance of that period in the development of the South.[28]

The Leopard's Spots

The setting of the story is in North Caroline during the Reconstruction period. Charles Gaston, who was a boy of ten when the Civil War ended, is the hero. He falls in love with Sallie Worth, the only daughter of General Worth, who is an implacable supporter of the Union. General Worth sees no sense in wasting time in politics, while young Gaston understands the need for leaders. He realizes that the two races must live together, only the Anglo-Saxons must have the supremacy. Miss Sallie, of course, submits to her father's wishes and is very unkind to Charles Gaston. He goes through many hard struggles to win her. Reverend John Durham and his wife, who have raised Gaston, both play important parts in the story.

The sub-plot centers about Tom Camp and his family. He is a soldier from the "poor white" class. Troubles with the Negroes cause the death of his two daughters. Ezra Perkins, Allan McLord, and Simon Legree are other important characters, but only for the purpose of portraying historical and political situations.

Citations from The Leopard's Spots

> "I always hated a nigger since I was knee high. My daddy and my mammy hated em before me. Somehow, we always felt like they was crowdin' us to death on them big plantations, and the little ones too. And then

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[28] Edward F. Harkins, Little Pilgrimages Among the Men Who Have Written Famous Books (Boston: L. C. Page and Company, 1903), pp. 113-31.

I had to leave my wife and baby and fight four years, all on account of their stinkin' hides, that never done nothing fer me except make it harder to live. Everytime I'd go into battle and hear them Minnie balls begin to sing over us, it seemed to me I could see their black ape faces grinnin' and makin' fun of us poor whites."[29]

"De laws-a-massy done got er church er der own! Dey has meetin' now in de school house dat Yankee 'oman built. De teachers tell 'em ef dey ain't good ernuf ter set wid de white folks in dere chu'ch, dey got ter hole up dey haids, and not 'low nobody ter push 'em in er nigger gallery."[30]

"Bah! Lay aside your Don Quixote Southern Chivalry this morning and talk to me in plain English. It doesn't matter whether I am a woman or a man. I am an idea, a divine mission this morning. I mean to establish a high school in this village for the negroes, and to build a Baptist church for them. Will you help me?"

"To be perfectly frank, I will not . . . your presence in this village as a missionary to the heathen is an insult to our intelligence and Christian manhood . . . you are a missionary among the children of Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, Jackson, Clay and Calhoun! . . . .

At the close of the war there were thousands of negro members of the white Baptist churches in the state. Your mission is not to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your mission is to teach crack brained theories of social and political equality to four millions of ignorant negroes, some of whom are but fifty years removed from the savagery of the African jungles. Your work is to separate and alienate the negroes from their former masters who can be their only real friends and guardians. Your work is to sow the dragon's teeth of an impossible social order that will bring forth its harvest of blood for our children."[31]

"Why is it that you good people of the North are spending your millions here now to help only the negroes, who feel least of all the sufferings of this war? The poor white people of the South are your own flesh and blood. Their Scotch Covenanters are of the same Puritan stock, these German, Huguenot and English people are all your kinsman, who stood at the stake with your fathers in the old world. They are many of them, homeless, without clothes, sick and hungry and broken hearted . . . . They had to

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[29] Thomas Dixon, Junior, The Leopard's Spots (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1903), pp. 28-9.

[30] Ibid., p. 41.

[31] Ibid., pp. 45-6.

fight this war because your armies invaded their soil. But for their sorrows, sufferings and burdens you have no ear to hear and no heart to pity. This is a strange thing to me."[32]

"We need your labour. Be honest, humble, patient, industrious and ever white man in the South will be your friend. What you need now is to go to work with all your might, build a roof over your head, get a few acres of land under your feet that is your own, put decent clothes on your backs, and some money in the bank, and you will become indispensible to the people of the South. They will be your best friends and give you every right and privilege you are prepared to receive."[33]

"Why couldn't they put soldiers into this Bureau if they had to have it, instead of these skunks and wolves?" snorted the General.

"Well, some of them are a little off odour of their records at home I'll admit . . . But this is the day of the carrion crow, General. You know they always follow the armies. They attack the wounded as well as the dead. You have my heartfelt sympathy. You have the dark days ahead! The death of Mr. Lincoln was the most awful calamity that could have possibly befallen the South."[34]

"Yes go on," shouted Perkins. "We are done with race and colour lines" . . .

"Our proud white aristocrats of the South are in a panic it seems. They fear the coming power of the Negro. They fear their Desdemonas may be fascinated again by an Othello! Well, Othello's day has come at last. If he has dreamed dreams in the past his tongue dared not speak, the day is fast coming when he will put these dreams into deeds, not words."[35]

"For fourteen years, the South has marched to the polls and struck blindly at the Republican party, and three times it has struck to kill. The Southern people have nothing in common with these Northern Democrats who make your platforms and nominate your candidate . . . you would vote for the devil if the Democrats nominated him, and ask no question; and what infuriates me is you vote to enforce platforms that mean economic ruin to the South . . . .

"You vote in solid mass on the Negro question, which you settled by the power of Anglo-Saxon insolence when you destroyed the Reconstruction governments at a blow. Why should you keep on voting against every interest of the South, merely because you hate the name Republican?"

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[32] Ibid., p. 48.

[33] Ibid., p. 66.

[34] Ibid., p. 77.

[35] Ibid., p. 89.

". . . The name Republican will stink in the South for a century, not because they beat us in the war, but because two years after the war, in profound peace, they inaugurated a second war on the unarmed people of the South, butchering the starving, the wounded, the women, and the children . . . . Their attempt to establish with the bayonet an African barbarism on the ruins of Southern Society was a conspiracy against human progress. It was the blackest crime of the nineteenth century."[36]

"My boy, the future America must be an Anglo-Saxon or a Mulatto! We are now deciding which it shall be. The future of the world depends on the future of this Republic. This Republic can have no future if racial lines are broken, and its proud citizenship sinks to the level of a mongrel breed of mulattoes. The South must fight this battle to the finish. Two thousand years look down upon the struggle and two thousand years of future bend low to catch the message of life or death."[37]

"When I see these young Negro men and women coming out of their schools and colleges well dressed, with their shallow veneer of an imitation culture, I feel like crying over the farce."

"Surely, Mrs. Durham, you believe they are better fitted for life?"

"They are not. They are lifted out of their only possible sphere of menial service, and denied any career. It is simply inhuman. They are led to certain slaughter of soul and body at last. It is a horrible tragedy."

". . . . I knew you were a bitter and brilliant woman, but I didn't think you would go to such lengths even with your pet aversions."

"It is not an aversion, or a prejudice, sir. It's a simple fact of history. Education increases the power of the human brain to think and the heart to suffer. Sooner or later these educated Negroes feel the clutch of the iron hand of the white man's unwritten laws on their throats . . . . The South is kinder to the Negro when he is kept in his place."[38]

"But, Doctor, will not your industrial training of the Negro gradually minimize any danger to your society?"

"No, it will gradually increase it. Industrial training gives power. If the Negro ever becomes a serious competitor of the white labourer in the industries of the South, the white man will kill him, just as your labour Unions do in the North now where the conditions of living are hard . . . . If you train the Negroes to be scientific farmers they will

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[36] Ibid., pp. 193-4.

[37] Ibid., p. 198.

[38] Ibid., p. 263.

become moved from the memory of slavery, a war of races will be inevitable, unless the Anglo-Saxon grant this trained and wealthy African equal social rights . . . . One drop of Negro blood makes a Negro."[39]

"The Negro has cost us already the loss of $7,000,000,000, a war that killed a half a million men, the debauchery of our suffrage, the corruption of our life, and threatens the future anarchy. Lincoln was right when he said:

'There is a physical difference between the white and the black races, which I believe will forever forbid them living together on terms of social and political equality.'

"Even you are still labouring under the delusions of 'Reconstruction.' The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, or the leopard his spots. Those who think it is possible will always tell you the place to work this miracle is in the South."[40]

Summary

The Leopard's Spots is purely an excuse to sketch the racial problem in the South. It portrays the havoc wrought in the South by the Northern people, because of their sentimental notions about the Negroes. The Northern people were far removed, and were unable to sense the difficulties in adjustment between the two races. The reader feels the distinction between the changes, which are forced upon the people by the Abolitionists, and the natural changes in the South's thinking. The physical changes did not hurt the Southerners nearly as much as the new political and social outlook did. This book seems like the South's answer to Uncle Tom's Cabin. It gives the true Southern conception of the racial problem that the Leopard's Spots will always remain; even religion and education cannot change them.

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[39] Ibid., p. 459.

[40] Ibid., p. 459.

The three books of this chapter, The Crisis, Red Rock, and The Leopard's Spots introduce and interpret the forces which tended in their final form to cause the downfall of the Cotton Kingdom. Naturally, the most obvious and important factor was the slavery issue. It was the seed from which the other elements grew, such as the trend toward industrialism and the loss of material wealth.

Thomas Nelson Page in Red Rock shows the people suffering defeat, but not acknowledging it. They still have spiritual wealth in the form of fine old traditions of birth, breeding, and chivalric courtesy. Through his idealized treatment of Southern life, a set type of fiction was created which remained crystalized over a period of years. The very mention of Thomas Nelson Page brings to the mind the concentrated essence of the glories of the Old South.

In The Leopard's Spots, Thomas Dixon does not idealize the South to quite the extent that Page does. He acknowledges the changes, and senses their final outcome without the appearance of being saddened by the results. He makes the reader feel that he believes that the particular pattern of life in the South is happy and desirable; yet to him nothing really matters except the retention of White supremacy. Dixon seems to understand that industrialism must come as the only answer to the problem of the freed slaves, but they must bow to white man's authority in that, as they have always done in the agricultural days.

CHAPTER V

THE SOUTH OF THE LATE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

This chapter is composed of two novels by Ellen Glasgow--The Deliverance and Barren Ground. In view of the very high appraisals given Miss Glasgow by the critics of Southern fiction, it seems appropriate to devote this entire chapter to her books.

Biographical Sketch of Ellen Glasgow

Ellen Glasgow might have been a Southern belle if she had been inclined that way. She was born of wealthy and aristocratic parents in Richmond, Virginia, in 1874. She has obeyed the elementary principle of good writing, that one must know about what he writes. Early in her life she became interested in the study of social forces. She has not been a violent reformer, but she has had an entirely new conception and interpretation of the South. As she has understood the issue, the South has been the result and not the cause of the Civil War.[1]

She has written some about the poor white class, but more often about the middle class Southern whites. Her characters have been selected mostly from the Scotch-Irish settlers, who are small farmers.

Miss Glasgow has always distinguished clearly between equality of economic opportunity and social equality. She recognized the need for blood

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[1] Arthur Hobson Quinn, American Fiction, An Historical and Critical Survey (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1936), p. 670.

and iron in the fiction of the South. Throughout her career she has supplied that need."[2]

> Her work has not been her pre-occupation only--it is to her an escape as well. She was born mentally detached from her surroundings, but the Virginia of her girlhood, despite its provincial charm, was so inalienable a part of the Victorian order from which she was spiritually in revolt that she was compelled by a more urgent effort of her will to escape into a world of her own making . . . .[3]

According to Miss Glasgow, the only art which has succeeded in the South is the art of hypocrisy. The Southerner learned to read, to write, and to argue ere he learned to think. His charm has always been that he could talk more and know less than any other American. All these things needed revision and that has been Miss Glasgow's niche in the literary field.[4]

The Deliverance

This story takes place in Virginia about 1885 or 1890. Will Fletcher, by means of a mortgage, has taken Blake Hall, which has belonged to the Blake family for over two hundred years. For eighteen years he had been the overseer for the plantation and five years after the close of the war he foreclosed on the Blakes. All this has taken place many years before the opening of the story.

The Blakes now live in a small house on eighty acres of land and

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[2] Grant Overton, "Ellen Glasgow's Arrow," Bookman, 61:291-6, May, 1925.

[3] Sara Haardt, "Ellen Glasgow and the South," Bookman, 69:133-9, April, 1929.

[4] Loc. cit.

within sight of Blake Hall. Mrs. Blake, who has been a famous belle in her early days, is blind and crippled. By means of clever deception the family keep from her the fact that they are so reduced in circumstances. She still thinks she is living at Blake Hall surrounded by her usual splendor. They have managed to keep a few pieces of their old furniture, silverware, and dishes--the only things with which the mother has any contact. They eat corn pone and bacon while daily she has her chicken and port. This entails appalling sacrifices on their part, but they wish to spare her. Three faithful old servants remain with them and wait on Mrs. Blake with the proper subservient manner. They address her affectionately as "Ole Miss."

