

## The National Period of American Literature

BY LORENZO SEARS, LIT. D.,  
Professor of American Literature in  
Brown University.

trappers and the dependents of a landed proprietor. He learned many things not put down in the schoolbooks and other books which were in his father's library, things which were to be of value to himself and of great interest to others when he should begin to tell about them. The lore of woods and waters, the craft of savage and beast, the rival cunning of an invading race, were lessons which were acquired without urging. In 17 years his education in woodcraft was finished, with some knowledge of books in three years at Yale. Then he went to sea and learned something about it and more about ships and sailors. Later, as a naval officer stationed on Lake Ontario, he came to know the ways of the inland seas. Next he married, staid three years longer in Cooperstown and went to Mamaronck to live in quiet contentment within reach of the Knickerbocker friends until he was seized with the notion at the age of 30 that he could write a better novel than the one he happened to be reading. He began to write "Precaution." If he had taken a little himself, he would not have written the dreary story of English society life, about which he knew very little. But at that time all American authors had to do imitative work before they began to quarry the wealth of material close at hand. In this very year of 1820 Irving was writing "The Sketch-Book," half English in character. Cooper was next urged to follow Scott, who had just finished the historical "Ivanhoe." The outcome was "The Spy," a novel of the Revolution, already beginning to be historical after 40 years. The scene was laid in the writer's neighborhood, the old neutral ground between two armies and plundered by both. The book was a great success at home and abroad, in England as well as America. Translated into French, it found its way into other languages and many lands, to Persia, Arabia and the far east. The new nation had now a novelist of its own to portray its new life to all the world.

This was still more evident when "The Pioneers" followed two years afterward. This time the author worked the other field, with which he was even more familiar—the wilderness, where he had grown up. Harvey Birch, the spy, was succeeded by Natty Bumppo, the backwoodsman, appealing to that aboriginal love of adventure and of the forest which clings to every boy like a heritage from the primeval life of the race. It was next to returning to the wigwam and the chase and the tribal feud. There had been nothing like it in Europe since the stone age. Here it was the experience of a young writer who was only throwing a thin tissue of romance over the trapper and the savage he had seen a hundred times. The story was as good as true and as interesting as fiction and always a favorite of the author. Sometimes the descriptive padding blocked the progress of events, but impatient readers early learn the skipping trick, sometimes to their loss and again to their gain. But Cooper had created or translated from life a great character, of whom he made the best and the most, running him through the series of five romances which bear the name of "Leatherstocking." He is the primitive American, evolved from two centuries' contact of the early colonist and adventurer with the wilderness. He has taken on its color and become a part of its life, a competitor with the wild beast and wild Indian in the struggle for existence without being degraded to the level of either. The nobler teachings of nature have fallen upon a white soul full of native justice and true nobility until a type of humanity is produced which might be taken as pristine in its native simplicity and honesty. It is barely possible that a travestied impression of this original creation has survived in the foreign mind, making it think of all Americans as backwoodsmen with more or less of acquired guile, and whose present counterparts are the spectacular creatures of a wild west show. This incongruous specimen should be distinguished from Cooper's frontiersman; also his Indian from those seen at a railway station on the plains. The old charge that he idealized the red proprietor of the woods and waters may be partly met by saying that the race has not been improved by rum or the ethics of traders and the agents of a paternal government.



Cooper.

He doubtless had his unlovely streaks, but the early education furnished by the British American settler developed the virtues of both races in a fertile soil.

To learn what was Cooper's restoration of the aboriginal type the five "Leatherstocking" tales will be read in the following order if the career of the woodsman is to be traced to the end: "The Deerslayer," "The Last of the Mohicans," "The Pathfinder," "The Pioneers" and "The Prairie," although this is not the order in which they were written.

When Cooper had gratified his love of nature by picturing life upon the frontier in "The Pioneers," he turned to his recollections of seafaring years and wrote "The Pilot," impelled, it is said, by Scott's blunders in his "Pirate." Two fresh fields had been broken when he entered upon one old as the sea and cultivated ever since Ulysses sailed the "unharvested deep," from which, however, a large crop of stories has been taken from Virgil's time onward. But there was enough left in its depths and on its surface to make a most successful story in the hands of a genuine sailor, as Cooper was. A large and breezy sort of man, he loved the wide ocean next to the boundless forest. He was not always finically careful about details of composition, but he made no landsman's mistakes about ships' rigging and sailors' lingo. A man-of-war was in his day a thing of beauty when under full sail, if not so terrific in battle as its hard shell successor. The romance of the engine room is now the topic on seven seas, but Cooper's "Wing and Wing" fancies will always people a receding age with a race of fighting sailors who belonged to a perilous time in our early history. Their conflicts with a great maritime power can best be understood in the pages of "The Pilot" and "The Red Rover." In these departments of frontier and sea life Cooper became our first historical novelist, having Scott only for a rival, and that without being his imitator. On British ground their books sold side by side and had the same translators into foreign tongues. Each in his own way brought credit to his country and great renown to himself. But it was in Sir Walter's own Edinburgh and in its Review that the words were written, "The empire of the sea is conceded to Cooper by acclamation."

