

## COLONEL DUNWODDIE, AND OTHER NOVELS.

OUT of one dozen brand-new native American novelettes, one, and one only, and that one full of literary faults, moves us by its earnestness, stimulates thought by the civic and social questions on which it bears, and revives the dream of a new school of fiction. The rest are, for the most part, so slight in their pretensions that it seems brutal even to discountenance them. Theirs is the infallible appeal of weakness and simplicity. They are so light, so short, so deprecatory and *ingénus*, that they fairly stir one's chivalous instincts. We repudiate the idea of quenching the smoking flax, although forced to admit that there may be a deal of this sort of smoke with very little fire.

There is something naïve and trustful in the very modesty of some of the themes. One writer tells us how six young ladies and one young gentleman spent the summer together at Nantucket,<sup>1</sup> boating, bathing, and reveling in all the regular sea-side delights. The situation is not forced, — this being, in fact, the usual numerical proportion of the sexes at places of summer resort; nor is probability violently outraged by the upshot of the story, in which the hero finds himself restricted to marrying one out of the six. He selects the damsel whom he has saved from drowning, probably because with her he felt most like a hero; but more recent graduates can answer better than ourselves for the beauty and veracity of the culminating scene: —

“ ‘ This is so much better than being drowned,’ said Edgerton, emphatically. And her smile was not a contradiction.”

Referring to a former speech of hers, he asked, maliciously, “ ‘ Does it seem so peculiar to get married as it did, Addie?’ . . . As Edgerton kissed her, she cried, ‘ Look, you jealous sea! You would have drowned him. See what you have gained! He is kissing me before you.’ ”

“ ‘ But we must cross the sea once more. Better not anger it,’ he said.

“ ‘ I am not afraid, — not with you, for you have beaten it; but I shall never dare come down here alone again.’ ”

This is rather meek for a mermaid; but elsewhere, in the conversation, there are gleams of humor and common sense, and some loving and even striking portraiture of the aspects of sea and shore. The Nantucket Idyl is a romance if it is anything, but we have not been able to discover what claim Brief Honors<sup>2</sup> has to be so considered. It is the tale of a great life insurance company, and of the marble halls in which its directors dwelt. Casual mention is also made of a young man who was for a while in the employ of the company, and then dismissed therefrom, and of a young woman in a French bonnet; but these familiar symptoms come to naught. The young man is jilted inferentially, but his heart is not broken; neither does the company become bankrupt, which would seem to be the least that can be expected of an

Causes of the General Stagnation of Commerce, by Jean-Baptiste Say. Principles of Political Economy and Taxation, by David Ricardo: chap. xxi., Effect of accumulation on profits and interest; chap. vi., On profits. Elements of Political Economy, by James Mill: chap. iv., s. 1, Of productive and unproductive Consumption; s. 3, That consumption is co-extensive with production. Principles of Political Economy, by John Stuart Mill: vol. i., Book I., chap. v., Fundamental propositions on capital, s. 3; chap. xi., Law of increase of capital, s. 4; vol. ii., Book III., chap. xiv., Excess of supply; Book IV., chap. iv., Of the tendency of profits to a minimum; chap. v., Consequences of the tendency of profits to a minimum. Chapters on Political Economy, by

Prof. Bonamy Price: chap. iv., Capital. The Economy of Consumption, by Robert Scott Moffat. Principles of Political Economy, by J. R. McCulloch Pt. I., chap. ii., s. 3, Accumulation and employment of capital; chap. vii., Causes of gluts; Pt. III., chap. vii., Circumstances which determine the average rate of profits; Pt. IV., Consumption of wealth. Article on Industrial Reconstruction, by Edward Atkinson, in the International Review for July-August, 1878.

<sup>1</sup> *Six to One.* A Nantucket Idyl. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *Brief Honors.* A Romance of the Great Dividable Chicago. Jansen, McClurg & Co. 1877.

insurance company in the way of romance. The tone of the writer is vaguely sarcastic, and the mysterious indictment of the insurance system, which the tale is supposed to envelop, was penned several years ago, as we learn from the preface, and then cautiously withheld from publication. One wishes that the Horatian method had been yet more strictly followed in this case, for as a tract the book is pointless, while as a story it is inane.