Christopher Blake, the son, was forced at the age of ten to stop school and go to work in the tobacco fields. He resents the loss of their home and hates Will Fletcher with deadly venom. For over twenty years his constant thought has been some method of revenge. Bill Fletcher, the spoiled grandson, takes a great liking to Christopher, and then Blake realizes that through him he can have his revenge. He encourages the boy to defy his grandfather, and aids and abets in getting his liquor until the boy becomes a drunkard. Also he urges him on, so that young Fletcher marries an immoral young woman.

Marie Fletcher, the granddaughter, returns home saddened and chastened because of her unhappy marriage. She tries to be a friend to Christopher Blake. Because of his interest in her and her kind treatment of him, he begins to sense some of the futility of his many years of bitterness.

Finally young Fletcher, in a drunken rage, murders his grandfather. As usual he runs to Christopher, who plans his escape. Then Blake confesses

that he has murdered Will Fletcher. He is sent to prison, but is released at the end of three years, when the boy confesses. Christopher feels that it was really he who committed the murder, that through his imprisonment he is making restitution for the good of his soul. He looks forward to being with Marie, not with his old time ardor, but with a magnificent understanding of life.

Citations from The Deliverance

"When leetle Mr. Christopher got turned out of the Hall jest befo' his pa died, an' was shuffled into the house of the overseer, whar Bill Fletcher used to live himself, the darkeys all bought bits o' land here an' thar an' settled down to do some farming on a free scale. Stuck up, suh! Why, that nigger Zebadee Blake passed me yestiddy drivin' his own mule team, and I heard him swar he wouldn't turn out o' the road for anybody less'n God A'mighty or Marse Christopher!"[5]

"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 seen a whole parcel o' darkeys stand stock still when Fletcher drove up to the bars with his sparkin' pair of bays, an' them mos' break thar necks lettin' 'em down as soon as Mr. Christopher 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."[6]

"Howdy, Marsters," he muttered, in answer to the lawyer's nod, raising a hand to his wrinkled forehead. "Y'all ain' seen nuttin' er ole Miss's yaller cat, Beulah, I reckon?"

Peterkin eyed him with the peculiar disfavour felt for the black man by the low-born white, and evinced a sudden interest out of all proportion to Carraway's idea of the loss.[7]

". . . . Mark my words, it ain't been two years since I found that nigger Boaz digging in my asparagus shoots for ole miss's dinner."

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[5] Ellen Glasgow, The Deliverance (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1904), p. 6.

[6] Ibid., p. 8.

[7] Ibid., p. 8.

"The property idea is very strong in these rural countries, you see," the lawyer remarked gravely. "They feel that every year adds a value to the hereditary possession of land, and when an estate has borne a single name for a century there has been a veritable impress placed upon it."[8]

"But his friends? Where were his friends, I wonder? In his youth he was one of the most popular men in the state--a high liver and a good toaster, you remember, and later on he stood well in the Confederate Government. That he should have fallen into abject poverty seems incomprehensible."

Fletcher twisted in his chair. "Why that was jest three years after the war, I tell you," he said with irritable emphasis; "he hadn't a friend this side of Jordan, I reckon, who could have raised fifty cents to save his soul. The quality were as bad off as thar own niggers."[9]

Christopher nodded carelessly. "Glad to see you, Isam," Tucker responded cordially. "Times have changed since you used to live over here."

"Dat's so, suh, dat's so. Times dey's done change, but I ain't. I'se jes de same. Dat's de tribble wid dis yer worl; w'en hit changes yo' fortune hit don' look ter changing yo' skin as well."[10]

"Business may come later, my son," she said, detaining them by a gesture of her heavily ringed hand. "After dinner you may take Mr. Carraway with you into the library and discuss your affairs over a bottle of burgundy, as it was your grandfather's custom before you . . ."[11]

"I have never slouched in my life," Mrs. Blake replied decisively, "and I do not care to fall into the habit in my old age. When my last hour comes, I hope at least to meet my God in the attitude becoming a lady; and in my day it would have been considered the height of impropriety to loll in a chair or even to rock in the presence of gentlemen. Your Great-aunt Susannah, one of the most modest women of her time, has often told me that once, having unfortunately crossed her knees in the parlor after supper, she suffered untold tortures from 'budges' for three mortal hours rather than to be seen to do anything so indelicate as to

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[8] Ibid., P. 20.

[9] Ibid., pp. 32-3.

[10] Ibid., p. 49.

[11] Ibid., pp. 59-60.

uncross them. Well, well, ladies were ladies in those days, and now Lila tells me it is quite customary for them to sit like men . . . ."

"Things have changed, dear, I wish they hadn't. I liked the old things too."[12]

"Oh, I can't bear to hear you," Cynthia returned passionately. "If we must go to the dogs, for heaven's sake, let's go remembering that we are Blakes--or Corbins, if you like."

"Bless your heart, child, I'd as lief remember I was a Blake--or even a Weatherby, for that matter. Why, Jacob Weatherby's grandfather was an honest, self-respecting tiller of the soil when mine used to fish his necktie out of the punch-bowl every Saturday night, people said."[13]

"I don't care about stations in life, nor blood, nor anything like that," she protested.

The old lady sighed, "We won't have any more of Solomon, Tucker," she observed. "I fear he will put notions into the child's head. Not care about blood, indeed! What are we coming to, I wonder?"[14]

The ancient custom of curing tobacco with open fires, which has persisted in Virginia since the days of the early settlers, was still commonly in use; and it is possible that had one of Christopher's colonial ancestors appeared at the moment in Jacob Weatherby's log barn, it would have been difficult to convince him that between his death and his resurrection there was a lapse of more than two hundred years.[15]

"Oh, Lila, who was his grandfather?" she cried.

"Well, there's one thing certain, she doesn't want to marry his grandfather," put in Tucker, . . . "Not that I have anything against the old chap, for that matter; he was an honest, well-behaved old body, and used to mend my boots for me until the day of his death . . ."

"Uncle Tucker, you will drive me mad," she exclaimed, the tears starting to her lashes. "It does seem to me that you might show some consideration for the family name. It's all we've left."

"And it's a good enough relic in its way," Tucker replied amicably, "though if you are going to make a business of sacrificing yourself, for heaven's sake let it be for something bigger than a relic. A live neighbor is a much better thing to make sacrifices for than a dead grandfather."[16]

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[12] Ibid., pp. 85-6.

[13] Ibid., pp. 94-5.

[14] Ibid., p. 171.

[15] Ibid., p. 204.

[16] Ibid., p. 211.

"Well, his son is becoming quite courtly," she responded, smiling, "and I know Jacob is proud of you--or he ought to be, which amounts to the same thing. There's nothing I like better than to see a good, hard-working family proper in life and raise its station. Not that I mean to put ideas into your head, of course, for it is a ridiculous sight to see a person dissatisfied with the position in which the good Lord has placed him."[17]

"Good Lord! It's such a little thing to make a fuss about," Tucker said, "when you remember, my dear, that our levels aren't any bigger than chalk lines in the eyes of God Almighty."[18]

"Well, it seems to me every thriftless nigger in the country thinks he's got aclaim to you, sho' enough," Tom Spade interrupted. "It warn't mo'n last week that I had a letter from the grandson of yo' pa's old blacksmith Buck, sayin' he was to hang in Philadelphia for somebody's murder, an' that I must tell Marse Christopher to come git him off. Thar's a good six humnard of 'em, black an' yaller, an' it's God A'mighty or Marse Christopher to 'em every one."[19]

As he stood there in the center of the room, his eyes, traversing the walls, fell upon the portrait of Bolivar Blake, and with one of the fantastic tricks of memory there shot into his head the eying phrase of that gay sinner: "I may not sit with the saints, but I shall stand among the gentlemen."[20]

Summary

In The Deliverance, Miss Glasgow appears to be truthful about the South without destroying old sentiments with too much harshness. It is truly a novel of transition. Mrs. Blake is the most dominant character throughout the story. She represents the very incarnation of the Old Southern tradition.

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17 Ibid., p. 233.

18 Ibid., p. 366.

19 Ibid., p. 378.

20 Ibid., p. 448.

She has never been told that the South lost the war and she speaks of the time "when we belonged to the United States." Since she has been allowed to believe that the glories of the South are overwhelmingly magnified in her estimation.

The other characters are of the New South. They realize that no longer does the blood in their veins determine their destinies. Tucker, Mrs. Blake's brother, is the most truly democratic of them all. He has been humbled by the great physical calamity which befell him during the war, and he has worked out a fine philosophy of living.

In the character of Will Fletcher, the one time overseer, who has become wealthy, there is an excellent portrayal of the uncultured "get rich quick" type. Although his crudities are offensive, Ellen Glasgow makes clear his rights. She shows that the opportunity to succeed economically should be free to all.

Barren Ground

Barren Ground is mainly the life story of Dorinda Oakley. She is the daughter of a middle class Scotch-Irish mother and a father from the "poor whites." Dorinda's life has been as barren as the living the family has wrested from the worn-out soil of Virginia. Dorinda falls suddenly and deeply in love with Jason Greylock, a young doctor, who is there taking care of his drunken father's practice. On the eve set for their marriage Jason brings home another bride. Dorinda goes to New York, where she is injured in a street accident, and her baby does not live. A surgeon and his wife give her employment and help her to regain her interest in life.

After a few years in the city, Dorinda feels the call of the land, and she determines to return. With borrowed capital she puts in some modern improvements and reclaims much of her parents' land, which has been ruined by the broomsedge. Later, she marries Nathan Pedlar because she respects him, and he can help her in the plan of life she has chosen. In the end she rescues Jason Greylock from the poorhouse, where he has been taken after losing all. He dies shortly afterward, as Nathan also does. She lives the rest of her days with her step-son and her memories.

Citations from Barren Ground

> The good families of the state have preserved among other things, custom, history, tradition, romantic fiction, and the Episcopal church. The good people, according to the records of the clergyman, which are the only surviving records, have preserved nothing except themselves . . . with the end of free labor and the beginning of the tenant system, authority passed from the country to the towns. The old men stayed by the farms, and their daughters withered dutifully beside them; but the sons of the good people drifted away to the city, where they assumed control of democracy as well as if the political machine which has made democracy safe for politics.[21]

> When, in after years, this grandaughter fell a victim to one of those instincts which Presbyterian theology has damned, but never wholly exterminated, and married a member of the "poor white" class . . . old Abernathy blessed the marriage and avoided as far as possible, the connection. Knowing the aptitude of the "poor white" for futility, he employed his remaining years on earth accumulating a comfortable inheritance for his great grandchildren.[22]

> After the first disillusionment of her marriage, she has confined her efforts at improvement to the two younger children. They had both she felt, sprung from the finer strain of the Abernathys. . . . There

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[21] Ellen Glasgow, Barren Ground. Garden City, (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1926), p. 5.

[22] Ibid., p. 9.

were hours when it seemed to her that the gulf between the dominant Scotch-Irish stock of the Valley and the mongrel breed of "poor white," which produced Joshua was as wide as the abyss between two alien races.[23]

She was a pink, flabby, irresponsible person, adjusting comfortably the physical burden of too much flesh to the spiritual repose of too little mind. All the virtues of the "poor white" had come to flower in her. Married at fifteen to a member of a family known as "the low down Prides," she had been perfectly contented with her lot in a two-room log cabin with her husband, a common labourer, having a taste for whiskey and a dis-inclination for work, who was looked upon by his neighbors, "as not all there." As the mother of children so numerous that their father could not remember their names, she still welcomed the yearly addition to her family with the moral serenity of a rabbit.[24]

"Look at the land . . . . "Even generations of failure can't teach the farmers about here that it's impossible to make bread out of straw . . . . "Oh the curse started with the tenant system I'll admit. The tenants used the land as a stingy man uses a horse he has hired by the month. But the other farmers are no better off now than the tenants. They've worked and starved the land to a skeleton."[25]

Romantic though she was, she was endowed with a stubborn aptitude for facing facts, for looking at life fearlessly; and now that imagination had done its work, she set herself to the task of rebuilding her ruined world.[26]

She laughed. "A thousand cares and we couldn't afford to buy a cow. Do you know what it means to be land-poor? After the war my father couldn't hire labor, so he had to let all the land go bad, as we say, except the little he could cultivate himself. The rest has run to old fields. Everything is eaten up by the taxes and the mortgage."[27]

I learned a lot in the hospital, and that the chief thing was that it is slighting that has ruined us, white and black alike, in the South . . . . That's a thrifty family, the Moodys. I never saw a darkey that

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[23] Ibid., p. 44.

[24] Ibid., pp. 92-3.

[25] Ibid., p. 111.

[26] Ibid., p. 182.

