

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Schiller Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schilling Kralik Katharina II. von Rußland Bellamy Raabe Gibbon Tschechow
Gerstäcker Raabe Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Kleist
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Mörike Musil
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
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Contemporary American Novelists (1900-1920)

Carl Van Doren

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PREFACE

The American Novel, published last year, undertook to trace the progress of a literary type in the United States from its beginnings to the end of the nineteenth century; *Contemporary American Novelists* undertakes to study the type as it has existed during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Readers of both volumes may note that in this later volume criticism has tended to supplant history. Only in writing of dead authors can the critic feel that any considerable portion of his task is done when he has arranged them in what he thinks their proper categories and their true perspective. In the case of living authors he has regularly to remember that he works with shifting materials, with figures whose dimensions and importance may be changed by growth, with persons who may desert old paths for new, reveal unsuspected attributes, increase or fade with the mere revolutions of time. All he can expect to do in dealing with any current type as fluid as the novel, is, seizing upon it at some specific moment, to examine the intentions and successes of outstanding or typical individuals and to make the most accurate report possible concerning them. Whatever general tendency there may be ought to appear from his examination.

The general tendency appearing most clearly among the novelists here studied is, of course, the drift of naturalism: initiated a full generation ago by several restless spirits, of whom E.W. Howe and Hamlin Garland are the most conspicuous survivors; continued by those young geniuses Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, Jack London, all dead before their time, and by Theodore Dreiser, Robert Herrick, Upton Sinclair, happily still alive; given a fresh impulse during the shaken years of the war and of the recovery from war by such satirists as Edgar Lee Masters and Sinclair Lewis and their companions in the new revolt. The intelligent American fiction of the century has to be studied—so far as the novel is concerned—largely in terms of its agreement or its disagreement with this naturalistic tendency, which has been powerful enough to draw Winston Churchill and

Booth Tarkington into an approach to its practices, to drive James Branch Cabell and Joseph Hergesheimer into explicit dissent, and to throw into strong relief the balanced independence of Edith Wharton and Willa Cather. The year 1920, marking a peak in the triumph of one or two species of naturalism and in some ways closing a chapter, affords an admirable occasion to take stock. This book, indeed, was planned and begun at the close of that year and has firmly resisted the temptation to do more than glance at most of the work produced since then—even at the price of giving what must seem insufficient notice to *The Triumph of the Egg* and *Three Soldiers* and of giving none at all to that still more recent masterpiece *Cytheræa*. While criticism pauses to take stock, creation steadily goes on.

Acknowledgments are due *The Nation* for permission to reprint from its pages those portions of the volume which have already been published there.

CARL VAN DOREN.

March, 1922.

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CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN NOVELISTS

CHAPTER I

OLD STYLE

1. LOCAL COLOR

A study of the American novel of the twentieth century must first of all take stock of certain types of fiction which continue to persist, with varying degrees of vitality and significance, from the last quarter of the century preceding.

There is, to begin with, the type associated with the now moribund cult of local color, which originally had Bret Harte for its prophet, and which, beginning almost at once after the Civil War, gradually broadened out until it saw priests in every state and followers in every county. Obedient to the example of the prophet, most of the practitioners of the mode chose to be episodic rather than epic in their undertakings; the history of local color belongs primarily to the historian of the short story. Even when the local colorists essayed the novel they commonly did little more than to expand some episode into elaborate dimensions or to string beads of episode upon an obvious thread. Hardly one of them ever made any real advance, either in art or reputation, upon his earliest important volume: George Washington Cable, after more than forty years, is still on the whole best represented by his *Old Creole Days*; and so—to name only the chief among the survivors—after intervals not greatly shorter are Mary N. Murfree ("Charles Egbert Craddock") by *In the Tennessee Mountains*, Thomas Nelson Page by *In Ole Virginia*, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman by *A Humble Romance* and

Other Stories, James Lane Allen by *Flute and Violin*, and Alice Brown by *Meadow-Grass*.

