

The National Period of American Literature

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A volume story from real life, marrying the London, trumpeter in the Horse guards. Two years after she published "The Inquisitor," a three decker in the manner of Laurence Sterne, and returned to England. There in 1790 she issued "Charlotte Temple; a Tale of Truth," and came back to the United States three years afterward. It is the last story, reissued here in 1794, and sometimes called the first American novel, that has survived the earlier. It was as little a creation of the imagination as were the names of the principal characters, Charlotte Temple being Charlotte Stanley and John Montraville being John Montrassor. But the book was a great success in a day. Twenty-five hundred copies were sold within a few years. Its popularity was long lived, and as late as 1892 it was republished. The plot is simple and the story as old as the captivating fascination of brass buttons and epaulets. A British officer bound for the American war entices a schoolgirl to share his fortunes. She trusts in the usual vows of fidelity. Both belonged to the nobility. That was the English side of the story. The American was the customary sequence of desertion, disgrace and death, all of it told in a style that never was on land or sea, except in an eighteenth century novel.

"Where is Charlotte?" said he. "Why does not my child come to welcome her dotting parent?"

"Be composed, my dear sir," said Mme. Du Pent. "Do not frighten yourself unnecessarily. She is not in the house at present, but, as mademoiselle is undoubtedly with her, she will speedily return in safety, and I hope they will both be able to account for this unreasonable absence in such a manner as shall remove our present uneasiness." And so on through 35 chapters, each interlocutor waiting his turn and adjusting himself, his pose, vocabulary and punctuation to stage effects of melodramatic intensity. It was the theatrical age of fiction. People who were at home reading a novel instead of going to the play demanded that it be illumined by footlights and be enlivened by something of the rant they had lately heard on the boards; hence much of ceremonial and unnatural oratorical and chapters headed, "Which people void of feeling need not read," meaning, "If ye have tears to shed, prepare to shed them now." This was taken as a stage direction by readers and complied with to the letter. They sighed and wept to order.

Mrs. Rowson continued to write until her demise in Boston in 1824.

Two men took up the new literary trade almost simultaneously. Henry Hugh Brackenridge getting the start of Charles Brockden Brown by a year only in his "Modern Chivalry." A graduate of Princeton in the class with James Madison and Philip Freneau, it is not strange that the young lawyer entered into the arena of politics early and took his literary capability with him as an assistant. The experiences he passed through in the whisky insurrection of 1794 furnished material for the above story, with the subtitle of the "Adventures of Captain Farago and Teague O'Regan, His Servant," the first part being published at Pittsburgh in 1796 and the second ten years later. The story smacked of border life, if it did not have the odor of a tavern tumbler about it, since the writer did not have so utter an abhorrence of moonshiners as the excise man did. Altogether it conveyed a useful lesson to a rough and raw population who had just acquired the new and dangerous possession of freedom and were handling it carelessly, not knowing that it was loaded. Teague O'Regan, the Sancho Panza to Captain Farago, was as great difficulty to keep out of office as his illustrious prototype had to get in. At any moment he might have himself a member of a philosophical society, of the legislature or an association of clergymen. Societies of colonial and other wars had not then been established or he might have fared still worse. At length he has greatness thrust upon him as collector of the excise among the whisky stills of the Alleghenies and eventually tar and feathers, by all of which it may be observed that politics was not in pulpits alone, but in literature as well in the early days of the republic.

Brockden Brown's novels were a nearer approach to a purely literary performance. A Philadelphia youth of studious ways, having a mind divided between practical views and an eccentric fancy, he abandoned law for literature and became the first in this country to pursue letters as a profession. Recovering speedily from an attack of the epic epidemic then prevailing, he began to cultivate fiction—pure, but not simple.

It was his misfortune to be caught in New York in the plague year of 1798, when the yellow fever was desolating the city. His nearest friend was taken, but he was left to describe the horrors of the pestilence in books which are yellow with fever and black with death. Besides, there is in them a large accompaniment of the preternatural—ventriloquism, somnambulism and spiritism—uncanny agencies to have in the house, but convenient in a novel, especially when plots get so complicated that the author cannot recall every knot that he has tied, as was sometimes the case with this one. However, a writer who produced so much in so short a time ought not to be taken to task for not keeping all his threads straight and well in hand. Six novels in three years and three of them in one year is a feat to justify the employment of the supernatural. "Wieland" in 1798, "Ormond" in 1799, "Arthur Mervyn" in 1800, "Edgar Huntley," "Clara Howard" and "Jane Talbot" in 1801 formed a pyrotechnic display of romance worthy to celebrate the going out of the eighteenth century and the coming in of the nineteenth. Moreover, there was no lack of unearthly colors in this flaming apotheosis of life and death or of visible and invisible hands to manage the catastrophe. Note this high light for example:

"Death seemed to hover over this scene, and I dreaded that the floating pestilence had already lighted on my frame. I approached a house before which stood a hearse. Presently a coffin borne by two men issued from the house. One of them as he assisted in thrusting the coffin into the cavity provided for it said: 'I'll be d—d if I think the poor dog was quite dead. It wasn't the fever that killed him, but the sight of the girl and her mother on the floor. It wasn't quite right to put him in his coffin before his breath was fairly gone. I thought the last look he gave me told me to stay a few minutes.' 'Pshaw! He could not live,' said the other. 'The sooner dead the better for him as well as for us. Did you mark how he eyed us when we carried away his wife and daughter?'"

Here is another: "Welbeck put his hands to his head and exclaimed: 'Curses on thy lips, infernal messenger! Chant elsewhere thy rueful ditty! Vanish if thou wouldst not feel in thy heart fangs red with blood less guilty than thine!'"

And one more: "Shuddering, I dashed myself against the wall and turned myself backward to examine the mysterious monitor. The moonlight streamed into each window, and every corner of the room was conspicuous, and yet I beheld nothing. If a human being had been there, could he fail to have been visible?"

Brown's pages are not all filled with such passages as these, but they occur often enough to keep the reader awake with their crawling shivers. It is the riot of the improbable and the impossible in action, based upon the fact of a pestilence or the red Indian. The last was an element which our early and later writers found too useful to leave out of the new American fiction. But in his yellow literature Brown had a good purpose to accomplish in enforcing lessons of justice and humanity and in attempting incidentally to have something done to head off the ravages of the plague. He was a voice crying in the wilderness of New York and Philadelphia for sanitary reform. He would not find himself out of date in this respect if he were still living. Adapted to the present style of fiction he might still do good service. As it was, he hit the taste of his own time, not overnice, and the temper of an age of restless and daring speculation, with its new fledged theories in medicine, philosophy and social science. His ghastly and ghoulish treatment of his theme was not altogether inappropriate to its horrors or out of harmony with the demands of readers who were familiar with them. After all, these weird productions were an advance upon the plaintive and melancholic wall that was started by Susannah Rowson. They were at least a howling wilderness of misery, with an incidental inculcation of constancy in friendship and fortitude in suffering. These and other virtues were bravely held up for admiration and imitation with shrieks and fainting, floods of tears and tearing rant and the crippling paralysis of nightmare. Possibly this generation needed this heroic treatment. At any rate, they took his medicine greedily and called him the first great American novelist—after England had approved.

He wrote political papers also of considerable value, advocating the Louisiana purchase and the territorial extension of the United States, and an address to congress upon foreign trade, exhibiting in the practical side of his nature. In addition, his contributions to the periodical press were numerous. He was an incessant and rapid writer, with premonitions that his life work must be done early. He died at the age of 39.

His novels, recently republished, may be regarded as the climax of American fiction in the eighteenth century in its late movement. They stand on the dividing line between two centuries, gathering up the romanticism of one into a focus and foreshadowing the realism of the next in a baleful glare shed over uncommon experiences.

There is little else to mark the passing of the second century of literary performance in America. In some directions there was much to be attained, but at the same time much had been accomplished in the eighteen decades since Bradford began his diary.

A great advance had been made in spirit and expression; the new nation was beginning to create a new literature.

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III.—Early Fiction.

F ICTION followed the drama in America, as elsewhere; also, as in the case of the drama, its beginnings were feeble.

Susannah Haswell came to Nantasket, Mass., as a child with her father, a British naval officer, in 1766. Inclined to literary pursuits, she was encouraged by James Otis and others and in 1786 wrote "Victoria," a two volume story from real life, marrying the London, trumpeter in the Horse guards. Two years after she published "The Inquisitor," a three decker in the manner of Laurence Sterne, and returned to England. There in 1790 she issued "Charlotte Temple; a Tale of Truth," and came back to the United States three years afterward. It is the last story, reissued here in 1794, and sometimes called the first American novel, that has survived the earlier. It was as little a creation of the imagination as were the names of the principal characters, Charlotte Temple being Charlotte Stanley and John Montraville being John Montrassor. But the book was a great success in a day. Twenty-five hundred copies were sold within a few years. Its popularity was long lived, and as late as 1892 it was republished. The plot is simple and the story as old as the captivating fascination of brass buttons and epaulets. A British officer bound for the American war entices a schoolgirl to share his fortunes. She trusts in the usual vows of fidelity. Both belonged to the nobility. That was the English side of the story. The American was the customary sequence of desertion, disgrace and death, all of it told in a style that never was on land or sea, except in an eighteenth century novel.