[27] Ibid., pp. 236-7.

had as much vim as Fluvanna. And she belongs to the new order too. I always thought it spoiled them to learn to read and write 'till I hired her. She's got all the sense Aunt Mehitable had and she's picked up some education besides. I declare, she talks better than a lot of white people I know."[28]

Like her mother, she was endowed with an intuitive understanding of the negroes; she would always know how to keep on friendly terms with that immature but not ungenerous race. Slavery in Queen Elizabeth County had rested more lightly than elsewhere. The religion that made people hard to themselves, her mother had often pointed out, made them impartially just to their dependents . . . . It was true that the coloured people about Pedlar's Mill were as industrious and as prosperous as any in the South, and that, within what their white neighbors called reasonable bounds, there was, at the end of the nineteenth century, little prejudice against them. Here and there a thriftless "poor white," such as Ike Pryde would display a fitful jealousy of Micajah Green, who had turned a few barren acres into a flourishing farm; but the better class of farmers preferred the intelligent coloured neighbor to the ignorant white one. Both were social inferiors, but where the matter was solely of farming, the advantages would usually fall to the more diligent. As for the negroes themselves, they lived contentedly enough as inferiors though not dependents . . . They had had not learned to think as a race, and the individual negro still attached himself instinctively to the superior powers.[29]

Nathan was the only man at Pedlar's Mill who lived in the future, and Nathan had always been ridiculed by his neighbors. The telephone, the modern churn, and the separators, what a protracted battle he had fought for each of these labor saving inventions. He was talking now of the time when they would have an electric plant on the farm and all the cows would be milked and the cream separated by electricity.[30]

Summary

Barren Ground is far removed from the sentimental traditions of the Old South. Until the time of Ellen Glasgow, Virginia had always been pictured as the home of the sugar-coated romance. The South always has had these middle class people, but they failed to get recognition in fiction until late in the nineteenth century.

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[28] Ibid., p. 264.

[29] Ibid., pp. 275-6.

[30] Ibid., p. 409.

This book acknowledges the equality of economic opportunity for the thrifty Negro. Mentally, he is considered dependent on the race which has enslaved him. Miss Glasgow has put the Negro farmer socially in the "poor white" class. She has given in Barren Ground great stress to that sense of futility which is the dominant characteristic of the "poor whites."

The soil, since it has been robbed of its fertility, has to some extent lost its hold upon its people. They, because of the loss of their man power, have become slaves to the land. This book offers the first ideas of progressive farming. Mention is made of the scientific principles of the feeding of the soil and of crop rotation. These are factors which indicate changes in the South.

Dorinda and her mother are in striking contrast in many ways with the sheltered women of the aristocratic class. They exhibit, however, the same dogged determination that the Southern women had during the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction.

Miss Glasgow is fearless in her interpretation of the Southern people and their changed conditions of living. She mentions the past, but refuses to weave a legend about its grandeur. The new order of Negroes, with their economic independence, she frankly acknowledges. She exposes the fallacy of thinking of landed people as wealthy and influential, for their land may be unproductive. Scientific methods of farming, industries, and some good common sense with which to meet life are her answer to the South's reconstruction problem. The main social phase which she emphasizes is the economic one. Parrington pronounced Ellen Glasgow the foremost representative of the intelligentsia of the New South.[31]

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31 Vernon Louis Parrington, The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920 (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1927), p. XII.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOUTH OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

According to chronological grouping, Sartoris by Faulkner and Unfinished Cathedral by Stribling are next in order. These books definitely introduce a picture of the new social order in the South.

Biographical Sketch of William Faulkner

William Faulkner was born in Ripley, Mississippi, in 1897. In his family background are generals, governors, and prominent statesmen. He has always been in the South with the exception of the years he was with the Canadian Flying Corps during the World War. His grandfather wrote highly romantic stories of the South about the time of the Civil War; but William, with more than gentle irony, tears away all illusions. When his finances are low he puts into practice his democratic principles; he paints houses and does various kinds of odd jobs.[1]

Sartoris

Sartoris is a chronicle of the rise and decline of the degenerate Sartoris family. The book tells of the past deeds, some heroic but not all sublime, of the Sartorises of the Carolinas. However, the particular events of the story take place in Mississippi immediately following the World War.

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[1] Living Authors, Dilly Tante, editor (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1931), p. 121.

The story centers around the disgusting escapades of Young Bayard Sartoris. The blood of dare devils is in him, and after he has spent several years in the war as an air pilot, he cannot settle down to an uneventful life. He broods over the death of his twin brother, John, who has been killed in service. By means of a fast car he proceeds to make life one long suspense for his family. Old Bayard, his grandfather, dies of shock while riding with him.

Young Sartoris marries a charming young girl, Narcissa Benbow, whom he deserts before their child is born. He then travels about the United States and South America becoming involved in several unsavory affairs. Finally he is killed in an airplane crash.

Citations from Sartoris

> A number of motor cars ranked along the curb lent a formally festive air to the place, and Simon with his tilted cigar stub wheeled up and drew rein and indulged in a brief, colorful altercation with a negro sitting at the wheel of a car parked before the hitching block. "Don't block off no Sartoris ca'iage, black boy," Simon concluded, when the other had moved the motor and permitted him access to the post. "Block off de commonality, ef you wants, but don't intervoke no equipage waitin' on Cunnel er Miss Jenny. Dey won't stan' fer it."[2]

> "I don't take nothin' offen no white man no mo', lootenant ner captain ner M. P. War showed the white folks dey can't git along with de cullud man. Trample him in de dus', but when de trouble bust loose, hit's 'Please suh, Mr. Cullud Man; right dis way whar de bugle blowin,' Mr. Cullud Man; you is de savior of de country.' And now de cullud race gwine reap de benefits of de war, and dat soon."
>
> "Sho," murmured Simon.
>
> "Yes, suh. And de women, too. I got my white in France, and I'm gwine git it here, too."
>
> "Lemme tell you somethin', nigger," Simon Said. "De good Lawd done took keer of you fer a long time, now, but he ain't gwine bother wid you always."[3]

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[2] William Faulkner, Sartoris (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929), p. 25.

[3] Ibid., p. 66.

"Gent'mun equipage," Simon mumbled. "Ridin' in dat thing, wid a gent'mun's proper equipage gwin' ter rack and ruin in de barn." . . . "Yo' own twin grandson, ridin' right up in yo' face in a contraption like dat," he continued, "and you lettin' um do it. You bad ez dey is. You jes' got ter lay down de law ter 'um, Marse John; wid all dese foreign wars en sich de young folks is growed away fum de correck behavior; dey don't know how ter conduck deyselfs in de gent'mun way. What you reckon folks gwine think when de sees yo' own folks ridin' in de same kine o' rig trash rides in? You jes' got ter resert yo'self, Marse John. Ain't Sartorises set de quality in dis country since befo' de war? And now jes' look at um."[4]

"And ever' time my hoe chopped once, I could hear hisn chop twice. I never had no shoes in them days, neither," . . . "So I had to learn to chop fast, with that ere hoe of hisn cuttin' at my bare heels. But I swo' then, come what mought, I wouldn't never plant nothin' in the ground, soon's I could he'p myself. It's all right fer folks that owns the land, but folks like my folks what don't never own no land, and ever' time we made a furrow, we was scratchin' dirt fer somebody else."[5]

He still retained the restaurant, and the canvas tent in the rear of it, in which he and his wife and baby had passed the first few months of their residence in town; and it served as an alighting-place for incoming Snopeses, from which they spread to third-rate businesses of various kinds--grocery stores, barbershops (there was one, an invalid of some sort, who operated a second-hand peanut roaster)--where they multiplied and flourished. The older residents from their Jeffersonian houses and genteel stores and offices, looked on with amusement at first. But this was long since become something like consternation.[6]

". . . . Do you think you're the only person in the world that ever went to a war? Do you reckon when my Bayard came back from The War that he made a nuisance of himself to everybody that had to live with him? But he was a gentleman; he raised the devil like a gentleman, not like you Mississippi country people. Clodhoppers. Look what he did with just a horse," she added. "He didn't need any flying machine."

. . . . . .

"Little two-bit war," young Bayard repeated, "and on a horse. Anybody can go to war on a horse. No chance for him to do much of anything."

"At least he got himself decently killed," Miss Jenny snapped. "He did more with a horse than you could do with that aeroplane."[7]

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[4] Ibid., pp. 113-4.

[5] Ibid., p. 141.

[6] Ibid., p. 173.

[7] Ibid., p. 230.

Simon gave her a pained, reproachful look. "He tole me to tell 'um he was gwine pay it."

"I'm damned if I did," old Bayard shouted. I told you I wouldn't pay a cent of it. And I told you that if you let 'em worry me about it, I'd skin you alive, sir."

"I ain't gwine let 'um worry you," Simon answered, soothingly. "Dat's what I'm fixin' now. You jes give 'um dey money, en me en you kin fix it up later."

"I'll be eternally damned if I will; if I let a lazy nigger that ain't worth his keep--"

"But somebody got to pay 'um," Simon pointed out patiently. Ain't dat right, Miss Jenny?"

"That's right," Miss Jenny agreed. "But I ain't the one."

"Yessuh, dey ain't no argument dat somebody got to pay um, dey'll put me in de jail. And den whut'll y'all do, widout nobody to keep dem hosses fed en clean, en to clean de house en wait on de table? Co'se I don't mine gwine to jail, even if dem' stone flo's ain't gwine do my mis'ry no good." . . . . Old Bayard slammed his feet to the floor.

"How much is it?" he demanded.[8]

"Yessum, I ought to. I been over this here country a hund'ed times since I wuz bawn. Mist' Bayard knows hit, too. He been huntin' it long ez I is, pretty near. Him and Mist' Johnny bofe. Miss Jenny send me wid 'um when dey had dey fust gun; me and dat 'ere single bar'l gun I used ter have ter tie together wid a string. You 'member dat ole single bar'l, Mist' Bayard? But hit would shoot! Many's de fox and squir'l we shot in dese woods."[9]

". . . What did you want to have this thing for? Who wants to clutter his stomach up with fish in November, with a kitchen full of 'possum and turkey and squirrel?"

"There are other people to eat here besides you," she retorted. "If you don't want any, don't eat it. We always had a fish course at home," she added. "But you can't wean these Mississippi country folks away from bread and meat to save your life."[10]

"How'd you like the army, Buddy?" Bayard asked.

"Not much," Buddy answered. "Ain't enough to do. Good life for a lazy man." He mused a moment. "They gimme a charm," he added, in a burst of shy, diffident confidence and sober pleasure.

"A charm?" Bayard repeated.

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[8] Ibid., pp. 272-3.

[9] Ibid., p. 288.

[10] Ibid., p. 293.

"Uhuh. One of them brass gimoracks on a colored ribbon. I aimed to show it to you, but I fergot. Do it tomorrow. That 'ere flo's too dang cold to teoh till I have to. I'll watoh a chance tomorrow when Pappy's outen the house."[11]

"Turkey," the old man was saying, with fine and rumbling disgust. "With a pen full of 'possums, and a river bottom full of squir'l and ducks, and a smokehouse full of hawg meat, you boys have got to go clean to town and buy a turkey fer Christmas dinner."

"Christmas ain't Christmas lessen a feller has a little somethin' different from ever' day," Jackson pointed out mildly.

"You boys jest wants a excuse to git to town and loaf all day and spend money," the old man retorted. "I've seen a sight mo' Christmases than you have, boy, and ef hit's got to be sto' bought, hit ain't Christmas."

"How about town folks?" Rafe asked. "You ain't allowin' them no Christmas a-tall."

"Don't deserve none," the old man snapped, "livin' on a little two-by-fo' lot, jam right up again' the next feller's back do', eatin' out tin cans."

"'Sposin' they all broke up in town," Stuart said, "and moved out here and took up land; you'd hear Pappy cussin' town then. You couldn't git along without town to keep folks bottled up in, Pappy, and you know it."[12]

The Negroes drank with him, amicably, a little diffidently--two opposed concepts. Antipathetic by race, blood, nature and environment, touching for a moment and fused with an illusion--humankind forgetting its lust, cowardice and greed for a day. "Chris'mus," the woman murmured shyly. "Thanky, suh."[13]

Summary

In Sartoris the author has stressed real democracy. He clearly points to the fact that it is the indivudal who matters. Faulkner definitely shows that young Sartoris' folly is not to be excused nor overlooked because of the fact that he belongs to a long line of gentlemen. It is one of the first books which thoroughly exposes the fallacy of idealizing family.

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[11] Ibid., p. 320.

[12] Ibid., pp. 335-6.

[13] Ibid., p. 347.

This book portrays the retardation of the South in matters of economic development. It gives a good picture of the agricultural South with its antipathy toward mechanized industries.