The *China Hunter's Club*<sup>1</sup> records the adventures of a band of inquisitive and resolute enthusiasts, who "raided" on the cupboards and buffets of a certain rural district for specimens of old English and early American pottery. They went through a great deal of dialect to get a very little china, and out of thirty-two well-executed illustrations of their discoveries, two or three only have any intrinsic beauty. All that it really imports a student of pottery to know about the date of these pieces and the history of their styles is contained in the preface, by Mr. Prime, — perhaps even a little more than is important. For when Mr. Prime records his belief that "the day will come when ceramic specimens showing our first steamships, our first railways, the portraits of our distinguished statesmen, soldiers, and sailors, the opening of our canals, the various events of our wars, and our triumphs in peace will rank in historical collections with the vases of Greece," we can only hope, for the æsthetic honor of our nation, that our Washington jugs and Pittsfield plates will be subjected to no such comparison. And when he assumes that Oriental porcelain was almost unknown here before the Revolution, it is evident that he has received no hint of those treasures of Ind, especially the spoils of Louisburg, which still shine resplendent in the well-preserved buffets of old mansions in southwestern Maine.

The mention of this locality reminds us of Mr. Tenney's *Agamenticus*,<sup>2</sup> of

which eccentric and seemingly not quite responsible tale the sombre scene is laid there. Out of the buffets themselves, he may be convicted of the same sort of historic misrepresentation of which Mr. Judd was guilty in his original but ghastly story of Margaret. Mr. Tenney's picture of domestic life in the last century in the coast towns overlooked by Agamenticus Mountain, Kittery, York, Eliot, and Wells, is a very repulsive one. He makes it out to have been at once stern and squalid, brutally immoral among the poorer folk, and lacking, even in the more affluent homes, all the amenities and some even of the decencies of civilized life. Now there is perhaps no other region of equal extent in New England where there are so many and so conspicuous traces of pre-Revolutionary wealth and refinement. There are a dozen ancient mansions in York alone where the fine antique furniture, the family portraits and old English engravings, the quaint and admirably wrought brass and silver, and the carefully illuminated coats-of-arms testify to a taste, in matters of household art, better, because unconscious, than the best of our day, and to a frank and simple pride in an honorable ancestry. These treasured relics tell a truer tale than Mr. Tenney's wayward imagination. They are even a little pathetic in the proof they offer that there was more of elegance in the lives of some of the dwellers in this nook of the coast in the middle of the last century than now. Mr. Tenney's researches into local history appear to have been considerable, and a gleam of ready humor lights him on his way; but unluckily he has gotten him a theory quite similar to that whereby Carlyle squared his history of Frederick the Great. He wills that old Parson Samuel Moody, whom he introduces under the name of David Benson, shall have found Agamenticus, or York, in a state of exceptional sin and misery, and not only christianized but civilized the place during his vigorous pastorate of nearly

<sup>1</sup> *The China Hunter's Club*. By the Youngest Member. New York: Harper and Brothers 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *Agamenticus*. By E. P. TENNEY. Boston: Lee and Shepard. New York: Charles P. Dillingham. 1878

fifty years. The truth we conceive to have been quite otherwise. York was early civilized by commerce and an usually frequent and direct communication with the old country; while Samuel Moody, powerful and picturesque figure though he was, and well worth commemoration in song and story, exemplified, in the most high-handed and tyrannous fashion, precisely that phase of the Puritan spirit which set itself in sternest opposition to the gentler humanities. His son Joseph, usually known as Handkerchief Moody, whom Mr. Tenney calls Sewall Benson, and whose tragic story was vaguely idealized by Hawthorne under the name of *The Minister's Black Veil*, was the spiritual victim of his god-fearing but unmerciful father. It was the stern coercion of the latter to a life from which he shrank which clouded the sensitive mind of Joseph, — not remorse for having accidentally killed a playmate in boyhood, which there is no good evidence that he ever did. There is not, in all our annals, a better subject for a psychological study, nor one more strikingly illustrative of time and scene, than the tale of these two remarkable men, so alien though so near of kin, and of their cruel action upon each other; and we owe Mr. Tenney a slight grudge for having clipped and shorn and *dried*, to suit his own speculative views, a theme so capable of poetry and pathos. Mr. Tenney can himself be very poetic and very moving when he will. In his earlier book, *Coronation*, there were passages of intense tenderness, and some nobly imaginative word-painting of scenery on the New England coast; but in *Agamenticus*, though the book is manly and sometimes entertaining, we see only the ruder and more whimsical aspects of his mind; and “story, God bless you! he has none to tell you” in either book, or quite forgets it after the first few chapters, if he began with one.