The eager popular demand for these brevities does not entirely account for the failure of the type to go beyond its first experimental stage. The defects of local color inhere in the constitution of the cult itself, which, as its name suggests, thought first of color and then of form, first of the piquant surfaces and then—if at all—of the stubborn deeps of human life. In a sense, the local colorists were all pioneers: they explored the older communities as solicitously as they did the new, but they most of them came earliest in some field or other and found—or thought—it necessary to clear the top of the soil before they sank shaft or spade into it. Moreover, they accepted almost without challenge the current inhibitions of gentility, reticence, cheerfulness. They confined themselves to the emotions and the ideas and the language, for the most part, of the respectable; they disregarded the stormier or stealthier behavior of mankind or veiled it with discreet periphrasis; they sweetened their narratives wherever possible with a brimming optimism nicely tintured with amiable sentiments. Poetic justice prospered and happy endings were orthodox. To a remarkable extent the local colorists passed by the immediate problems of Americans—social, theological, political, economic; nor did they frequently rise above the local to the universal. They were, in short, ordinarily provincial, without, however, the rude durability or the homely truthfulness of provincialism at its best.

To reflect upon the achievements of this dwindling cult is to discover that it invented few memorable plots, devised almost no new styles, created little that was genuinely original in its modes of truth or beauty, and even added but the scantiest handful of characters to the great gallery of the imagination. What local color did was to fit obliging fiction to resisting fact in so many native regions that the entire country came in some degree to see itself through literary eyes and therefore in some degree to feel civilized by the sight. This is, indeed, one of the important processes of civilization. But in this case it was limited in its influence by the habits of vision which the local colorists had. They scrutinized their world at the instigation of benevolence rather than at that of intelligence; they felt it with friendship rather than with passion. And because of their limita-

tions of intelligence and passion they fell naturally into routine ways and both saw and represented in accordance with this or that prevailing formula. Herein they were powerfully confirmed by the pressure of editors and a public who wanted each writer to continue in the channel of his happiest success and not to disappoint them by new departures. Not only did this result in confining individuals to a single channel each but it resulted in the convergence of all of them into a few broad and shallow streams.

An excellent example may be found in the flourishing cycle of stories which, while Bret Harte was celebrating California, grew up about the life of Southern plantations before the war. The mood of most of these was of course elegiac and the motive was to show how much splendor had perished in the downfall of the old régime. Over and over they repeated the same themes: how an irascible planter refuses to allow his daughter to marry the youth of her choice and how true love finds a way; how a beguiling Southern maiden has to choose between lovers and gives her hand and heart to him who is stoutest in his adherence to the Confederacy; how, now and then, love crosses the lines and a Confederate girl magnanimously, though only after a desperate struggle with herself, marries a Union officer who has saved the old plantation from a marauding band of Union soldiers; how a pair of ancient slaves cling to their duty during the appalling years and will not presume upon their freedom even when it comes; how the gentry, though menaced by a riffraff of poor whites, nevertheless hold their heads high and shine brightly through the gloom; how some former planter and everlasting colonel declines to be reconstructed by events and passes the remainder of his years as a courageous, bibulous, orgulous simulacrum of his once thriving self. Mr. Page's *In Ole Virginia* and F. Hopkinson Smith's *Colonel Carter of Cartersville* in a brief compass employ all these themes; and dozens of books which might be named play variations upon them without really enlarging or correcting them. All of them were kindly, humorous, sentimental, charming; almost all of them are steadily fading out like family photographs.

The South, however, did not restrict itself wholly to its plantation cycle. In New Orleans Mr. Cable daintily worked the lode which had been deposited there by a French and Spanish past and by the

presence still of Creole elements in the population. Yet he too was elegiac, sentimental, pretty, even when his style was most deft and his representations most engaging. Quaintness was his second nature; romance was in his blood. Bras-Coupé, the great, proud, rebellious slave in *The Grandissimes*, belongs to the ancient lineage of those African princes who in many tales have been sold to chain and lash and have escaped from them by dying. The postures and graces and contrivances of Mr. Cable's Creoles are traditional to all the little aristocracies surviving, in fiction, from some more substantial day. Yet in spite of these conventions his better novels have a texture of genuine vividness and beauty. In their portrayal of the manners of New Orleans they have many points of quiet satire and censure that betray a critical intelligence working seriously behind them. That critical disposition in Mr. Cable led him to disagree with the majority of Southerners regarding the justice due the Negroes; and it helped persuade him to spend the remainder of his life in a distant region.