The racial question has a dual viewpoint. Simon represents the old school of thought--the Negro who is dependent on his employer or patron, and who really seems to feel inferior. Simon's son, who has just returned from the World War feels no inhibitions, and represents to some extent the Twentieth Century Negro.

Biographical Sketch of T. S. Stribling

T. S. Stribling was born in Clifton, Tennessee, and he has always lived in the South except for a few years spent in New York. He attended the Normal School at Florence, Alabama, and than taught school. His teaching career was of short duration for he was a failure as a disciplinarian. According to his own explanation, he was so busy analyzing what his pupils would do next and why, that he failed to discipline them.

After he gave up teaching he wrote syndicated stories for a series of Sunday School publications. This was not to his liking so he continued to try other types of writing. His first success came in 1921 with the publication of Birthright, and he has had continued success since then.[14]

Mr. Stribling is devoted to the South; so he took upon himself the painting of a picture of the South as he intimately knows it. Concerning his purpose he says:

> "Each generation quickly and completely forgets its forbears. I was filled with a profound sense of tragedy that my own family, my neighbors,

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14 Living Authors, Dilly Tante, editor (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1931), p. 390.

the whole South surrounding me would be utterly lost in the onrushing flood of years. History will not rescue it from oblivion because history is too general to be human and too remote to be real."[15]

Unfinished Cathedral

Florence, Alabama about 1910 is the setting for this story. The family of Colonel Miltiades Vaiden dominates the entire plot. Colonel Milt, as he is commonly known, is the financial dictator of Florence and the surrounding towns. His fortune has been founded on fraud and theft, but that has not deterred him from feeling that he is a great success.

The city of Florence is having a great real estate boom and along with the other projects is the plan for a great cathedral. It is to be known as All Souls Cathedral and is supposed to be strictly non-sectarian. When business is flourishing there comes a blow to continued prosperity in the form of racial trouble. Six negro boys are accused of assaulting a white woman. There is great tenseness of feeling. Many of the civic organizations of the city beg that the law may be allowed to take its course. Finally the boys are spirited away by the authorities to prevent a lynching.

Jerry Catlin, a nephew of Colonel Vaidens, is the assistant minister at the partly finished cathedral, and works on the committee which collects donations for the project. He is the sweetheart that Sydna, Colonel Milt's wife, has cast off that she may marry the old man for his wealth and position. The minister is still enamored of her, although he dutifully falls in love with the church organist and marries her in the usual ministerial fashion.

There is still another intrigue in the affairs of Marsan, Colonel Vaiden's daughter, and a high school youth. The good old Vaiden name is

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[15] T. S. Stribling, Unfinished Cathedral (New York: The Literary Guild, 1934), appendage.

saved by her marriage to her high school teacher, who knows of her mistake but is willing to overlook it.

The inflation bubble bursts, but Colonel Vaiden with his usual shrewdness and dishonesty is able to save enough money for his family. He also plans to finish the cathedral, but on a more modest scale than had originally been planned. He hires cheap Negro labor and thus antagonizes the Labor Unions. Colonel Vaiden meets a violent death at the entrance of the cathedral at the hands of a man he has wronged many years before.

Citations from Unfinished Cathedral

"My name's Northrup. I'm debbity sheriff here. There's some niggers ridin' this train . . . I b'lieve they's one under there, . . . I'll git on the other side an' if one crawls out, you nab him."
Jerry nodded.
"I made shore you was a Southern man before I ast you. A dern Yankee is jest as liable to turn a nigger aloose as hold him."[16]

The assistant minister was half minded to loose his captive. Had he been a white boy he would have done so. But in the South there rests upon white men a kind of racial obligation to correct and reform as best they can the missteps and short comings of the colored people, so this impulse to liberate the child was overruled in the Reverend Jerry Catlin's mind by his wider duty to his country.[17]

"How am I going to approach Sheffeld men for a subscription to a church in Florence?"
"First, of course, it's a Tri-city . . . really North Alabama Cathedral . . . you know . . . reflect honor and dignity on the future metropolis of the South . . . that's the idea . . . Merger . . . Tri-city . . . North Alabama . . . All Alabama . . . All South . . . step it up to metropolitan importance, building for hundreds of thousands yet to come . . . they'll get that . . . they're real estate men."[18]

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[16] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[17] Ibid., p. 10.

[18] Ibid., p. 20.

"I got into the real estate business in an odd way, too. I always believed I would be a prosperous, influential business man some day. It's really in the Petman blood, Dr. Catlin . . . My folks descended from royalty . . . "the little man hemmed slightly, "or so they always told me."

Jerry picked his motor's path along the nail and can strewn Carver's Lane.

"A number of Southern families think that," he explained gently. "You see the South was pretty well sprinkled with royalists right after the Revolution. The people said they were royalists. Their descendants gradually corrupted the word into 'royalty,' and nearly every Southern person you see nowadays will tell you he is descended from the 'royalty.' My own father held that idea about the Catlins."

"Well, I declare," blurted out Petman, quite taken aback, "maybe that is so . . . Well, anyway, the thought that the Petmans were somebody gave me heart to go on with my Jerico idyah."

"What was that?"

"A subdivision for niggers . . . you know, the dependable sort of niggers . . . . I decided I would try to give 'em something really good."

Jerry winced at the idea that he was driving home with a dealer in negro real estate . . . .[19]

"You can summon a grand jury and hang these negroes just as efficiently and far less expensively than you can lynch them now. What will the ten thousand strangers in our gates think of us if we hang six men without legal sanction? Why, we will be the worst advertised town in America! You know that! Every outsider here will write home about it! People pay no attention to reports of lynchings in newspapers, but they certainly will pay attention when their own folks write home and say they saw one! They'll be shocked! America will be shocked! We can't afford to do this!"[20]

"No, no, gentlemen, this trial must end the excuse lynching parties always make--that the law is uncertain. A swift trial followed by immediate execution will consolidate public opinion here in the South against illegal violence. We have got to rescue the South from the stain of barbarism. These six negro miscreants must be hanged to protect the law-abiding colored population of Alabama from future outbreaks of mob law. I have worked with niggers all my life. I have nigger friends who are just as sincere and devoted to me as any man sitting at this table. Out of the affection I have for these niggers and the value I place upon the colored people as the economic foundation of Southern life, I must ask that every one of these six be lodged in the Lauderdale

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[19] Ibid., pp. 46-7.

[20] Ibid., p. 56.

county jail and be hanged so as to make the lives and property of hundreds of thousands of colored citizens of the South free from the gusts of passion and chance."[21]

"Look here, Sinton," he said in a gentler tone, "I don't know whether you have thought of it or not but the trial and conviction and execution of these boys will have a deep bearing on the future of the colored people all over the South."

"Yes, we know that, too," agreed the black man, "that's why our society is stirred up about it."

"Yes, but had you ever asked yourselves if you were stirred up in the right say?"

"How do you mean?"

"I mean, if the boys are hanged, the next case of assault will probably be brought into court, too. It will set a precedent. The people of Alabama will have confidence in their courts. They can be persuaded to let such cases come to trial instead of taking violent and illegal action. You know very well such a precedent settled into custom would be a thousand times better for the colored race than the present state of things."[22]

". . . I know you love your country, Colonel Vaiden."

The Colonel looked straight at Bodine.

"My country was crushed, overrun, poisoned, and polluted years ago, Mr. Bodine."

The organizer stared at the old man.

"Why don't you consider this your country?"

"It's where I'm living. It's a place without leisure, without a finesse. Look at those six negroes thrown in jail! Why were they ever permitted to run loose in the first place? . . . This wouldn't happen if the niggers had plenty of work, but a mawkish sentimentality brought down here by Yankees. . ."[23]

"If a man rides he must do it in a motor car at not less than fifty miles an hour. If he makes an investment it must net him three hundred per cent per annum or the investor will change to something else. There is no sense of leisure in anything any more."

"How did folks get like that?" asked Marsan . . .

"Because the niggers have been set free. Slaves and plantations brought a sense of leisure and a sense of responsibility toward God which no turn of fortune or misfortune could shake. Slavery not only preserved the original American idea of a family, it enlarged and ennobled it into that of a patriarchy. It produced leisure and culture and that deep wide responsibility without which men drift into hedonism and dilettantism.

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[21] Ibid., p. 96.

[22] Ibid., p. 101.

[23] Ibid., p. 124.

The Yankees not only set aside the ordained institution of slavery, they have set aside the ordinance of marriage with universal divorce, and courtesy with universal boorishness."

"Southern people get divorces too."

"That's because people mimic men with money, no matter how sad an example they set."[24]

"Dykes, what did the bank let him sink so much money in nigger cottages for?"

"Why, the boom was on, and there was such a rush of work . . . Nobody dreamed he was following the minimum specifications in the nigger houses . . . didn't anywhere else."

"This won't do . . . this won't do at all . . . not for niggers!"

"Aren't they worth the money?" demanded Swartout.

"That's the trouble," explained Lindsay, "they are far too good. You've got too much invested here to expect to get it back out of the niggers. You know you only collect about three fifths of the nominal indebtedness contracted by a group of colored people . . ."[25]

"No matter to what heights the future genius of the South may soar, it will never again reach those mountain ranges of chivalry and generosity; those sun-kissed peaks of Pride which we behold today only through the blue mists of Time."

"Too truly has the Southern poet sang, 'Time, the tomb builder.'"

"O Time, Time, Time, if in thy garnering thou canst not spare heroes, spare us their deeds.

"Spare us their constancy, their devotion, their patriotism, their selfless service for the healing of our nation.

"Daughters of the Confederacy, the monuments you have erected upon the battlefields of the South are chalices for the preservation of that rich heritage."[26]

It seemed to the old grandmother that Time did not go on, but that it was a vast wheel that turned slowly round and round . . .

In the midst of these vague plannings and consolations the door bell clanged in the hall below. It was not an electric buzzer; it was the same brass lion's foot which had served the old house before Miltiades had built so many additions to it. Its single clang seemed more in keeping with the portico and grand hallway and ornamental iron balcony at the second-story level than an electric bell would have been.[27]

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[24] Ibid., pp. 128-9.

[25] Ibid., p. 238.

[26] Ibid., pp. 271-2.

[27] Ibid., p. 306.

> Marsan had a girlish notion that she would like to have it in the old Lacefield Manor down in the Reserve. She had heard so many tales of the old plantation life, the war, the romance of her great-uncle, A. Gray Lacefield, and her aunt, Marcia Catlin, who had been born a Vaiden, that she had longed to make her marriage in that storied scene.[28]

Summary

Stribling is rather baffling in his handling of the various social aspects of the South. The reader feels that in his bitter denouncement of the Negro he is personally sincere. He presents the fact that the Negroes are tolerated and protected merely because the South wishes to avoid the stigma of being pronounced unjust. It is not love and understanding for the black race which prompts the South to do for them.

There appears a subtle irony in the author's handling of the old sentiments of honor and grandeur which are always supposed to go with the mention of family. He makes it clear that he thinks the aristocracy of money has taken the place of birth and breeding. The weakness in both the thought and conduct of the ladies and gentlemen of the old aristocracy is crudely exposed; the author acknowledges that family standing was sufficient to gloss over these missteps. Yet, in the final analysis the author seems to hold to the feeling that the Old South with all its faults was superior to the New South.

In summarizing this chapter's contribution to this study, it can be said that Faulkner and Stribling have very effectively debunked the adulation of family, especially in the cases when there is simply no justification for it. Faulkner is more kindly in his consideration of the racial question

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[28] Ibid., p. 322.

than Stribling, but both men give it a large place in their books because of its importance to the South. These two authors agree that always the Negro will be dependent on the white people for decisions of major importance, although he may have some slight economic independence. They mention that industrialism in the South is the answer to the employment problem, and they acknowledge the need for social democracy, but only among the white people.

CHAPTER VII

THE SOUTH AS REFLECTED IN FOUR NOVELS GROUPED THEMATICALLY

The first half of this chapter consists of two novels--*The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains* and *The Time of Man*. All of the characters in these two books belong to the under-privileged "poor white" class, often referred to as the South's curse. Although all other books used in this investigation have been grouped chronologically, the writer deems it appropriate to place the books in this chapter according to theme. Since these books are almost solely devoted to character analysis of "poor whites" and with little allusion to historical events, they seem books for all time.

Biographical Sketch of Mary Noailles Murfree

Mary Noailles Murfree, better known as Charles Egbert Craddock, was born at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in 1850. During the first seventeen years of her life she lived at Nashville, where her father had a fine law practice. She attended the academy in Nashville and later a seminary in Philadelphia. Lameness and frail health prevented her from having a normal childhood and caused her to become a great reader. Early in her life she wrote much, but discarded many of her early attempts. When she attempted to get her work published, she assumed a man's name. She thought that would cause editors to give the manuscripts more consideration. It is said that her style of penmanship was typically

masculine in appearance, and that it was much of a shock when her identity became known.