Every writer must have his ups and downs, and Cooper's alternated with customary regularity or irregularity. When he attempted to repeat the success of his first American novel, "The Spy," in "Lionel Lincoln," he did not attain eminence.

In "The Last of the Mohicans," 1826, Cooper picked himself up again, being on his own ground once more, hand in hand with Leatherstocking, now in the main prime of a forester, than whom no finer woodland character has been created since the day of the mythical Robin Hood. Nor was the American specimen an outlaw and a princely thief, as became the Saxon under Norman oppression. Instead he had every homely virtue that might adorn a nobleman of nature unspoiled by contact with scoundrels of the town or the settlements. With this book Cooper achieved his greatest success at home and abroad among the multitudes who read what they like and turn a deaf ear to the charmer critics, charm they never so wisely. These did by no means agree among themselves and thereby made good their title.

It was at this point that our successful novelist was able to go abroad for seven years and incidentally to enjoy the tribute which was freely accorded by foreigners who had confidence in their own estimates of literary values, even if they did not enrich the author by a share in the profits on pirated editions of his works. Yet they gave him cordial welcome and would have made a lion of him if he had permitted the show. On the other side the scenery was more attractive to him than social displays, and he found his enjoyment in the sunny skies of Italy, the mountains of Switzerland and the old German cities. Meantime his pen was busy with "The Prairie," "The Red Rover," "The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish" and "The Water Witch." Of these "The Red Rover" was most approved, surpassing "The Pilot" even in its interest to lovers of sea stories. Imitations of these stories, by the way, had been springing up after his first venture like catboats following in the wake of a racer. His own books, however, were multiplying faster than all their imitations, being published as soon as written in over 30 different places in Europe and read as far east as Egypt, Jerusalem and Ispahan.

In the "Letters of a Traveling Bachelor," "Residence in Europe," "Letter to His Countrymen," "Homeward Bound" and "Home as Found" he is the sensor of his native land and shared the hatred which follows that official, especially when self appointed. He was not fitted to lessen the inevitable unpleasantness attached to his mission. His own arrogance and violence provoked a similar spirit, which retorted in virulent personal abuse. This was checked in its public expression by law suits, which had the good effect of settling the license of the press in personal matters, but the rancor of his enemies was undiminished for years. This was fostered by positions which he took in his "Naval History of the United States," contrary to the popular view of the real hero in the battle of Lake Erie, but fortified by subsequent decisions in arbitration. In this case, as in others, Cooper was not so far from right as from urbanity and swavity in maintaining it. Still, it must be conceded that he had not much encouragement to cultivate these virtues, nor had he much inclination. Hence it was "Athanasius against the world" once more. He more than held his own, but the record of the content does not add to his literary reputation.

(Copyright, 1900.)

## VII.—James Fenimore Cooper.

**A** NEW JERSEY judge who had acquired vast tracts of land in and around the sources of the Susquehanna in central New York built a stately mansion on the shore of Otsego lake and removed his family thither in 1790. His son James, then a year old, grew up in this wilderness in the midst of a sort of baronial grandeur among Indians,

## WHEAT IN THE SOUTH.

Continuous Tillage and Peas or Clover Can Replace Fertilizer.

By deep breaking, thorough harrowing, repeated sowings with pea vines or clover, we can soon make any of our poor southern farms so rich that it will pay us to grow our own wheat and quit buying flour and fertilizer, says Dr. Hainnutt of the Georgia Cultivator. The great scientific principles that make farming pay are much the same in every section. We need to study these more and apply them constantly. They are simple and easily learned. They never fail to give success when obeyed.

Wheat cannot be cultivated after sowing. Therefore it must be cultivated before sowing—that is, we must prepare the soil that the crop can do its best without further cultivation. Can we do this? We can. How? We must break the soil as deep as we can either with or without subsoiling. The essential point is to be sure to break it deep. Then we must make it fine and firm by repeated harrowing. This will enable the soil to hold the rain water where it falls. It will also enable it to furnish the same water in proper quantities at the right time to the growing crop.