Two more of our ephemeridæ, *Bluffton*<sup>1</sup> and *The Crew of the Sam Weller*,<sup>2</sup> have also a distinctly religious purpose, — a fact which will secure them a wide

circulation among that numerous class who crave some sort of spiritual sanction or association for even their sports and dissipations. *Bluffton* is so very audible and emphatic a book that it ought to be easy to characterize. It has decided literary merits, a concise, clear style, energy in narrative, animation in dialogue. There is no subtlety of characterization, but a certain broad and sure discernment of human differences. And yet the book leaves an unpleasant impression, due mainly, we think, to its tone of ineffable conceit. The story is that of a young man educated for the ministry in the straitest sect of the religion of the fathers, who adopts “radical” views, loses his first parish in consequence, and then takes charge of a less orthodox one, — a kind of typical church of the future. The form of the story is autobiographical, and the main event is treated as something new in history and of cosmic importance. Never was confession of unfaith more boastfully made, and seldom has unfaith confessed itself so shallow. The very beginnings and commonplaces of modern scientific skepticism are proclaimed with a grand air of intellectual daring and Promethean revolt. The *a b c* of that school of biblical exegesis which may be termed *destructive* is recited loudly and solemnly, as if it were a formula which might probably take the speaker to the stake. The hero has an ardent love affair on his Caucasus of *Bluffton*, the tale of which is well told but for a taint of coarseness, which reappears yet more offensively in the unpleasant and incredible episode of life in New York, whereby the author seeks to enhance the interest of his plot. We close Mr. Savage's book with the feeling that he has some little literary good in him, but small chance of literary improvement.

*The Crew of the Sam Weller* is latest of that legion of lively tracts with which Mr. Habberton has flooded his fatherland since *Helen's Babies* was so rapturously welcomed by the public of railway readers. The book, as we said, is relig-

<sup>1</sup> *Bluffton: A Story of To-Day*. By M. J. SAVAGE. Boston: Lee and Shepard 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *The Crew of the Sam Weller*. By JOHN HABBERTON. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons

ious, but it is not moral. A young bank defaulter, of engaging appearance, first spends all the money which he has stolen, and then runs away from civilization, assumes an *alias*, and ships on a Mississippi flat-boat for New Orleans. The scenes on this boat are as "realistic" in their squalor as any in Tourguéneff, and so far, it may be supposed, "good art." A something happens there, however, undreamed of in the philosophy of the Russian: the hero is "converted" by the influence of a messmate, and very properly desires to return to New York and give himself up to justice. But when the bank directors, at whose meeting he presents himself, learn that though he has squandered their money he has "got religion," they decline to proceed against him, and cheerfully bid him go free. Here, truly, is a valuable suggestion for the cashier of the period. The same mixture of active piety with extremely passive morality may be observed in *Miriam's Heritage*,<sup>1</sup> the third number of Harper's New Library of American Fiction. It is a kind of amplified and aggravated Sunday-school book, whose chapters are supplied with long poetical captions from Walt Whitman, Mrs. Hemans, John G. Saxe, and — Mollie Moore! The mother of Miriam — the young lady with the heritage — is the most earnest and didactic person whom we have encountered in romance for many years. To a wandering army officer who claims the hospitality of her sylvan home she remarks, apropos of *checkers*, "All games of chance appear to me foolish, if not sinful. There are, of course, games of skill and tests of memory which are amusing, and may be beneficial if not so absorbing as to cease to amuse. But on temperance I can imagine but one opinion among sensible people. A human being unable to control appetite is lower than a beast! But I do not believe there is such a being. . . I heard a man say it was as easy to quit drinking as to open his hand. Suppose

the liquor was *even that near* his lips; he opened his hand, and glass and liquor were on the ground." No wonder the major "started to his feet, and walked up and down the room" before he said, "Had I met you before, madam! Had anybody said this to me twenty years ago! But now I fear it is too late." And yet when Miriam is sent away from the guardianship of this austere mother to a celebrated school, where she becomes a prodigy of book-learning, the fact is mentioned with playful indifference, as if it were a rather pleasant local peculiarity, that teachers and pupils alike had the habit of repairing their rapid waste of nerve and brain substance by an enormous consumption of opium. The only *palliating* circumstance about Miriam's Heritage is that it acquaints us with the great beauty and rich material resources of a not very well known region in the Middle States; and *Mag*,<sup>2</sup> the fourth volume of the same series, a rather graceful and entirely harmless little story, after the manner of the philanthropic Dickens, gives us an attractive glimpse of an equally interesting country a little farther south.