The tendency to embellish her novels with too much description seemed to detract from their real value. Literary authorities do not agree as to the exactness with which she drew her characters. There are those who feel that she knew her mountain people well and understood them. Others feel that her viewpoint was strictly metropolitan, and that she knew the region only as one who summered there.[1]

The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains

Hiram Kelsey is the prophet of the backwoods people who live in the valleys and the foothills of that range of mountains known as the Great Smokies of Tennessee. His ignorant, but devout utterances come as true prophecies to their untrained minds. The parson suffers greatly, when he feels at times that he has slipped from grace, and then goes to the top of the great bald mountains to pray. Interwoven with this tale of the particular religious conception of these uncouth people is the story of the Cayce family, which makes its living by operating a moonshine still in a secret cave in the mountains. Old Groundhog Cayce, his four sons, and his daughter Dorinda are typically representative of the "poor whites" of the mountainous regions of the South.

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[1] Fred Lewis Pattee, A History of American Literature Since 1870 (New York: The Century Company, 1915), p. 310.

Rick Tyler, Dorinda's sweetheart, is a fugitive from justice and is hiding in the hills. Micajah Green, the boastful, swaggering sheriff is unkind to Dorinda, while he is searching for Rick. This incident and a few others lead to a feud between the Cayce family and the sheriff. The settlement blacksmith, Gid Fletcher, takes Rick captive for the two hundred dollar reward and thus gets himself involved in the feud.

As a result of a case of mistaken identity, the prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains is murdered by the Cayces, who think, of course, that he is 'Cajah Green. Dorinda, in her simple faith, thinks that the parson has been lifted into the clouds like the prophets of old. This burden of grief and guilt wrecks the mind of Old Groundhog Cayce and changes Pete Cayce for the better.

Citations from The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains

> "Lor'-a mighty! ef I jes' knowed afore-hand how it will teck the boys when they view that air door down on the floor! They mought jounce hyar ez ef they were bereft o' reason, an' all thar hope o' salvation be hung on the hinges. An' then again they mought 'low ez they had ruther hev no door than be at the trouble o' shettin' it an' barrin' it up ez they come and go. They air mighty onsartin in thar temper an' I hev never hankered ter see 'em crost. But fur the glory's sake, don't tech the bar'l. It's been set thar ter age some, ef the Lord'll spare it."[2]

> "He shell rue it, he shell rue it. Me an' mine take no word off'n nobody. My gran'dad an' his three brothers, one hundred and fourteen years ago, kem hyar from old North State an' settled in the Big Smoky. They an thar sons rooted up the wilderness. They crapped. They fit the beastis; they fit the Injun; they fit the British; an' this las' little war o' ourn they fit each other. Thar hev never been a coward 'mongst em. Thar hev never been a key turned on one of 'em or a door

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[2] Mary N. Murfree, The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1885), p. 27.

shet. They have respected the law fur what it war wuth, an' they hev stood up fur thar rights again it. They answer fur thar words, an' others hev to answer."[3]

"I'd never hev thunk o' takin' up religion, ef I hed been let ter live along like other men be, or ef me and mine could die like other folks be let ter die! But it 'apeared ter me ez religion war 'boat all ez war lef,' arter I hed gin the baby the stuff the valley doctor had lef' fur Em'ly--bein' ez I couldn't read right the old critter's curious scraping with his pencil--an' gin Em'ly the stuff fur the baby. An' it died. An' then Em'ly got on settled an' crazy, an' tuk ter vagrantin' 'round, an' fell off'n the bluff. An' some says she flunged herself off'n, an' I knows she flunged herself off'n it through bein' out'n her mind with grief."[4]

"Lord a' mighty, air the corn mine, or no? Air the orchard mine or the raiders? An' ails me ez I can't make whiskey an' applejack same ez in my pappy's time, when him an' me run a sour mash still on the top o' mountaings in the light o' day up'ards o' twenty years, an' never hearn o' no raiders? Tell me that's agin' the law, nowadays! Waal, now, who made the law? I never; 'an I ain't a goin' ter abide by it, nuther. Ez sure ez ye air born, it air just a yankee trick fotched down hyar by the Fed'ral Army. An' ef I hed knowed they war goin' ter gin sich persecutions arter the war I dunno how I'd got my consent ter fit alongside of 'em like I done fower year fur the union."[5]

In the mountains men do not regard church privileges as the opportunity of a quiet hour to meditate on secular affairs, while a gentle voice drones on antiquated theme. To Amos, Samson was the latest thing out.[6]

Somehow, the mountains had for his ignorant mind some coercive internal evidence of the great truths. In their exalted suggestiveness were congruities; so far from the world were they--so high above it; so interlinked with the history of all that makes the races of men more than the beasts that perish, that conserves the values of that noble idea--an immortal soul. On a mountain the cross was planted; the

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[3] Ibid., p. 33.

[4] Ibid., p. 78.

[5] Ibid., p. 150.

[6] Ibid., p. 157.

steepes beheld the glories of the transfiguration; the lofty solitudes heard the prayers of Christ; and from the heights issued the great sermon instinct with all moralties of every creed.

No other book had he ever read: only that sublime epic, with its deep tenderness and its mighty portents, with its subleties of prophecy in wide and splendid phrase, and their fulfillment in the barren record of the simplest life; with all the throbbing presentiment of martyrdom and doom and death, dominated by the miracle of resurrection and the potency of divinity. Every detail was as clearly pictured to his mind as if, instead of the vast unstoned stretches of the Great Smoky Mountains he looked upon the sanctities of the hills of Judea.[7]

Gid Fletcher acted as the umpire. He armed himself with a whip of many thongs and took his stand beneath the branches of the tree from which the gander was suspended. Aghast at his terrible situation, the gander's wild-eyes stared about, his great wings flapped drearily; his long neck protruded with its peculiar motion, unaware of the clutch it invited.

The gaping crowd at the store, on the cabin porches, on the fences, watched the competitors with wide-eyed, wide-mouthed delight . . . . The men filed slowly around the prescribed space, once, twice; then each made the circuit along at a break neck gallop. As the first horseman passed beneath the branch upon which hung the frantic fluttering bird, the blacksmith, standing sentinel with his whip of many thongs, laid it upon the flank of the horse, and despite the wild sudden plunge the rider rose in his stirrups and clutched the greased neck of the swaying gander.[8]

It has been so long the unwritten law of the moonshiners that the informer shall perish as the consequences of his malice and rashness, that whatever normal moral sense they possess is in subjection to their arbitrary code of justice and the savage custom of the region. The mysterious disappearance of a horse-thief or a revenue spy, dramatically chronicled, with a wink and a grin, as 'never hearn on no more,' or 'fund dead in the road one mornin,' does not affect the mountaineers.[9]

Summary

In this story of the early Reconstruction Period, the author reveals her version of the viewpoint of the "poor white" settlers of the South

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[7] Ibid., p. 169.

[8] Ibid., pp. 297-8.

[9] Ibid., p. 301.

toward religion and the law. To them the law represents injustice rather than justice. Apparently their manner of settling feuds does not seem incongruous with their avowals of "conviction," which is the term they use to refer to their religious conversions. "Who has made the law anyhow?" seems to Groundhog Cayce excuse for his avowed disobedience of it. It is a story of savage primitiveness and pathetic ignorance.

These people exhibit a rare contentment with their lot in life and a great love for nature, her moods and her changing panorama, which is typical in the mountain regions. The religious philosophy of these people is strange, yet beautiful in abounding faith. Dorinda could understand that feeling of oneness between God and nature, and somehow sense, at times, the great struggle in Parson Kelsey's heart. Her trust in Rick Tyler is lost; but her faith in the inherent rightness of things, as they are, is not shattered.

Biographical Sketch of Elizabeth Madox Roberts

Elizabeth Madox Roberts was born at Perryville near Springfield, Kentucky, in what is now known as the "Pigeon River country." This is now her permanent home. She is deeply attached to the South as her people have been Kentuckians since 1803.

Her first novel, The Time of Man, is truly a novel of the soil. It has been a success in the United States and England. German, Swedish and Dano-Norwegian editions of it have been published. It is considered by critics a book of all times for all people. Miss Roberts has rare art in the understanding and the expression of the human emotions. She is

able to fuse this art with the action of her story and thus make a well-rounded novel.[10]

The Time of Man

The Time of Man is really the life story of Ellen Chesser, a girl belonging to the "poor white" class. When the story opens she is about twelve years of age. She is traveling through Tennessee and Kentucky with her father and mother. Their wagon is one of a caravan which is made up of people who follow the crops and do some horse trading. They have no destination, they are "jist a-goen."

Mrs. Chesser finally persuades her husband to farm for a man who has made him a good offer. They remain there a few years, and then the endless seeking to find something better calls them to move on. In the meantime, Ellen has been jilted by Jonas Prather and she wishes to move to escape her misery.

After some more wandering they locate again and within a short while Ellen marries Jasper Kent, a neighboring farm hand. He quarrels with his employers and is accused of setting fire to their barn. Ellen and Jasper are forced to leave the country. The story of Jasper's trouble follows them; and where they are as the years pass, their children are unjustly persecuted. As a result of this condition they are forced again and again to move on a "far piece."

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[10] Living Authors, Dilly Tante, editor (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1931), p. 343.

Citations from The Time of Man

"If only some o'nary trash hadn't stole my shoes," she said when a thorn drove into her heel and sent cold quivers of pain to the very roots of her hair. She bit hard on her cheeks and lips and waited until the tremors passed out of her flesh. "It's o'nary to steal," she said. "It's right low down, now, right wrong. You dasn't steal from your own set. That there would be awful wrong, and I reckon it's wrong nohow. It's wrong to the folks that lose the stuff and that makes it come around wrong to the body that takes it. Only if a man's got so much he never misses what you take, why then it seems like it might maybe not be wrong, only you can't tell we'r a man is a-goen to miss it or not so it's wrong, I reckon, no matter."[11]

Her closed eyes saw the book out of which Eva Stikes had learned to tell fortunes, a little green book, rolled at the corners and dirty, smelling of snuff-dip. Eva had sent ten cents for it; it had come from Batavia, Illinois. "Gives lucky and unlucky days, interprets dreams, tells fortunes by all methods, cards, palmistry, tea-cup zodialogy," was printed on the paper cover. The picture on the back of the fortune book looked very much like Eva herself, for Eva's mouth sank together where her teeth were gone. Ellen knew all about Eva's youngones; she had six dead, but four were living. A high, thin voice and a low deep voice took turns in memory:

"Mammy, I want to eat."

"Well, go to the grub box."

"There ain't e'er bite there, I been."

"Well, ask Joe Sikes to feed you, he's your daddy."[12]

She liked to sit in the corn after it grew waist-high or more. In the soft clods of the bright days or in the soft loam of the days after showers she would sit, looking about, feeling herself moving with the corn. A voice would come to her mind:

"Or even suppose it was the poorest sort of a shanty made outen boards set on end and only one room, or two; and suppose the people that lived there last used to be a dirty set and left their filth behind them when they went; and even suppose there'd be fleas under the house where the hogs had been a sleepin' . . . . I'd set about maken it fitten to live in, you'd see. I'd scrub that-there floor . . . ." or then:

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[11] Elizabeth Madox Roberts, The Time of Man (New York: The Viking Press, 1926), p. 9.

[12] Ibid., p. 17.

"They'd be a fair sight to see when the roses came in bloom next summer and when the grapes got up over that-there arbor--big bunches of grapes a-hangen down all summer and a-turnen purple in the fall and the bees a-comen to get sweet outen some. That would be a sight to see now."[13]

"Oh, people are ugly and everything is ugly," Ellen muttered, remembering. "Brown ground ugly and yesterday ugly and all the things people do--eaten and a-walken and a-haven things to keep. Terrible, it is. Hard to do. Everything ugly . . . . yesterday ugly and everything ugly, all the way back to the first, as far as you can recollect, ground, sun, things to eat, cooken, things to keep, wanten things, backward as far as you can recollect."[14]

"I'm a-thinken about the geography book, Tessie's other book, an old one all torn at the corners and spotted where somebody left it in the rain some time long ago. London Bridge across the Thames. The Cathedral and Plaza, Mexico City. You could see yourself a-liven in the brown house, a-walken up big stairs and a-looken our that-there tower window, a-sitten down in a tower to look out all day, a-sitten back cool . . . . Town Hall, Leeds. Wide staird, flat-topped roof and a tower with a clock to tell the time of day. A fountain a-drippen out in front. You could see yourself live in that-there house a-looken out the window at sunup to see if the fountain is a-goen yet . . . .