The breaking can be done any time from now to the last of September, the earlier the better.

The harrowing should be repeated as often as convenient. Every time we roll and harrow we increase the soluble plant food in the soil. Hence we increase the power of the soil to yield and decrease the necessity of buying potash and phosphoric acid.

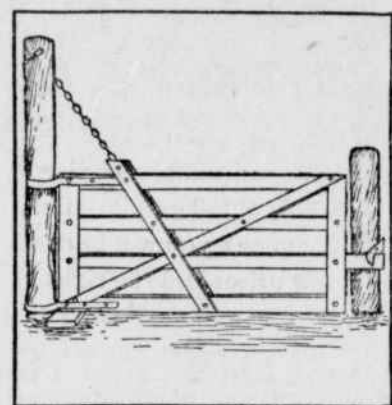
We do not say you must quit buying these, but we do say you may quit. If you keep up this continuous tillage and sow peas or clover, your soil will soon be in condition to grow such crops as will be independent of bought fertilizers.

Go to work preparing your wheat land at the earliest opportunity. Continue to pulverize it right up to the day of sowing. This will insure you a good yield of wheat or oats.

## A GATE WORTH TRYING.

A Correspondent Writes It to Close Itself and Stay Closed.

I send you the following sketch of a gate that will absolutely close itself and stay closed. Take any ordinary gate and attach hinges as shown (to be made from old wagon or buggy tire), just so the same will work easily on the post. Then attach trace chain at brace A and also to post at B on reverse side from gate. By opening the gate the chain is wound around the post, raising the gate about eight



SELF-CLOSING GATE.

inches. It will close by its own weight. The hinges are cheaply and easily made and attached, using only two small bolts on each. If people will adopt this hinge and method of swinging a gate, they will have no further trouble by having gates left open. I have used three now for four years and have had no trouble. Before it was nearly impossible for me to keep them closed. The gate is suspended by the chain, and the brace at A is for the purpose of letting the weight come on all four slats and should be about 13 inches from the rear of the gate.—Cor. Farm and Ranch.

## The Southern Dust Board.

Making dust is the keynote of successful farming, according to Dr. Hainnutt, who says in Southern Cultivator: "Kick up a dust and lots of dust on your farm, and you will get good dust for so doing. The dust board is simply a piece of plank any convenient length, say three feet, usually 1 by 6 inches. It is fastened on to the plow stock so as to follow close up behind the scrape or harrow or cultivator and crush the small clods into fine dust. Some use a small steel spring, such as you see on some cotton planters to cover with. Some use a piece of wire. We have had very good work done by using a piece of 2 by 4 scantling, tied on with a wire. If your rows are wide, you can make your dust board longer. Its name indicates its nature. It is intended to be used in dry weather to make a dust blanket in the farm. The object is to prevent the water from evaporating from the soil and feed it to the crops.

## Some Things Alfalfa Did.

At the Laramie (Wyo.) station the value of alfalfa harvested from one-half acre of land for five years was about \$50 more than the cost of producing it.

The value of potatoes and grain from an adjoining half acre for five years was about \$44 more than the cost of producing it at local prices.

When the alfalfa land was plowed and planted to wheat, it produced \$8 to \$12 more value in wheat per acre than the land which had grown potatoes and grain before.

When alfalfa land was plowed and planted to potatoes, it gave \$10 worth more of potatoes per acre than was obtained from land which had grown potatoes and grain before.

By growing alfalfa the above increase of yields and values was produced with absolutely no cost for fertilizing the land.

## Opportunities.

In one of the Greek cities there stood, long ago, a statue. Every trace of it has vanished now, as is the case with most of these old master pieces of genius; but there is still in existence an epigram, which gives us an excellent description of it, and, as we read the words, we can discover the lesson which those wise old Greeks meant that the statue should teach to every passer-by.

The epigram is in the form of a conversation between a traveler and the statue.

"What is thy name, O statue?"  
"I am called Opportunity."  
"Who made thee?"  
"Lysippus."  
"Why art thou standing on thy toes?"  
"To show that I stay but a moment."  
"Why hast thou wings on thy feet?"  
"To show how quickly I pass by."  
"But why is thy hair so long on thy forehead?"  
"That men may seize me when they meet me."  
"Why, then, is thy head so bald behind?"  
"To show that when I have once passed I cannot be caught."