Two volumes of collected tales, by justly distinguished writers, — a second series by Saxe Holm<sup>3</sup> and Bret Harte's *Drift from Two Shores*,<sup>4</sup> — suggest the thought in common that the practice of reassembling fugitive sketches puts an author's work to a peculiarly severe test. He who escapes the charge of monotony under such circumstances must have a very versatile mind. For there is a certain trade-mark of the spirit which he cannot help affixing to every narrative of human experience which he tries to make symmetrical and complete. His theory of life, his way of looking at the great fundamental facts of it, have to be reiterated just so often as he closes the story of a career. Of course, too, if he be not Shakespeare (and the chances are against that), he has fully fathomed only a limited number of human types, and

<sup>1</sup> *Miriam's Heritage*. A Story of the Delaware River. By ALMA CALDER. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1878.

<sup>2</sup> *Mag*. A Story of To-Day. Harper's New Library of American Fiction. New York. 1878.

<sup>3</sup> *Saxe Holm's Stories*. Second Series. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1878.

<sup>4</sup> *Drift from Two Shores*. By BRET HARTE. Boston: Houghton, Osgood & Co. 1878.

these must reappear. A book once a year, or better, once in two years, provided we like the author and his men and manners, is all very well; but when the same "small passage of few notes" is repeated "o'er and o'er for all one summer morning," "the ear," as Mr. Tennyson justly observes, "wearies to hear it." It is no use remonstrating with Mr. Bret Harte, who planted himself long ago on his inalienable literary right to give his readers just as little as they will take for their money; and moreover that brisk barbaric stave of his was so odd and electrifying when first he tried it that it will bear a good deal of whistling even yet; but with the distressingly "authentic" cadences of Saxe Holm it is not so. Whoever she may be, she is tender and sympathetic; she is discerning, and sometimes highly dramatic; she writes good English, and has a fine eye for color; but she is incessantly and morbidly sentimental. Secretly or ostentatiously, her people all *mope*. And what is worse and less natural, her men mope more than her women. Man, in the majority of these gentle and graceful tales, plays the part of a patient victim; woman, that of a foreordained and unwilling destroyer of his peace. It is very sad and very tiresome, and not at all like life. It is hard to say which tries us more, — the cheerful helplessness of the hero, or the mournful self-complacency of the heroine. On the whole, we think we like the woman less, because we do not believe in her. For all her meek airs, she knows very well what she is about. In the midst of a somewhat superfluous display of piety and purity, she reveals the conscious coquette. Madame Guyon was her prototype; Madame de Krüdener shows what, under favoring circumstances, she may come to. And we ought always to remember, concerning the mental fickleness of her lover, that we are invariably made to see him — so to speak — through her medium.

To many readers this will appear to be captious and exaggerated criticism of work which is far enough above our republican average; but the point of it is

that it is only in Massachusetts that the Saxe Holm stories declare their limitations so plainly, and awaken in us so strong an antagonism. Taken singly, their faults of tone, especially their frequent tendency to *flat*, are almost imperceptible. The best tale in the last series, Farmer Basset's Love Story, is a very good story indeed, and prettily told. Even here, we do not like the heroine so well as the author appears to do, and Miss Fanny's descent in full dress upon her rustic visitor appears to us not so much "kind and wise" as snobbish and histrionic; but we are glad that, for once, the lover shares our discernment, and behaves like a man; and the brief notes on his two marriages are full of real pathos. My Tourmaline, which has been a more admired story than Farmer Basset, does not please us nearly as well. There are no such wax and parian under-graduates, we are happy to believe, as those who descended upon that Maine village on that autumn night; and if there were, they would never have been rusticated, nor, in any case, have adopted the daughter of a defunct tramp, and taken her with them to the parsonage; nor would any actual Maine clergyman and his wife have received the impossible trio in and coddled them indiscriminately; nor would the tramp's daughter have proved to be an angel, nor even wanted to be one. The author means to invest the latter part of her tale with a dreamy and mystical air associated with the occult properties of the tourmaline; but she succeeds only in showing that an important geological discovery was treated with the most ignorant and careless folly, while the mild incantations of the foundling heroine with her "stonic" merely suggest that the child was predisposed to chorea, and *indicate*, as certain of our physicians are wont to say, beefsteak and mud-pies. In Joe Hale's Red Stockings a healthier tone is recovered, and the character of the child-woman at the light-house is humorously conceived and charmingly developed. But if Saxe Holm is capable of a sustained effort, she should make her next book consist of but one story; and if she