"It was a good book, a learned book. I read it a heap here and you and I looked at a heap of the pictures . . . .

"One of those books is mine. Tessie gave me one to keep, but it's safer with the balance, I said, along under the quilts . . . . It would be the dearest thing in life if I could find my book someday and have it in my hands or in my room hid under the bed to get out when we'd have a rainy spell of weather."[15]

"Get Ellen the shoes. I can wait a spell. My old ones will do me," she heard the words again. Minnie, Edd and Lue and Harp and Corie and Davie, before she came. "Mammy, what made your teeth go snaggly and all come outen your head?" she had asked once. "Do you reckon you could have seven brats inside of twelve years and have e'er a tooth left to your name?"[16]

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[13] Ibid., p. 24.

[14] Ibid., pp. 36-7.

[15] Ibid., pp. 39-40.

[16] Ibid., p. 42.

"I'm ugly," she said, "an I might as well know it and remember. My hands are big and coarse and my skin is browned and redded in the wind. My eyes are slow and big, always a-looken at everything in the world and always expecten to see something more. My face looks like the ground and my back looks like ground with my old cloak pulled over it, I'm ugly . . . . no need for me to think about something pink to wear or something blue or yellow. No use to think about soft colors. You might as well wear one kind as another. Drab. Brown. Faded dark old shrunk-up anything is good enough. Why don't you just give up and be ugly? That's what you are. Ugly. That's all."[17]

"Oh, why am I here and what is it all for, anyway? What is it is a-beaten down on my breath? I'm a-fallen through the world and there's no end to the top and no end to the bottom. Mammy a-getten up and a-cooken and a-goen to bed and Pappy works all day, and we have to have fire and there's no end to anything."[18]

Her mother's words would call out in the lonely stillness of her mind. "Where's the fellows that ought to be a-comen? . . . . "What fellows?" she had said, dreaming over her hair. "A big grown girl, nigh to eighteen and no fellows a-comen!" She had been lifting a lock of her hair, making it lie in different ways . . . The taunt had come upon her unprepared and now the words would probe the still dark after the first misery was gone. A hard cry snarled in the dark. "Where's the fellows that ought to be a-comen?"[19]

"Hush, everybody, hush you-all. Ellen Chesser is a-goen to sing a song."

"I can sing Lady Nancy Belle--that's a story Mammy taught me a long time ago, one she learned offen her grannie, or I can sing Lucy is a Mighty Generous Lady, which ever you'd rather."

Nervous moments came over her mouth and strained at her eyes and her throat, but she took a deep breath, caught her breath twice and began in a shy voice. . . . She sang:

> "Lord Lovel he stood by his castle wall
> A-comben his milk white steed;
> Down came the Lady Nancy Belle
> A-wishen her lover good speed
> A-wishen her lover good speed."[20]
> . . . . . .

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[17] Ibid., pp. 82-3.

[18] Ibid., p. 89.

[19] Ibid., p. 105.

[20] Ibid., pp. 114-5.

Tim McNeal held a mug of custard over Eli Prather's head, spilling a little.

"I baptise you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

"Quit, I already been bapsoused, soused, I say."

"I saw you when you was pulled up outen the water. You looked like a drowned rat."

"Washed your sins away, didn't you, Eli?" The creek was muddied all the next day. I went by and I see what was left back in Dever Creek."

"Preacher said baptism wouldn't do me e'er bit of good. Said they'd have to take a scrub brush."[21]

"When I was a gal they was six horses tied to Pappy's fence and one of them was Sol Beemen's. He lives ore in Nelson now and look, he owns a fine farm. His wife gets ten dozen eggs a day, they say. Sol Beemen.

"Over and above that, one man is good as another, and about all alike, if gals only knowed."

"But land sakes! I must have Joe. I never see Sol when Joe is by."

"I ain't never been sorry I took Dan, though. I never see the day I'd take anybody else."

"Hear Lute O'Shay talk!"

"When they say 'come see the bride,' I always say, I'd rather see her in ten years. I'll wait my time," I say.

"Yes, teeth all gone. Back crooked."[22]

They were young like herself. The speaker would rock herself slowly as she spoke, speaking carelessly, often smiling in a shadowed way.

"Lige is a great hand to make," the first said, "and a great hand to spend on me. A new winter cloak he said for me to get."

"Abe laughed," one said, "laughed right out at my old shoes today and said, 'Land sake, Irie, where's the money I laid out for your shoes'?"

Then Ellen spoke, murmuring like the rest. She had never made so long a speech before. "Jasper, he said, 'Ellen, why don't you get yourself a new dress, a worsted one, blue maybe? Here's the money,' he said, 'here on the shelf' . . . . .'No use to stint and hoard up. And buy some pretty to trim it with, velvet maybe,' he says."[23]

"I heard it said one time that all the stars have names. Wouldn't it be a thing to do now, to walk out of a night and to say, 'there's this one and there's that,' a-callen by name?"

"You could learn that too in books, it's said. I got a heap of books to read and ne'er a one have I read yet but two or maybe three. You never could read all the books in the world, I reckon, if you read all your days until you're old."

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21 Ibid., p. 119.

22 Ibid., p. 147.

23 Ibid., p. 322.

"I don't aim to get old. I wouldn't. Grow up is all I aim."
"But the wisdom of the world is the dearest thing in life, learnen is, and it's my wish to get a hold on to some of that-there . . . It means as much as all the balance of life, seems like. Books is what I want. In books, it's said, you'd find the wisdom of all the ages."[24]

Summary

The Time of Man represents the soul-cry of the "poor whites" of Kentucky and Tennessee. The endless, pitiful groping of these people for something better is pathetically presented in this book. Their ignorance is so great that they cannot find the adequate words with which to express or describe the things which they desire. They are deprived of anything more than an occasional glimpse of life on a higher level, thus their wishes are nebulous, half-formed yearnings for they know not what.

Miss Roberts makes clear their economic status and their social ostracism. She stresses again and agin their feeling of futility. Their almost universal belief in predestination adds to their sense of futility and causes them to cease to struggle. Some of their revolting crudities are a natural result of the physical conditions in which they live.

Charles R. Walker says that The Time of Man presents the tenant farmer's devotion to and dependence on the soil; that, according to Miss Robert's treatment, the "poor whites" of the South are as truly the eternal peasant as are those of Spain and Siberia.[25]

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[24] Ibid., p. 381.

[25] Charles R. Walker, "The Autumn Novel Harvest," Independent, 117:535, November, 1926.

The authors of these two novels certainly strip the glamour from the South. Their material may be considered romantic, but at least they have treated it with stark realism. They show the high place that agrarianism has in the minds of the "scrub settlers" and their fear of what they term the "new fangled" ideas of labor and industry. From the standpoint of these people, the South is very decidedly an unprogressive section.

Politics and religion are almost completely ignored by these two writers; education is mentioned, but not too favorably, for it is presented as it is viewed by the "poor whites." They are as doubtful of the value of education as they are of the new industrial methods--to them too much larnin' is a dangerous thing.

The recognition of these people to the extent that novels are written exclusively about them is a new note in Southern fiction, for formerly they were scarcely considered worthy of mention.

The following two novels, Scarlet Sister Mary and Mamba's Daughters, which compose the last half of this chapter, give a fine insight into the mind and heart of the black race. As it has been explained previously, these books, because of their integral nature, are classified according to subject matter.

Biographical Sketch of Julia Peterkin

Julia Peterkin was born in South Carolina in 1880. Left motherless when but a small child, she was reared by a Negro mammy. She was graduated from Converse College in Spartanburg, North Carolina. In 1903 she married William George Peterkin, a cotton planter. For over thirty years she has been the mistress of Lang Syne Plantation near Fort Mott, South Carolina.

Hundreds of Negroes are employed on the plantation. Mrs. Peterkin has been judge, jury, doctor, and family adviser to them. She likes Negroes and understands them. The simplicity of their minds endears them to her, but she does not become too sentimental about them. It is interesting to know that Mrs. Peterkin was not educated for a writer; she had never written anything until she was over forty years of age.[26]

Scarlet Sister Mary

The Quarters at Blue Brook Plantation somewhere in South Carolina is the location of this story. All of the characters are Negroes. Mary, an orphan, has been reared by Maum Hannah and Budda Ben, her crippled son. At fifteen years of age Mary is married to July, a wild young buck, who deserts her when their son is only a few months old. She suffers acutely for a long time after July leaves. Later she becomes callous and debased because of the shock, and she proceeds to earn for herself the appellation of Scarlet Sister Mary.

Mary has great affection for her large brood of illegitimate children, and seems to feel that they are worth the price she had paid, for she is considered very low by all the other Negroes of the Quarters. The church, of course, casts her out; and she is ostracized from all the social affairs of her people.

After twenty years, July returns and wishes to have Mary support him, but she refuses to have him about. Mary calls her son by July her only heart

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[26] Living Authors, Dilly Tante, editor (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1931), pp. 318-9.

child, and when he dies she is almost crushed by her sorrow. With her great maternal instinct she takes his child, Little Emma, to rear.

This death and the fact that one of her numerous brood is crippled make Mary feel that she is being punished for her sins. However, proud of her family, her good health and looks, Mary looks forward buoyantly to life. She plans to repent and accept religion just before her time comes to die; life in the meantime is too joyous to be hampered by the restrictions of religion. Finally grieved by her son's death and the knowledge that her daughter is following her example, she seeks God and after many days of seeking finds peace.

Citations from Scarlet Sister Mary

> "Shut you mout,' gal, befo Gawd strikes you dead wid a lie on you tongue. You might could fool some people, but you can' fool me; Neither Gawd. Gawd's eyes stays on you, all de time, day an' night. A-seein' all you do some like dat lookin'-glass on de wall sees dis room. Evy time you have sin, a big white angel up in Heaven writes it down in a book . . . . On de day o judgment, dat same angel'll stand up 'an read em out for de whole world to hear. De livin' and de dead'll know . . . . If you don't repent, yunnuh'll go to torment when you die too."[27]

> Mary was heavy, but many tasks to be done kept her days filled from morning until night. A woman who is about to bear a child has a strangely good hand for planting seed; something magic in her touch makes the seed sprout quickly and grow fast and mature in half the regular time. Everybody in the Quarters who planted a winter vegetable garden wanted Mary to drop the seed.[28]

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[27] Julia Peterkin, Scarlet Sister Mary (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1928), pp. 36-7.

[28] Ibid., p. 64.

Mary wanted to say many things but she remembered Maum Hannah's training; when the thunder rolls, people must sit down quiet and listen while Up-Yonder, the Great I Am, the Maker of all things, talks.[29]

"I want a charm for July, Daddy Cudjoe, July's got a side-gal."
Daddy looked grave.
"How long you been married, honey?"
"Me and him ain' been married a year yet."
"Who is de side-gal, daughter?"
. . . . . .
"Id like to kill Cinder, Daddy--kill em dead. If you'll gi me a pizen I'll feed it to em till e is stone dead."
. . . ."No, honey, you wrong. Pizen ain't to be trusted. Sometimes it works backwards as well as forwards, you might be de one to dead. Hatin' ain't good, neither . . . . It's better to go easy with conjure. You must stop fretten an' being scared. Keep full o victuals, make your mouth smile, laugh an' be merry if you can. Don' never let people see you downhearted, or a-hangin' you head, an' lookin' sorrowful. Dat ain't de way. No. Mens don' crave a sorrowful, sad-lookin' 'oman. Don' never let a man feel sorry for you if you want 'em to stick to you."[30]

"Dey is two diffunt kinds o love, Si May-e, two; eye-love an' heart-love. Eye-love is tricky. E will fool you . . . . De 'oman look good to de man; de man look good to de 'oman. Den dey gone an' married to-gedder. But soon, all two'll wish to Gawd dey ain' never see one annuder."
"Heart-love is diffunt. Diffunt from eye-love as day is from night. Sometimes joy walk long wid em, but e go much wid sorrow. Heart-love and sorrow is one mudder's chillen. When you meets wid heart-love, peace'll leave you. But heart-love is brave. E kin pure smile in de face o deat,' honey. E pure shames deat'."[31]

"You hold you head, gal, an' quit a-draggin' you feet. Fo Gawd's sake wash you face an' wrap your hair nice an' put on a clean dress an' apron. Yesterday's sun is set, Si May-e. Last year's rain is dry. It's better to let old sorrows sleep an' tink on what's a-comin' to-morrow. Plenty o to-morrows is ahead o you. Plenty o good to-morrows too, if you'll listen at what I'm a-tellin' you."[32]

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29 Ibid., p. 87.