The incident is symptomatic. While slavery still existed, public opinion in the South had demanded that literature should exhibit the institution only under a rosy light; public opinion now demanded that the problem in its new guise should still be glossed over in the old way. In neither era, consequently, could an honest novelist freely follow his observations upon Southern life in general. The mind of the herd bore down upon him and crushed him into the accepted molds. It seems a curious irony that the Negroes who thus innocently limited the literature of their section should have been the subjects of a little body of narrative which bids fair to outlast all that local color hit upon in the South. Joel Chandler Harris is not, strictly speaking, a contemporary, but Uncle Remus is contemporary and perennial. His stories are grounded in the universal traits of simple souls; they are also the whimsical, incidental mirror of a particular race during a significant—though now extinct—phase of its career. They are at once as ancient and as fresh as folk-lore.

Besides the rich planters and their slaves one other class of human beings in the South especially attracted the attention of the local colorists—the mountaineers. Certain distant cousins of this backwoods stock had come into literature as "Pikes" or poor whites in the Far West with Bret Harte and in the Middle West with John

Hay and Edward Eggleston; it remained for Charles Egbert Craddock in Tennessee and John Fox in Kentucky to discover the heroic and sentimental qualities of the breed among its highland fastnesses of the Great Smoky and Cumberland Mountains. Here again formulas sprang up and so stifled the free growth of observation that, though a multitude of stories has been written about the mountains, almost all of them may be resolved into themes as few in number as those which succeeded nearer Tidewater: how a stranger man comes into the mountains, loves the flower of all the native maidens, and clashes with the suspicions or jealousies of her neighborhood; how two clans have been worn away by a long vendetta until only one representative of each clan remains and the two forgive and forget among the ruins; how a band of highlanders defend themselves against the invading minions of a law made for the nation at large but hardly applicable to highland circumstances; how the mountain virtues in some way or other prove superior to the softer virtues—almost vices by comparison—of the world of plains and cities. These formulas, however, resulted from another cause than the popular complacency which hated to be disturbed in Virginia and Louisiana. The mountain people, inarticulate themselves, have uniformly been seen from the outside and therefore have been studied in their surface peculiarities more often than in their deeper traits of character. And, having once entered the realm of legend, they continue to be known by the half-dozen distinguishing features which in legend are always enough for any type.

In the North and West, of course, much the same process went on as in the South among the local colorists, conditioned by the same demands and pressures. Because the territory was wider, however, in the expanding sections, the types of character there were somewhat less likely to be confined to one locality than in the section which for a time had a ring drawn round it by its past and by the difficulty of emerging from it; and because the career of North and West was not definitely interrupted by the war, the types of fiction there have persisted longer than in the South, where a new order of life, after a generation of clinging memories, has moved toward popular heroes of a new variety.

The cowboy, for instance, legitimate successor to the miners and gamblers of Bret Harte, might derive from almost any one of the

states and might range over prodigious areas; it is partly accident, of course, that he stands out so sharply among the numerous conditions of men produced by the new frontier. Except on very few occasions, as in Alfred Henry Lewis's racy Wolfville stories and in Frederick Remington's vivid pictures, in Andy Adams's more minute chronicle *The Log of a Cowboy*, in Owen Wister's more sentimental *The Virginian*, and in O. Henry's more diversified *Heart of the West* and its fellows among his books, the cowboy has regularly moved on the plane of the sub-literary—in dime novels and, latterly, in moving pictures. He, like the mountaineer of the South, has himself been largely inarticulate except for his rude songs and ballads; formula and tradition caught him early and in fiction stiffened one of the most picturesque of human beings—a modern Centaur, an American Cossack, a Western picaro—into a stock figure who in a stock costume perpetually sits a bucking broncho, brandishes a six-shooter or swings a lariat, rounds up stampeding cattle, makes fierce war on Mexicans, Indians, and rival outfits, and ardently, humbly woos the ranchman's gentle daughter or the timorous school-ma'am. He still has no Homer, no Gogol, no Fenimore Cooper even, though he invites a master of some sort to take advantage of a thrilling opportunity.