has already twice proved herself capable, her third effort should have the fine style and firm realism of Mercy Philbrick and Hetty's *Strange Story*, without their far-fetched sentiment and distorted morality.

The patient patriot who has accompanied us thus far in our review of late American fiction may now, if he will, have some minutes for refreshment, and regale himself on a few English reprints, or a translation from the French, German, or Russian. He will find *Mine is Thine* and *Less Black than we 're Painted*<sup>1</sup> second or third rate English tales, of the most amusing and agreeable order, full of picturesque situations and piquant events, brisk in conversation, sustained in interest, abounding in humor. They contain no grand studies of character, but some clever sketches and two or three delightful caricatures. In *Mine is Thine* there are descriptions of a gillies' ball in the Highlands, and of the achievements of a French marquis at a stag-hunt, fit to revive the spirits even after Saxe Holm. And if Mr. Payn makes too many small jokes in his own person, and stoops from an author's proper dignity in the affluence of his merely verbal wit, even this is better than a corresponding affluence of verbal dullness. It is curious to observe, in passing, in both these prosperous and sprightly young writers, how their language is impregnated with the phraseology of Tennyson. They quote him incessantly: often consciously, with inverted commas; more often, it is clear, quite automatically. They get as many *mots* out of *In Memoriam* as Gail Hamilton and the clergy get out of the Bible. It is a straw tending to show that the laureate has been one of the great influences of this generation.

*Gabrielle*,<sup>2</sup> by Henry Gréville, has been already noticed in these pages under its

<sup>1</sup> Harper's Library of Select Novels. 1878. *Less Black than we 're Painted*. By JAMES PAYN. *Mine is Thine*. By J. C. LOCKHART.

<sup>2</sup> *Gabrielle*; or, *The House of Maurège*. Translated from the French of HENRY GRÉVILLE. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson and Brother. 1878.

<sup>3</sup> *Margarethe*; or, *Life Problems*. From the German of E. JUNCKER, by MRS. A. L. WISTER. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott. 1878.

original title of *The House of Maurège*. The name of Sherwood upon the title-page is a guaranty for the excellence of the translation, and the book is refined and charming, but it is more like other French novels than *Dosia*. The trail of the Gallic serpent is over it, and the tread of the German elephant is in all the pages of *Margarethe*,<sup>3</sup> where the high-souled *dramatis personæ* talk skeptical philosophy, and experiment, timidly, in elective affinities. In *Pillone*,<sup>4</sup> that old-time favorite the Neapolitan brigand returns to the stage after a long vacation, and the brief tale of his romantic adventures is told with spirit, and may fairly be called interesting. In *The Cossacks*,<sup>5</sup> on the contrary, there is no echo of old romance, but only "music of the future," so called, — loud, unmelodic, strange, and terrifying, yet having a unique power of fascination. The translator expresses in his preface the modest hope that his work "may contribute a little to the better knowledge and understanding not only of the Russians, but of the most maligned and misunderstood portion of them, — the Cossacks." If it does not do this, it makes a striking and even thrilling contribution to our ignorance. How keen, how wild, how primitive and lawless, how ante or extra human, is the Caucasian life which Count Tolstoy portrays! There is a *reek* about it, like the smoke of the peat which they burn there, dense and blinding, but not wholly unpleasant or unclean.