30 Ibid., p. 123.

31 Ibid., p. 161.

32 Ibid., p. 166.

Some people called the creatures boll-weevils, others call them boll-evils, some people thought God made them to turn the thought of people to him, others thought Satan had sent them; but no matter who was right, the wicked things destroyed every lock of cotton year after year and no man or charm or conjure could rule them.

The white landowners sent poison machines to scatter dust over the fields. Night after night the strange things droned and whined spreading their poison clouds, but the rain always came and washed the fields clean and fresh again. It must have been that the weevils could eat poison and thrive. The stuff that was meant to kill them seemed to make them grow fatter and stronger than ever. Cotton's time was out.[33]

People were trying to change the world, letting new ways creep in every day. Except for that newfangled hay-press, Keepsie would have his two good legs today.

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Keepsie was a brave-hearted boy. He could have died, but he strove to live and now he was as well as ever. He could play around as spry as any of the other children, hopping like a sparrow, doing almost anything that the others could do until he decided to go to that free school.

Mary didn't want him to go. She had never learned to read. There were no printed words in the Quarters except in Brer Dee's Bible and on the newspapers pasted on the house walls to hinder the wind from gushing too fast through the cracks. The same white people who made that hay-press made newspapers and books. Such things were dangerous. Keepsie ought not to tamper with them. Who could tell what book reading might do to him?[34]

White people are curious things. They pass laws no matter how fool the laws are, and put people in jail if those laws are not kept. People had come into the world over the same old road ever since Eve birthed Cain and Abel, and now mid-wife had to learn how to birth children a new way. It was enough to upset the whole world.

White people try to be too smart. If they keep on a-messing in God's business and trying to change things from the way He meant them to be, the first thing they know, He would get cross and Judgment Day and wipe the whole world clean of them . . . . They ought to be careful of their laws and projects. The old way to birth children has its drawbacks, but it is plenty good enough. They had better leave it alone.[35]

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[33] Ibid., p. 188.

[34] Ibid., pp. 195-6.

[35] Ibid., pp. 209-10.

For to save Mary's life she could not keep her mind fixed on the joys of heaven, but sought her pleasures right here in this world, where pleasures are in such easy reach. She believed in God, and Satan and Heaven and Hell's fires, but the rules of Heaven's Gate Church made the Christian life very difficult for a young, strong, healthy woman.[36]

"I know yunnuh talks about me behind my back, but I don' mind. Talk all you want to. I ain' no member o de church. I been baptized an' I been a member four diffrunt times in my life. A member, de same as you. When I git old an' tired seein' pleasure, I'm gwine to seek an' pray an' be a member again.[37]

"Look at me, gal. You think I don' know what ails you? I do. You ain' frettin' cause you done wrong. No. You's fretten cause one o dem town mens tricked you an' dropped you. You is a fool. As much mens as Gawd put in his world, any 'oman what would shed a tear over one man ain' got good sense. You make me pure shame. Shame. Me an' de chillen an' Budda Ben all has been pinchin' an' savin' an' doin' on half-rations so you could stay to school yonder until you got a depluma. Gawd knows what a depluma is, but I know I rather have dat lil gal-child yonder den all de deplumas in de world."[38]

There they were, ten stripes red like blood across the width of white cloth.

"Dem scarlet stripes is Jedus" blood. Every sin you had laid a open cut on Jedus' back."

Mary counted them again. Ten scarlet stripes were there.

"You had nine chillen, enty, Si May-e?"

She had.

"All was born in sin, enty?"

She bowed her head low. But she had only had nine children . . . .

"Seraphine had a sin child, Si May-e."

"Gawd holds you responsible for Seraphine's sin. You set de pattern . . . . You is to blame.

Mary knew that Unex spoke the truth.

"Wha' you gwine to do, Si May-e?"

She lay speechless.

"Prayin' is all de hope you got so pray without ceastin until dem stripes come clean and you soul gets white as snow."[39]

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[36] Ibid., p. 219.

[37] Ibid., p. 262.

[38] Ibid., p. 286.

[39] Ibid., pp. 335-6.

Thank God, although her whole body was shaking like a leaf, and her voice was so hoarse she could hardly talk, she could smile and look him in the eyes and tell him that she had been lost but now she was found. Yes, thank God, she was found Her sins were gone. She had seen her soul striped with pure scarlet, but God had taken pity on her and made it clean. She saw it with her own eyes. Now her soul was as white as snow. Jesus had washed it whiter than snow.

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Old Daddy Cudjoe came last, after most the others had gone and only Andrew waited outside to see Mary home. He took Mary's hand and shook it, then he cut his eyes all around to be certain Maum Hannah could not hear him when he whispered:

"If you gwine to quit wid mens now, Si May-e, do gi me you conjure rag. E's de best charm I ever made."

Mary looked straight into his eyes and smiled as she shook her head.

"I'll lend em to you when you need 'em Daddy, but I couldn't gi way my love-charm. E's all I got now to keep me young."[40]

Summary

This book presents the unprogressive spirit which still marks the Negro field workers. They are much more removed from the white influence than are those employed as house servants. Much of their queer reasoning and ideas of conduct is distasteful, but is no doubt a true result of their heritage.

Belief in signs, omens, and all aspects of conjuring is deeply ingrained in their thinking. God, to them, is close; and there is no disrespect in their crude manner of addressing Him.

The main value of this book is the presentation of the Negroes as real people and not just mechanical puppets. This book justifies the assumption that they feel, think, and suffer just as white people do.

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40 Ibid., pp. 341-5.

Biographical Sketch of Du Bose Heyward

Du Bose Heyward was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1885. He is the son of an aristocratic family and among his forebears there is a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Early in Heyward's life his family was saddened by the loss of his father, and was also affected by financial loss. Many times he worked until exhausted in trying to contribute to the support of his family. These times were followed by periods when he was able only to read and study.

At the age of twenty he worked at the wharves in Charleston as a checker in a cotton warehouse. He observed closely, and learned to understand the Negroes. After a nervous breakdown at about the age of thirty, he went to the North Carolina Mountains to recuperate. He continued there to study the Negro people. During the World War he did organizing work among the colored people of that section of North Carolina. Mamba's Daughters and others of his novels are considered to be among the first novels to be written about the American Negro which are true to both life and art.[41]

Mamba's Daughters

The setting for this story is Charleston, South Carolina, a few years after the beginning of the twentieth century. Mamba is a Negro belonging to the group known as the "wharf niggers." They are treated as social outcasts by the Negroes who are employed as servants in the homes of white people.

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41 Living Authors, Dilly Tante, editor (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1931), pp. 178-180.

Mamba has a consuming desire to better her condition and she plans her campaign to get her "some white folks." She slyly ingratiates herself with the Wentworths, an impoverished, but very genteel family. She does much for them over a period of years, although they are unable to pay her. Then she executes her coup d'etat, asking for letters of recommendation so that she may get placed in a paying job.

The Wentworths, coming from a long line of slave-holding people, understand Mamba and admire her as an individual. They accede to her plan, and she is placed with the Atkinsons, their neighbors, who have recently come from the North. Mrs. Atkinson has social designs; when Mamba tells her she came to them because her family was once owned by the Atkinsons of the Carolinas, the bargain is most happily closed.

Mamba's ambition is not purely selfish; it is to provide the proper education for Lissa, her granddaughter, whom she wishes to get into the elite mulatto society of Charleston. Hagar, Lissa's mother, a huge, brawny woman with weak intellect, but with the strength of a man, works in the phosphate mines to help provide for Lissa's musical training.

Lissa becomes irked by the restricted life Mamba forces her to lead; she begins to go about with a fast crowd. Prince, a hi-yaller gambler, becomes interested in her and takes her one night to his cabin near the phosphate mines. Mamba and Hagar learn of her whereabouts and go for her. Mamba takes her away while Hagar remains to mete out the proper punishment. She does too thorough a job, and realizes she must flee, for she is a murder-

ess.

Hagar, finding that she cannot escape, commits suicide, leaving a note which shields her daughter. Mamba sends Lissa to New York to continue her study of music. Lissa makes good on the New York stage and Mamba with her great ambition fulfilled is blissfully contented.

Citations from Mamba's Daughters

> Fortunes had waned in the little brick house. Polly was approaching the time when she could graduate from her school. She could name the English kings forward and backward, speak French, spell perfectly, and do sums in elementary arithmetic. So much for what might have been classed as commercial assets with which to meet the exactions of the Twentieth Century. But from the gentle and charming old ladies she had absorbed the old Southern gentlewoman tradition that had lingered on in the disintegrating old school like rose leaves in a jar.[42]

> The old town looked with indulgent eyes upon youth in its wild-oats stage. That was something rooted in the traditions of their people, understood. Good blood could be counted upon to win through in that reckless period. Fathers and uncles would exchange sly winks that condoned the indiscretions of today, while they implied a vanished but far more adventurous youth of their own.[43]

> "Ah gots tuh get uh pay job now, Miss Wentworth. Ah gots tuh get money fuh somet'ing p'tic'lar. An' ah gots tuh fin' uh white boss whut kin look attuh my chillen when dey meets dey trouble. Yo' an' Mauma here, yo' knows ah ain't a real house-raise' nigger, but dese new white folks whut comin' tuh Chas'n now, dey ain't knows de different, an' dey is want ole-time house-raise' nigger whut use' tuh b'long tuh de' quality. Ah is axin' yuh now tuh gib me letter an' say ah is raise' wid yo' fambly."[44]

Unfortunately there were only certain occupations that a gentleman could follow in Charleston without sacrifice of family dignity, and if one were handicapped by the lack of professional training these were reduced to a minimum. One could work in a bank, or one of the bond and

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[42] Du Bose Heyward, Mamba's Daughters (New York: The Literary Guild, 1929), p. 16.

[43] Ibid., p. 17.

[44] Ibid., pp. 35-6.

real estate offices on Broad Street. One could become a cotton expert, or even a broker in the wholesale district along East Bay. Strange to say, in spite of the unholy stench and overalls, one could seek employment in the great fertilizer factories beyond the city limits. But a gentleman seeking a livelihood in the early nineteen hundreds could not engage in any branch of the retail business without imposing upon his humiliated family the burden of incessant explanation.[45]

He turned on his heel and stepped briskly away, but his half-solved problem was not to be outdistanced; it was with him again, insinuating itself between his mind and the image of yesterday's quotation board. Individuals--human beings--that's the answer perhaps. Can't lift the masses. No use to try, it's too vast. Can't get hold of the edges of it, and if one did would probably drop and smash to pieces. But when you know of one who is catching hell, got to be decent, human. And leave the race problem to God and the great-grandchildren.[46]

She well knew that there was no halfway ground in the society of the old town. Membership in the St. Cecilia Society and attendance at its balls was the one criterion. For a hundred and fifty years the managing board of the organization had gathered annually, sipped their port, champagne, or Scotch, with the changing fashion, and decided whether any of the "new people" in town were eligible for recognition by their hereditary aristocracy. Within that charmed circle one belonged, one was a member of the family. Outside of the fatal line, one was always more or less a stranger stopping temporarily in the city.[47]

With incredible swiftness the supper march was followed by the usual ritual of the midnight repast--oysters, then boiled rice, duck, boned turkey. Champagne, ... Dessert--and the moment came when, according to the old custom, the men left their own partners to circle among the tables, drinking health to old sweethearts, débutantes, visiting girls.

After supper--dances--one that impinged upon his consciousness--the sixteenth. Out over the polished floor flowed the strains of "Auf Wiedersehn," weaving their old, sentimental spell about the feet of the callous new generation, deluging them with their flood of associations.[48]

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[45] Ibid., p. 43.

[46] Ibid., p. 72.

[47] Ibid., p. 116.

[48] Ibid., pp. 132-3.

"Phosphates," she wondered, "suggests something to do with soda water to my uninitiated mind, but I don't suppose a gentleman has anything to do with soda fountains."

"No," he said, too preoccupied with the thread-bare deception to smile, "I have the management of the Phosphate Mining Company's Commissary."

She gave him her wide gaze. "That sounds important. I am duly impressed."

Under her look his own eyes began to waver. Suddenly he blurted out: "No, that's all rot. It isn't important. In plain English I serve a gang of phosphate negroes all the week, then on Sunday I wash up, come to town, sit in the family pew, and play the gentleman."[49]

"Strange tangle, this negro business. Had a talk with a neighbor of yours about it yesterday. Atkinson--fine chap--open minded. He's been thinking a lot about it and had sized it up pretty well. He said that the Yankees were all for the negro race, and hated him as an individual, but that in the South we love the individual negro, while we hate, or at least fear, them as a race. I told him that if he had been South during reconstruction and had seen them making laws for us in Columbia, he'd know mighty well why, as a race, we have to hold them under."[50]

In town, both numbers and power rested securely with the white, and so he could afford to appear in court for a negro, could educate him, give him a chance in business, indulge his own benign paternalism. Out in the agricultural region, staying on upon the same soil that had enslaved their grandfathers, they were held to the old code of behavior by a tradition of servitude, reinforced in many cases by an actual affection to their landlords. There they were safe. Only here in the industrial belt, thronged as it was by the rag-tag and bob-tail of the race, ten, twenty, a hundred of them to a single white, the grip could not be allowed to slacken. White supremacy must remain absolute.[51]

"You see, my dear," she said, "what our race is accomplishing artistically--when we have Burleigh, a poet like Paul Lawrence Dunbar, and in painting, Tanner, to speak for us, we have something to be proud of . . ."[52]

Then a man said, "Everybody know nigger kill herself."