The same fate of formula and tradition befell another type multiplied by the local novelists—the bad boy. His career may be said to have begun in New England, with Thomas Bailey Aldrich's reaction from the priggish manikins who infested the older "juveniles"; but Mark Twain took him up with such mastery that his subsequent habitat has usually been the Middle West, where a recognized lineage connects Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn with Mitch Miller and Penrod Schofield and their fellow-conspirators against the peace of villages. The bad boy, it must be noticed, is never really bad; he is simply mischievous. He serves as a natural outlet for the imagination of communities which are respectable but which lack reverence for solemn dignity. He can play the wildest pranks and still be innocent; he can have his adolescent fling and then settle down into a prudent maturity. Both the influence of Mark Twain and the local color tendency toward uniformity in type have held the bad boy to a path which, in view of his character, seems singularly narrow. In book after book he indulges in the same practical

jokes upon parents, teachers, and all those in authority; brags, fibs, fights, plays truant, learns to swear and smoke, with the same devices and consequences; suffers from the same agonies of shyness, the same indifference to the female sex, the same awkward inclination toward particular little girls. For the most part, thanks to the formulas, he has been examined from the angle of adult irritation or amusement; only very recently—as by Edgar Lee Masters and Sherwood Anderson—has he been credited with a life and passions more or less his own and therefore as fully rounded as his stage of development permits.

The American business man, with millions of imaginations daily turned upon him, rarely appears in that fiction which sprang from local color except as the canny trader of some small town or as the ruthless magnate of some glittering metropolis. *David Harum* remains his rural avatar and *The Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son* his most popular commentary. Doubtless the existence of this type in every community tends to warn off the searchers after local figures, who have preferred, in their fashion, to be monopolists when they could. Doubtless, also, the American business man has suffered from the critical light in which he has been studied by the reflective novelists. But though the higher grades of literature have refused to pay unstinted tribute and honor to men of wealth, the lower grades have paid almost as lavishly as life itself.

Multitudes of poor boys in popular fiction rise to affluence by the practice of the commercial virtues. To be self-made, the axiom tacitly runs, is to be well-made. Time was in the United States when the true hero had to start his career, unaided, from some lonely farm, from some widow's cottage, or from some city slum; and although, with the growth of luxury in the nation, readers have come to approve the heir who puts on overalls and works up in a few months from the bottom of the factory to the top, the standards of success are practically the same in all instances: sleepless industry, restless scheming, resistless will, coupled with a changeless probity in the domestic excellences. Nothing is more curious about the American business man of fiction than the sentimentality he displays in all matters of the heart. He may hold as robustly as he likes to the doctrine that business is business and that business and sympathy will not mix, but when put to the test he must always soften under the

pleadings of distress and be malleable to the desires of mother, sweetheart, wife, or daughter. Even when a popular novelist sets out to be reflective—say, for example, Winston Churchill—he takes his hero up to the mountain of success and then conducts him down again to the valley of humiliation, made conscious that the love, after all, either of his family or of his society, is better than lucre. Theodore Dreiser's stubborn habit of presenting his rich men's will to power without abatement or apology has helped to keep him steadily suspected. The popular romancers have contrived to mingle passion for money and susceptibility to moralism somewhat upon the analogy of those lucky thaumaturgists who are able to eat their cake and have it too.