My Sisters.

Now list while I a story tell
About my sisters twain,
The older we called "pretty Nell,"
The younger Nancy Jane.
Sis Nancy was a homely girl
As every one could see,
Her reddish hair refused to curl—
Her face was "freckledy."
Of sylph like form she could not boast,
No wasp-like waist was her'n,
But when it came to bake and roast,
She knew it to a "turn."
A beauty was my sister Nell;
The neighbors prophesied,
She'd cut a "figger" as a belle
And be some great man's bride.
And pap and mam, they thought so too,
And cautioned me and Nance
We'd have the hardest work to do
And let Nel' have a chance.
By sun rise Nance the breakfast got,
Nell took her "beauty nap,"
Then me and Nance, or cold or hot,
Went to the field with pap.

A teacher-man came by one day
And said that sister Nell,
Such marks of talent did display,
We ought to school her well.
Then pap and mam, they talked a spell
And called in Nance and me,
And told us that our sister Nell
Must graduated be.
And said we'd have to learn to lave
And stint and little eat,
The necessary funds to save
Nell's schooling to complete.

Then sister Nell to college went
To work went me and Nance,
And every nerve and muscle bent
To give our Nell a chance.

Her first report we thought was good;
The 'Fessor said that she
With proper application would
Rise 'bove MEDIOCRITY.

And pap and mam were tickled well
When that report was read,
And said they always knew that Nell
Would some hew get ahead.

Nell's letters mostly were demands
For money to buy clothes,
While Nance's shoes and my "brogans"
Were gaping at the toes.

At last by some hook'em a-crook
Sis Nell got her "Diplome,"
And pap and mam the old mare took
To bring her safely home.

No such day had we ever known
Our Nell you ought to have seen,
If she had only had a crown
You'd thought she was a queen.

Nell's gowns received admiring looks
From all the neighbors there;
For she it seems had studied books
Much less than things to wear.

And soon we found her but a sham,
Nothing we did was right;
"Backwoodsy" she called pap and mam,
And Nance "a horrid fright."

And as to me she scarcely deigned
To give the slightest look;
A high and haughty air maintained
When'er to me she spoke.

And what the neighbors prophesied
Did not materialize;
Though with her rarest charms Nell tried
To captivate the boys.

Nance, scarcely to the parlor went,
Unless 'twas to be swept,
While Nell her days and nights there spent,
And sang love songs—or slept.

And Nance—old Nance who would have thought
She with that reddish hair,
Could ever in this world have caught
A fellow like Jim Blair.

How Jim and Nance settled the thing
Blamed if I ever knew;
He must have caught her on the wing,
As back and forth she flew.

But Jim's right 'cute"—he knows what's
* good.
He come a courtin' Nell—
But when he found who cooked that food
'Twas "Nellie fare-you-well."

I love to visit Jim and Nance,
It's fun without alloy;
They let a fellow skip and dance—
And "gosh!" they've got a boy.

And Nance seems better looking now,
Her hair's not near so red;
Jim swears the freckles on her brow
Have just about all fled.

But Nell has grown quite "wrinkledy,"
Her neck measures a span;
She sits and prays—"Lord give to me
A man—most any man."

I fear that there's no such good luck
For this proud Sis of mine;
No hand will dare this fruit to pluck,
'Twill dry up on the vine.

No External Symptoms.

The blood may be in bad condition, yet with no external signs, no skin eruption or sores to indicate it. The symptoms in such cases being a variable appetite, poor digestion, an indescrivable weakness and nervousness, loss of flesh and a general run-down condition of the system—clearly showing the blood has lost its nutritive qualities, has become thin and watery. It is in just such cases that S. S. S. has done some of its quickest and most effective work by building up the blood and supplying the elements lacking to make it strong and vigorous.

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S. S. S. is the only purely vegetable blood purifier known. It contains no minerals whatever. Send for our free book on blood and skin diseases and write our physicians for any information or advice wanted. No charge for medical advice.
THE SWIFT SPECIFIC CO., ATLANTA, GA.

Notice, Taxes!