We understand perfectly why Tourguénéff should admire this tale, and call it the most perfect in Russian literature. It is Tourguénéff with a freer and fiercer poetry, less his contemptuous *ennui* and arid sophistication. There is a chapter of soliloquy by the hero, Dimitri Olenin, on occasion of his going out stag-hunting in the wild woods quite alone, which

<sup>4</sup> *Pillone*. From the Danish of WILHELM BERGSÖE, by D. G. HUBBARD. Wayside Series Boston: Lockwood, Brooks & Co. 1878.

<sup>5</sup> *The Cossacks*. A Tale of the Caucasus in 1852. By COUNT LEO TOLSTOY. Translated from the Russian by EUGENE SCHUYLER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1878.

is a literary revelation in its artless and solemn, one might almost add shameless, intensity. The book seems very well translated in the descriptive parts, but poorly in the conversational, where we cannot help suspecting that the blunt and inconsequent speeches of the characters were sometimes as meaningless to the translator as he makes them to ourselves. We would gladly — for the novel deserves to be dwelt upon — take space to illustrate it by quotation, especially of the aforesaid soliloquy, but must reserve all the little space that is left us for a tale which touches us more nearly: for the one bright exception to the tameness of our home products; for that oasis in the great American desert on which, in the beginning of this not too flattering *résumé*, we promised ultimately to land our readers.

Number five in Harper's New Library of American Fiction is entitled Colonel Dunwoddie, Millionaire.<sup>1</sup> It is a story of Southern life since the war, and it is Southern in spirit to the heart's core; but we cannot imagine anything better fitted to warm the best hearts among ourselves towards that devoted region than this revelation of what is in the best of theirs. We should say that the author had not read many novels, at least of late, and we can well understand that he has had something graver to do. He tells his tale with a grand carelessness of literary effect, which is more than compensated, however, by the intensity of emotion that underlies it. We remark, in the first page or two, that he says *will* for *shall*, and "this made it that much more natural," etc., but we soon cease to be critical about trifles. For we are introduced to a hero who presently becomes as real to us as Colonel Newcome, and hardly less dear; a chivalrous, fiery, faulty, tender soul, the outlines of whose character are so finely and firmly drawn for us, at the very outset, that all his previous and all his subsequent career, every act, word, project, chimera, blunder, and triumph, become logical, natural, necessary. We under-

stand perfectly that our colonel "did not believe in secession as a remedy for acknowledged wrongs," and that "he made powerful speeches against it: one in the brick court-house in Clairsville, where he lived, wherein he reached a pitch of eloquence which inspired him with the first hope he ever had that he really possessed genius;" and we understand equally well what follows. "But he did not prevent the war. With many others, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, he abhorred the impending epidemic of civil strife; yet, when it came, with all others from the Gulf to the St. Lawrence, he also took the terrible fever. Precisely two months after his great speech, he made, in the same court-house, another speech, the reverse of the former, and far more vehement, and on the strength of it a company was raised, of which he was unanimously elected captain. He had been a whig of the school of Henry Clay, — of Washington, rather. During the war he enshrouded himself with the smoke, and deafened himself with the cannon to everything like deliberate thought or theory, making the fighting the exclusive business of his head as well as his hands." Compare this account with the record of many a war democrat at the North, — say the chief pride of Massachusetts herself, the lamented General Bartlett. Surely, the children of these two classes of men are closely akin, and those who chance to be the heirs of victory ought first to confess and most imperiously to insist upon the tie. Colonel Dunwoddie (and that we instinctively speak of him as historic is in itself a tribute to a new and unnamed author's power) is introduced to us at the lowest ebb of his *post-bellum* fortunes, in the midst of what seems a death-grapple with a merciless and, if you will, avenging fate. Around him, in drawing only less masterly than that of his own strong character, are grouped his family, with their bright and varied promise and the blasting conditions of their lot, his few social equals, the feeble and mournful remnant of a perished aristocracy, and the mass of his poverty-paralyzed towns - people. The chaotic