A similar mixture occurs in the politician of popular tradition. He hardly ever rises to the dimensions of statesmanship, and indeed rarely belongs to the Federal government at all: Washington has always been singularly neglected by the novelists. The American politician of fiction is essentially a local personage, the boss of ward or village. Customarily he holds no office himself but instead sits in some dusty den and dispenses injustice with an even hand. Candidates fear his influence and either truckle to him or advance against him with the weapons of reform—failing, as a rule, to accomplish anything. Aldermen and legislators are his creatures. His web is out in all directions: he holds this man's mortgage, knows that man's guilty secret, discovers the other's weakness and takes advantage of it. He is cynically illiterate and contemptuous of the respectable classes. If need be he can resort to outrageous violence to gain his ends. And yet, though the reflective novelists have all condemned him for half a century, he sits fast in ordinary fiction, where he is tolerated with the amused fatalism which in actual American life has allowed his lease to run so long. What justifies him is his success—his countrymen love success for its own sake—and his kind heart. Like Robin Hood he levies upon the plethoric rich for the deserving poor; and he yields to the tender entreaties of the widow and the orphan with amiable gestures.

The women characters evolved by the school of local color endure a serious restriction from the excessive interest taken by the novelists in the American young girl. Not only has she as a possible reader established the boundaries beyond which they might not go in

speaking of sexual affairs but she has dominated the scene of their inventions with her glittering energy and her healthy bloodlessness. Some differences appear among the sections of the country as to what special phases of her character shall be here or there preferred: she is ordinarily most capricious in the Southern, most strenuous in the Western, most knowing in the New York, and most demure in the New England novels. Yet everywhere she considerably resembles a bright, cool, graceful boy pretending to be a woman. Coeducation and the scarcity of chaperons have made her self-possessed to a degree which mystifies readers not duly versed in American folkways. Though she plays at love-making almost from the cradle, she manages hardly ever to be scorched—a salamander, as one novelist suggests, sporting among the flames of life.

When native Victorianism was at its height, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, she inclined to piety as her mode of preservation; at the present moment she inclines to a romping optimism which frightens away both thought and passion. From *The Wide, Wide World* to *Pollyanna*, however, she has taken habitual advantage of the reverence for the virgin which is one of the most pervasive elements in American popular opinion. That reverence has many charming and wholesome aspects; it has given young women a priceless freedom of movement in America without the penalty of being constantly suspected of sexual designs which they may not harbor. It must be remembered that the Daisy Millers who awaken unjust European gossip are understood at home, and that the understanding given them is a form of homage certainly no less honorable than the compliments of gallantry. In actual experience, however, girls grow up, whereas the popular fiction of the United States has done its best to keep them forever children. Nothing breaks the crystal shallows of their confidence. They are insolently secure in a world apparently made for them. The little difficulties which perturb their courtship are nine-tenths of them superficial and external matters, and the end comes as smoothly as a fairy tale's, before doubt has ever had an opportunity to shatter or passion the occasion to purge a spirit. From Hawthorne to the beginnings of naturalism there was hardly a single profound love story written in America. How could there be when green girls were the sole heroines and censors?

Among the older women created by the local color generation there were certain fashionable successes and social climbers in the large cities who have more complex fortunes than the young girls; but for the most part they are merely typical or conventional—as selfish as gold and as hard as agate. On somewhat humbler levels that generation—as Mary Austin has pointed out of American fiction at large—came nearer to reality by its representation of a type peculiar to the United States: the "woman" who is also a "lady"; that is, who combines in herself the functions both of the busy housewife and of the charming ornament of her society. The gradual reduction in America of the servant class has served to develop women who keep books and music beside them at their domestic tasks as pioneer farmers kept muskets near them in the fields. They devote to homely duties the time devoted by European ladies to love, intrigue, public affairs; they preserve, thanks to countless labor-saving devices, for more or less intellectual pursuits the strength which among European women is consumed by habitual drudgery. The combination of functions has probably done much to increase sexlessness and to decrease helplessness, and so to produce almost a new species of womanhood which is bound eventually to be of great moment in the national life. Local color, however, taking the species for granted, seems hardly to have been aware of its significant existence.