"Why dat is?" Hagar persisted in her strangely impersonal catechism.

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[49] Ibid., pp. 141-2.

[50] Ibid., p. 155.

[51] Ibid., p. 159.

[52] Ibid., p. 213.

"Cause nigger ain't worry herself dat much," came the answer.
"Tain't always goin' be like dat," she said in a slow musing voice, as though she were thinking aloud. "Time comin' when nigger goin' worry jest like white folks, an' den Gawd goin' show 'em what to do when de trouble get too deep fer he to wade t'rough."[53]

"I have learned since that the battle is on here--not in the South. Not that we receive more kindness here. There is a certain kind of cruelty that we meet in New York that is not known in South Carolina. We have been taught to expect things here, and then when we come we find these things denied us."[54]

"What music!" he thought. "Primitive?--Sophisticated?--Neither--both. Savage, tender, reckless. Something saved whole from a race's beginnings and raised to the nth degree by the Twentieth Century magic . . . . Lissa! What a voice--power--beauty--everything, and that heart-breaking pure negro quality--Hagar--Mamba. Rotten time of it, like as not, for all the laughter and singing--climbing out of the mud--making a gallant fight of it . . . others too, back at home--different kinds with different sorts of trouble. That Banker Broaden, for instance--good citizen . . . What would he think if I addressed him as mister? . . . What would my white friends think? That's easy: 'Turn their heads,' 'Black Menace.' Absurd, looking at it from a distance . . . 'Good morning, Mister Broaden,' saying it like that--meaning it . . . Why not? . . . Little enough, God knows! . . ."[55]

Summary

In Mamba's Daughters Du Bose Heyward has given a fine and thoughtful interpretation of the Negro. The reader feels that he suffers with the Negro and that he would gladly find an answer to their problems if he only were able. He pays a fine tribute to the Negro race by endowing Mamba with great ambition and steadfastness of purpose. However, he acknowledges the

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[53] Ibid., p. 285.

[54] Ibid., p. 299.

[55] Ibid., p. 303.

supremacy of the white race in that Mamba was forced to find her "some white folks" before she could plan her campaign for Lissa. His plea seems to be for the white people to help and understand the Negro as an individual, and gradually the black race will come up.

This book gives a good picture of the exacting social standards of the South; yet it shows some of the new economic standards, and a breaking away from the old hide-bound conventions of the Southern aristocracy.

Julia Peterkin in Scarlet Sister Mary clearly recognizes the New South by writing a book with all Negro characters. Her contribution to this study is a kindly and understanding delineation of the Negro people, which should be accorded them, irrespective of their previous place in the old Southern régime.

Mamba's Daughters is primarily a study of the Negro. The black characters are in the foreground, and the white people are merely background, which seems quite an unusual arrangement in Southern fiction. Du Bose Heyward calls the people of the New South the "callous generation," which expression clearly defines the fact that they are lacking in sentiment toward the old standards and traditions of the past.

CHAPTER VIII

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

A brief summary of each novel has been made and a general statement of conclusion for each chapter; now the time has come when the writer feels justified in drawing certain conclusions for this entire study. This research has been made in an attempt to find in the fiction of the South discussions of the social forces which have caused the transition from the Old Traditional South to the New South. The general summary will be given under the following heads:

1. General types of characters as they appear unique or indicative of the South.
2. Racial feelings.
3. Place of the "poor whites."
4. The mention of old families and habits which show the retention of old traditions.
5. Allusion to education, politics, and religion, if they illustrate special trends.
6. Agrarianism versus industrialism.

Types of Characters

This study reveals the fact that the Southern writer seem unable to produce a story without building it about a unique personage, such as a country squire, a lawyer, or a banker who holds much land. This is true so

commonly that such a type has come to be associated with the South. He is usually portrayed as possessing an arrogant dominating disposition; one who stands well in his own estimation, and who has an air of condescension toward others. In this fictitious character there is usually combined hard-headed business tactics with the courtly graces of a gentleman of the old school. Even in the later novels, when the authors wish to present a more modern point of view, they seem unable to forego the portrayal of such a character. The writers, for the most part, make the reader conscious of the changed conditions by contrasting these people who represent the Old South with the people of the New South.

According to the early fiction writers, all the women must be young, beautiful, and high-spirited; unless they come in this category they are unworthy of mention. Until the time of Ellen Glasgow, with her middleclass women characters, the only exceptions were women possessed of a scintillating or caustic wit. The place of women is always a good standard by which to judge a country or a section thereof. The time came when the Southern writers ceased to glorify their women to the extent to which it was done during the Thomas Nelson Page régime in fiction. It can then be ventured, as a conclusion, in this one particular at least, that the Old Traditional South has passed.

Scarcely any novel can be found without a particular Negro character, either man or woman, who is faithful, dependent, and intelligent. Several of the novelists, whose books have been used in this study, drew their picture of the late racial problems by contrasting the actions of such a character with the actions of the freed Negro of the later generations.

Racial Feelings

Concerning the feelings between the white and black races, it seems possible to trace some definite steps. In the early days the attitude of the white man toward his slaves was chiefly paternalistic, and the black people were truly dependent on him in all ways. This was true from the beginning of the institution of slavery in the South almost until the time of the Civil War. Many of the Negroes were then in defiance of the white men at times only at the instigation of the "Carpet Bag" leaders. After the first terrible years of the early Reconstruction period, there came gradually to be less tension between the two races. According to Ellen Glasgow's interpretation of the late Reconstruction days, some of the Negroes who had become economically independent were looked upon with more favor by the white population than was accorded the "poor whites."

It is interesting to note that the Negroes of the Old South were always proud of their "white folks." For many years after the Civil War the better Negroes disliked the new people who came to capitalize on the South's defeat. The black people were quick to distinguish between real and assumed quality.

It can be definitely stated that each author stressed the fact that there must always be white supremacy. Du Bose Heyward endows his Negro characters with very fine qualities, and he points to the outstanding achievements of many of their race. He encourages kindly treatment of both the gifted and the under-privileged Negro as individuals, but he elaborates upon the fact that in the mass they must be subservient to the white people. The place the Negroes are given in the fiction of the South acknowledged their

new standing. The writer feels safe in concluding that the fiction consulted decidedly reflects racial changes.

The Place of the "Poor Whites"

With the exception of the two books, The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains, and The Time of Man, which are solely concerning the "poor whites," very scant mention has been given to them. In life and in fiction they are a class apart. These people have a great hatred for the Negroes, for they feel that the Negroes have deprived them of their birthright of a living wage. According to the literacy tests and statements concerning the educational progress in the South, the fiction by Elizabeth Madox Roberts regarding these people is true in many respects. They are reserved and distant when thrown in contact with moneyed people, and prefer to live apart.

A sense of futility is the greatest curse of the "poor whites," and yet a most natural one, too, considering their manner of living, which has changed so little over a period of many years. They are noted for their restrained emotions; yet beneath their uncouth exterior, many of them suffer with great hunger for both spiritual and material things--an inarticulate nebulous craving for something better.

History records very little progress for them considering the great strides toward progress taken by the other people of the United States. It seems amazing, with the mechanized farm equipment used in other sections of our country, that they can still be working with the crudest of machinery. Southern writers have been indifferent and slow to acknowledge the place of

the "scrub settlers." These people are a blot on Southern progress and, no doubt, many of the writers, out of loyalty to their own, hesitate to bring them before the reading public.

The Mention of Old Families and Habits Which Show the Retention of Old Traditions

Throughout the novels used in this study, there has been frequent mention of old families, their habits and traditions. Perhaps some definite points should be mentioned at this time. The authors allude to fox hunting, feasting, drinking, and dancing; the great desire for guests and the many courtesies shown them; the inborn love of the Southern people for fine-blooded horses and racing. Among the old customs is the habit of retaining old types of architecture and articles of sentimental value. Less tangible, but none the less important, are the beliefs in the divine right of slavery, a love for dignified leisure, and the practice of the courtly graces.

It is an interesting fact that in the novels which have been written in this century, there has not been an appreciable decline in the frequency of these allusions. All of the writers whose novels have been used in this study are Southern born; thus this sentimental outlook for that section of the country seems natural. Perhaps the provincial outlook, which characterizes the South, is another reason for this fact.

Allusions to Education, Politics and Religion

This survey has revealed to the writer that the authors of this section refer more requently to politics and economic influences than they do to education and religion. In the novels printed early in the Nineteenth Century, there is occasional mention of the Jeffersonian principles of democracy. In presenting the period prior to the Revolution, John Esten Cook in The Virginian Comedians makes more mention of politics than any other author consulted. Next to him in this respect is Winston Churchill in The Crisis. His main puspose in his political discussion seems to be to present the fact that the death of Abraham Lincoln was the greatest blow that the South ever experienced; that, had he lived, the South would have been spared the pain and worry of the Reconstruction days.

Thomas Dixon gives politics a rather vital place in his novels of the Reconstruction. The main issues emphasized by these authors by means of political allusions are: that the South has never been a democracy in the true sense of the word; that the term "Solid South" came from the wholesale voting for the Democrats because the Republicans favored the freeing of the slaves.

There has been practically no mention of religion in many of the novels, with the exception of its place in the lives of the "poor whites" and the Negroes. Great religious fervor comes naturally to oppressed people. Historians tell us that the Southern people of the upper class cared more for material things than for spiritual blessings, and this verdict is upheld in this investigation.

Little mention of education in a broad sense of the term has been given, although there have been many references to schools. In the early days each plantation usually had a special room for the school. Each plantation-owner hired a tutor for his children and the children of the overseer. In a few cases the children from several plantations gathered at one of the homes where they were instructed in a group. At this same time, the authors referred to some of the Southern universities, but the general habit was to send the young men to universities abroad. Only one book written before the Civil War mentioned the district school. Several allusions were made to academies. As the history of education progressed, as reflected in these novels, there came the mention of the modern high school and the business college.

Agrarianism Versus Industrialism

This investigation brings to light the fact that in the early days in the South there was great dislike for Yankee thrift and for commercial enterprises. Poorly managed, and poorly kept general stores, with an elastic credit system, seemed to be the approved type. All the literature of that time spoke of agricultural life as the one and only ideal mode of existence. The references to the land warrant the conclusion that the love evinced for it by the landed gentry was mostly because of its value as a source of power and distinction. One can sense a great distinction between the acquisitive love for the land and that affection experienced by those who toil and commune with it, as the tenant farmers of the South do.

Little by little there came suggestions of changed attitudes toward industrialism, but even in the early years of the Twentieth Century there were still certain occupations that the impoverished descendants of the old landholders could work at without being looked upon with derision, and others which were strictly taboo. Practically no author, except Ellen Glasgow, has had the temerity to portray any character in his books as engaged in any type of work of a menial nature. William Faulkner in Sartoris gives an excellent picture of the Snopes family, who try anything in the line of commercial activity from operating a peanut stand on up the ladder. Then he shows the derision and disdain with which these business attempts are viewed by the Jeffersonians of the Twentieth Century.

After listing these findings, the writer desires to offer a few more general conclusions and impressions. By a comparison with the facts of history, it is evident that these Southern fiction writers have made a sincere effort to portray and interpret the social forces which have caused the transition from the Old South to the New South. These authors are inclined to be conservative, and they lag far behind history in chronicling the events of major importance. The South has often been called in literary criticisms "The Hesitant South" and no doubt this is the answer to the source of such an appellation. Of course the habit of creating a legend of the past is also another reason for the use of such a descriptive term.

The writer is of the general impression that the fictional literature of the South is inferior to that of the North. After a study of the biographies of the Southern men of fiction, it is found that the brains of the

South have gone into the writing of books on political economy. The time and talent of many prominent men has been spent in law and politics in an effort to uphold the South and its type of living.

Another impression persists in the mind of the writer--that it is ironic that the iconoclasts of the New South cannot escape the nostalgic desire for the wonderful past. One cannot come to the end of such a study without a desire to delve deeper into more Southern fiction, and to understand the subtle forces which enthrall its people and lure those who read its fiction.

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