I shall attend at the following times and places to collect the County and State taxes for the year 1901:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Clayton, Monday, October | 21 |
| Cleveland, Tuesday, " | 22 |
| Pleasant Grove, Wednesday, " | 23 |
| Elevation, Thursday, " | 24 |
| Banner, Benson, Friday, " | 25 |
| Ingrams, Four Oaks, Monday, " | 28 |
| Meadow, Rome, Tuesday, " | 29 |
| Bentonville, Wednesday, " | 30 |
| Boon Hill, Princeton, Thursday, " | 31 |
| Beulah, Kenly, Friday, November | 1 |
| O'Neals, Hare's Store, Monday, " | 4 |
| Wilders, Arch'r Lo'ge, Tuesday, " | 5 |
| Wilson's Mills, Wednesday, " | 6 |
| Selma, - - - Thursday, " | 7 |
| Smithfield, - - Friday, " | 8 |

The books will be kept open at the office in Smithfield all the time.

J. T. ELLINGTON,
Sheriff Johnston County.



FACTS.
Our Carbolized Healing Cream

IS MADE ONLY BY US,
of the most soothing and healing medicines known, and will do all an ointment can do for the relief and cure of Sores, Burns, old Ulcers, Creaked Skin, Eczema, and Skin Diseases.

A Large Box at our store for 25c., or by mail if you would like to try it.

MONTAGUE, Druggist,
GARNER, N. C.

BARBER SHOP.



When you come to Smithfield be sure to get a first-class shave and an up-to-date haircut at my shop. Mack Hawkins,

An Experienced Barber,
is with me.
Prof. Matthew McCauley,
The Old Reliable Barber,
MARKET ST., SMITHFIELD, N. C.

High prices at the Farmers Warehouse at all times.

A Cordial Invitation

Is given to the general public to call and examine our full stock of goods. We have goods that will please and our prices are satisfactory. We have a large and complete stock of

Dry Goods,
Notions,
Hats, Shoes

and all other goods in this line which we are selling at prices to please.

We have a good stock of Groceries

and can save money to all who buy from us.

—WE ALSO BUY—

Country Produce

AND PAY THE HIGHEST MARKET PRICES FOR SAME. GIVE US A TRIAL.

BENJ. HUDSON & SON,

BENSON, N. C.

Hardware!

Fitz Lee and Wetter Stoves
FOR COOKING AND HEATING.

Big stock of Farm Implements, Carpenters' Tools, Builders' Material, Cutlery, Tinware, Crockery, Paints, Sash, Doors, Blinds, &c., always on hand.

GOOD STOCK OF GUNS OF THE BEST MAKES.

We Have Taken out License to Sell Pistols.

COUNTRY MERCHANTS,

We are prepared to give you wholesale prices on Nails by the keg, Tinware, Cobblers' Shoe Nails, Axes, S. & W. Cartridges

Everybody asked to come and trade with us.

Clayton Hardware Company,

C. W. CARTER, Owner and Proprietor,
D10-tf. CLAYTON, N. C.

NEW FALL GOODS,

My new stock of Dry Goods, Notions, Millinery, Cloaks, Capes, Shoes, Hats Caps, Clothing and Gents' Furnishing Goods is now complete and up-to-date in each department.

IN DRESS GOODS,

I have a full line of the latest weaves and colors in dress goods. Also a full line of trimming in silks, velvets, gimps, braids, jets and applique.

SHIRT WAIST GOODS,

My line of shirt waist goods is 'bang-up.' I have a nice line of silks, flannels, all-wool Albatross, Percales. All in beautiful shades.

My Millinery Department is Full and Complete.

I have put in a full stock of the latest shapes and colors for fall and winter. Also full line of CAPS for misses and children. Ladies wishing anything in this department will find Miss Beckwith at her post ready and willing to serve them in a strictly up-to-date style.

SHOES, SHOES, SHOES, SHOES.

I carry a full line of Zeigler Bros.' fine shoes for ladies, misses and children, the best shoes made for wear. Every pair warranted. I also carry a full stock of other makes of fine shoes for men, ladies, misses and children, which are first quality and you can buy them very cheap.

CLOTHING! CLOTHING!

I have put in a full stock of clothing of newest make-up styles in all sizes for men, youths and children. Prices from \$1 to \$12.50 per suit. Also a nice line of PANTS from \$2 to \$5. Also I have a good line of FINE HATS, all colors, and a good line of

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Cabinet Maker and Undertaker,
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ONE YEAR FOR \$1.25.