<sup>1</sup> *Colonel Dunwoddie, Millionaire. A Story of To-Day.* New York: Harper and Brothers. 1878

elements of a disorganized civilization are shown us in all their fierce disorder: the childish freedman intoxicated by his sudden elevation, or, if loyal, thoughtful and manly like Anderson Parker, doomed inevitably to be crushed in his effort to mediate between the two races; the vicious and treacherous half-caste; the unprincipled foreign adventurer. Let the reader lose himself in this book for half an hour, as he surely will if once he opens and reads, and he will understand better than ever before the expiation thus far wrought out for the civic crime of '61. The author strives, almost painfully, to write with moderation; to promote by his tact a better understanding of his section at the North; to disregard the cruel mortifications of the present, and fix his gaze upon the possible future. He cannot, for conscience' sake, help making his Northern immigrant a scoundrel, or, technically speaking, a *scalawag*; but he anxiously assures us that the colonel's peerless and saintly wife was also of Northern extraction, although it must be owned that she had become pretty fully imbued with strictly Southern sentiments. But the finest part of his work, and on the whole the most interesting, is that in which he develops the differences between the old type of high-born Southerners, both men and women, and the new. The contrast between the colonel himself and his son Horace, and that between Emeline Anderson and her mother, are drawn with extreme skill. The new aims and multiplied activities of the young are shown; the pride of personal effort and achievement replacing that of irresponsible command. And if these two heroic young people are fair specimens of the "new South" already growing into manhood and womanhood, and if the vigor and fervor and sound reason of the present romance may be taken to foreshadow what is yet coming thence in the way of literature, we need not be ashamed of feeling carried along at least half-way with the vehement colonel himself when he forecasts the future in this wise:—

“‘Don't misunderstand me! The

South is the best part of America; its people the noblest, its resources the greatest. It is wholly against nature that the rest of the country should have surpassed the South, as in some things it has done. Mere science, invention, what is called energy, may belong by natural laws to colder latitudes. It is so in Europe. But the government of this republic belongs to the South. It had it in large measure from the first, and would have held it still had it not been for the folly of a few when Lincoln was elected. It will assuredly come into possession of it again, to hold it henceforth. But that is not what I care for most. The South is the Italy of America. It should always have been the region of art, of song, as it has been of eloquence. Don't mention it, Horace, but slavery paralyzed us. All that is past. Henceforth the South is to be all that Greece, that Italy, has been. Not only to America, my boy, to the whole world! Mark what I say!’ And Horace felt a thrill of pride as his father paused in front of him, erect, inspired.”

“‘All these miserable little squabbles will perish with my generation. The next will revere us as a race of heroes, but it will also pity us. Be broader than I am, my boy, but always be Southern. *Don't make money your chief object.* Never lie, cheat, or steal *when you are in Congress.* Never be mean. Be energetic, but be honorable. Never let your honor be suspected, as when, for instance, any indebtedness is concerned. Treat women with all deference, but detest strong-minded females. Be a gentleman, Horace,—a gentleman.’”

“Fresh from his experiences when away, Horace felt, but it was with indignation at himself, that there was something more old-fashioned and obsolete in his father than he had thought; yet he loved him the more, with a tenderer respect and affection.”

We would gladly quote from other of the colonel's passionate harangues, or, better still, the simple but terrible death scene of Anderson Parker. The Uncle Tom of the new dispensation, a broader and higher creature in every way than

his predecessor, brutally murdered too, like him, witnesses a no less moving testimony when he only mutters at rare intervals during his last delirium, "I done the best I knew how, O Lord." We do not purpose farther to unfold the plot of Colonel Dunwoddie, nor even to tell the reader how he came and ceased to be a millionaire. The plot is a good one, and is very nearly new, and there ought to be a law protecting authors from the infringement, by reviewers, of their patent right to mystify their readers. If the reviewer be also thought in this case to have encroached a little upon the province of the orator, he can only plead once more the extreme and rather exciting rarity of a strong and solemn sensation occasioned by a work of fiction. In the friendly rivalry, supposed to be typified on the striking cover of Harper's new series, between the pumpkin and the cotton boll, the fleecy boll remains for the present abundantly triumphant over its massive Northern competitor. We sincerely hope that the author of Colonel Dunwoddie, to quote the words of his brief preface, will feel warranted by the success of his present venture in portraying "more fully a region, the varied interest of whose past and present is exceeded only by the abundant promise of its future."