Only New England emphasized a distinct type: the old maid. She has been studied in that section as in no other quarter of the world. Expansion and emigration after the Civil War drew very heavily upon the declining Puritan stock; and naturally the young men left their native farms and villages more numerous than the young women, who remained behind and in many cases never married. Local fiction fell very largely into the hands of women—Harriet Beecher Stowe, Rose Terry Cooke, Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Alice Brown—who broke completely with the age-old tradition of ridiculing spinsters no longer young. In the little cycles which these story-tellers elaborated the old maid is likely to be the center of her episode, studied in her own career and not merely in that of households upon which she is some sort of parasite. The heroine of Mrs. Freeman's *A New England Nun* is an illuminating instance: she has been betrothed to an absent, fortune-

hunting lover for fourteen years, and now that he is back she finds herself full of consternation at his masculine habits and rejoices when he turns to another woman and leaves his first love to the felicity of her contented cell.

What in most literatures appears as a catastrophe appears in New England as a relief. Energy has run low in the calm veins of such women, and they have better things to do than to dwell upon the lives they might have led had marriage complicated them. Here genre painting reaches its apogee in American literature: quaint interiors scrupulously described; rounds of minute activity familiarly portrayed; skimpy moods analyzed with a delicate competence of touch. At the same time, New England literature was now too sentimental and now too realistic to allow all its old maids to remain perpetually sweet and passive. In its sentimental hours it liked to call up their younger days and to show them at the point which had decided or compelled their future loneliness—again and again discovering some act of abnegation such as giving up a lover because of the unsteadiness of his moral principles or surrendering him to another woman to whom he seemed for some reason or other to belong. In its realistic hours local color in New England liked to examine the atrophy of the emotions which in these stories often grows upon the celibate. One formula endlessly repeated deals with the efforts of some acrid spinster—or wife long widowed—to keep a young girl from marriage, generally out of contempt for love as a trivial weakness; the conclusion usually makes love victorious after a thunderbolt of revelation to the hinderer. There are inquiries, too, into the repressions and obsessions of women whose lives in this fashion or that have missed their flowering. Many of the inquiries are sympathetic, tender, penetrating, but most of them incline toward timidity and tameness. Their note is prevailingly the note of elegy; they are seen through a trembling haze of reticence. It is as if they had been made for readers of a vitality no more abundant than that of their angular heroines.

It would be possible to make a picturesque, precious anthology of stories dealing with the types and humors of New England. Different writers would contribute different tones: Sarah Orne Jewett the tone of faded gentility brooding over its miniature possessions in decaying seaport towns or in idyllic villages a little further inland;

Mary E. Wilkins Freeman the tone of a stern honesty trained in isolated farms and along high, exposed ridges where the wind seems to have gnarled the dispositions of men and women as it has gnarled the apple trees and where human stubbornness perpetually crops out through a covering of kindness as if in imitation of those granite ledges which everywhere tend to break through the thin soil; Alice Brown the tone of a homely accuracy touched with the fresh hues of a gently poetical temperament. More detailed in actuality than the stories of other sections, these New England plots do not fall so readily into formulas as do those of the South and West; and yet they have their formulas: how a stubborn pride worthy of some supreme cause holds an elderly Yankee to a petty, obstinate course until grievous calamities ensue; how a rural wife, neglected and overworked by her husband, rises in revolt against the treadmill of her dull tasks and startles him into comprehension and awkward consideration; how the remnant of some once prosperous family puts into the labor of keeping up appearances an amount of effort which, otherwise expended, might restore the family fortunes; how neighbors lock horns in the ruthless litigation which in New England corresponds to the vendettas of Kentucky and how they are reconciled eventually by sentiment in one guise or another; how a young girl—there are no Tom Joneses and few Hamlets in this womanly universe—grows up bright and sensitive as a flower and suffers from the hard, stiff frame of pious poverty; how a superb heroism springs out of a narrow life, expressing itself in some act of pitiful surrender and veiling the deed under an even more pitiful inarticulateness.

The cities of New England have been almost passed over by the local colorists; Boston, the capital of the Puritans, has singularly to depend upon the older Holmes or the visiting Howells of Ohio for its reputation in fiction. Ever since Hawthorne, the romancers and novelists of his native province have taken, one may say, to the fields, where they have worked much in the mood of Rose Terry Cooke, who called her best collection of stories *Huckleberries* to emphasize what she thought a true resemblance between the crops and characters of New England—"hardy, sweet yet spicy, defying storms of heat or cold with calm persistence, clinging to a poor soil,