Like unto Like<sup>1</sup> is a production as triumphantly feminine as Colonel Dunwoddie was gravely and somewhat clumsily masculine. It aims to deal with the same stern facts and perplexing political problems, flashing over the waste places of Southern society the restless light reflected from a brilliant but seemingly shallow mind. We say seemingly, for the novel is not only very feminine but very young, and to youth and aptness, ambitious of great themes, what may not yet be added in the way of depth and power? Meanwhile, Like unto Like must be content to owe to its *girliness* its greatest charm. There is a fine flow of spirits through its open pages; a certain sweetness even in its smartness;

keen perceptions, quick emotions, false conclusions, inopportune merriment and palpable coquetry where it should be gravest; a naive parade of a little learning; a frank rebound of impulsive anticipation following hard after the lavish disaster with which the tale is made to close. There is some fine writing in it, and much poor writing, and a little which is very good.

The people of Yariba are described in lively fashion, with captivating touches of always good-humored satire, and the Southern provincial town is so new a field in fiction that the sketch has a singular freshness of interest. Nevertheless, as in the case of the Gulf city so graphically described in Mr. Baker's Year Worth Living, the more faithful we feel the picture of society to be, the less we find it hopeful, for the general level of the civilization portrayed is surprisingly low. The class whose claims to fine breeding are so confidently asserted is represented as not merely unlettered, like the happy "Barbarians" of Mr. Matthew Arnold's native isle, but undignified and unmannerly. Squire Barton, the head of one old family and constant eulogist of the Yariba stock, has a style of language and a grade of wit which would discredit the "shiftless" loungers of a New Hampshire village grocery. Van Tolliver, the hope of another sceptred race, whom the author evidently herself admires as a flower of Confederate chivalry, is a fickle and slightly sordid lover, and an arrogant boor. If this be indeed the true type of the rising generation of Southern gentlemen, then, setting aside the heavier crimes alleged against their class, we must hold them convicted of having somehow forfeited the best of their privileges, those finer and more fantastic moral graces of which almost all other aristocracies have contrived to make a dazzling display. But we would rather believe Horace Dunwoddie to be the true type.

The heroine of Like unto Like, Blythe Herndon, is a fine, lovable, and sufficiently credible creature; but her love story, though told with effusion and vehemence, does not greatly move us. We

<sup>1</sup> *Like unto Like*. A Novel. By SHERWOOD BONNER. Harper's Library of American Fiction, No. 9. 1878.

are not made to comprehend why she should ever have loved, or thought she loved, the hardy freethinker and freedoer, alien in traditions and nearly twice her age, in whom, despite all that is told us of his practical philanthropies, we cannot help remarking a touch of brutality. That she should soon have ceased to love him was inevitable, and the ghostly grandmother's anathemas are superfluous, and therefore a little grotesque. On the other hand, if the author herself means her hero and heroine for types, and if her title, *Like unto Like*, signifies a final and fatal incompatibility between the Northern and Southern spirit, then the display of wide sympathies and dispassionate views, especially in the animated and really admirable chapter where Blythe takes the evidence on political questions of five differing friends, is, as the French would say, *demented*.

Shall we say, however, that *Like unto Like*, though a book of slight performance, is one of abundant promise? Its hopeful features are a certain uncon-

scious originality over and above that which the author affects, the delightful naturalness and unforced humor of the dialogue, and the mental activity which finds itself perpetually allured toward large views and lofty considerations. Its less favorable qualities are its feebleness of characterization; its lack — more complete even than is usual among our native romances — of dramatic and constructive power; a kind of commonness even in the author's most cherished personages; and a seeming levity of soul, which tends to cheapen, for merely melodramatic effect, situations and conceptions which are in themselves essentially tragic and terrible, — like the episode of the heroine's murdered sister, and the pious vengeance of the implacable grandmother. On the whole, we find that the book interests in its author rather than in itself, and will hardly lead farther afield the wandering glances which have essayed to peer beyond Mason and Dixon's line for the long tarrying portent of the Great American Novel.

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### THE SPIDER.

SPINNER of the silken snare,  
Fell Arachne in your lair,  
Tell me, if your powers can tell,  
How you do your work so well!

Weaving on, in light and dark,  
Segment and concentric arc,  
Lace-like, gossamer designs,  
Strict to geometric lines,

Perfect to the utmost part,  
Occult, exquisite of art, —  
How are all these wonders bred  
In your atom of a head?

Propositions here involved  
Wit of man has never solved;  
Demonstrations hard to find  
Are as crystal to your mind.