We do not see the statues standing on the highways to remind us of our opportunities for doing good and being of service to others, but we know that they come to us. They are ours but for a moment. If we let them pass they are gone forever.—Selected

## Startling, But True.

"If every one knew what a grand medicine Dr. King's New Life Pills is," writes D. H. Turner, Dempseytown, Pa., "you'd sell all you have in a day. Two weeks' use has made a new man of me." Infalible for constipation, stomach and liver troubles. 25c. at Hood Bros. drug store.

The Christmas number of The Delineator is about the first of the special Christmas issues. It is a beauty. The cover is a most artistic production, showing a beautifully gowned woman, standing gracefully in a brilliantly lighted salon. Two charming love stories, one by Cyrus Townsend Brady, plenty of advice regarding Christmas Gifts, timely pointers on Cookery, Winter-time care of Plants, all the fashion of the day interpreted into simple language, can be found in the Christmas number of The Delineator. It is a splendid magazine, satisfactory inside and out. There is no magazine for women at present published that is more practical in all its pages. As a Xmas gift itself, it bears its own recommendation.

## You Know What You are Taking.

When you take Grove's Tasteless Chill Tonic because the formula is plainly printed on every bottle showing that it is simply Iron and Quinine in a tasteless form. No Cure, No Pay. 50c.

There are some women so fat and jolly and comfortable looking it always seems that they ought to be out in the kitchen mixing up something nice for a boy.

When a man marries he is greatly embarrassed the first year in attempting to call his wife's mother "Mother." After that he gets rid of all embarrassment by calling her "Grandma."

## The Eminent Kidney and Bladder Specialist.



The Discoverer of Swamp-Root at Work in His Laboratory.

There is a disease prevailing in this country most dangerous because so deceptive. Many sudden deaths are caused by it—heart disease, pneumonia, heart failure or apoplexy are often the result of kidney disease. If kidney trouble is allowed to advance the kidney-poisoned blood will attack the vital organs, or the kidneys themselves break down and waste away cell by cell. Then the richness of the blood—the albumen—leaks out and the sufferer has Bright's Disease, the worst form of kidney trouble.

Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, the new discovery is the true specific for kidney, bladder and urinary troubles. It has cured thousands of apparently hopeless cases, after all other efforts have failed. At druggists in fifty-cent and dollar sizes. A sample bottle sent free by mail, also a book telling about Swamp-Root and its wonderful cures. Address Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., and mention this paper.

ARE YOU DEAF? ANY HEAD NOISES?

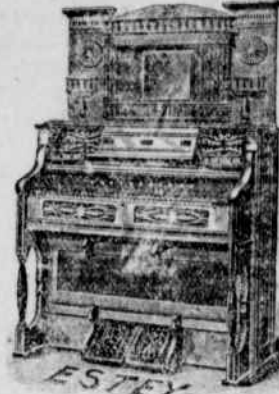


ALL CASES OF DEAFNESS OR HARD HEARING ARE NOW CURABLE

by our new invention. Only those born deaf are incurable. HEAD NOISES CEASE IMMEDIATELY. F. A. WERMAN, OF BALTIMORE, SAYS:

Gentlemen:—Being entirely cured of deafness, thanks to your treatment, I will now give you a full history of my case, to be used at your discretion. About five years ago my right ear began to ring, and this kept on getting worse, until I lost my hearing in this ear entirely. I underwent a treatment for catarrh, for three months, without any success, consulted a number of physicians, among others, the most eminent ear specialist of this city, who told me that only an operation could help me, and even that only temporarily, that the head noises would then cease, but the hearing in the affected ear would be lost forever. I then saw your advertisement accidentally in a New York paper, and ordered your treatment. After I had used it only a few days according to your directions, the noises ceased, and to-day, after five weeks, my hearing in the diseased ear has been entirely restored. I thank you heartily and beg to remain Very truly yours, F. A. WERMAN, 30 S. Broadway, Baltimore, Md.

Our treatment does not interfere with your usual occupation. Examination and advice free. YOU CAN CURE YOURSELF AT HOME at a nominal cost. INTERNATIONAL AURAL CLINIC, 596 LA SALLE AVE., CHICAGO, ILL.



## MAKE HOME HAPPY.

We know nothing you can buy that would add more to the happiness of your home than

## A GOOD ORGAN.

We want to sell you one. We keep the ESTEY, a strictly high grade instrument.

Headquarters at R. F. Smith's Furniture Store. Call and see these Organs.

## BENSON ORGAN CO.,

Robert F. Smith, Joseph G. Smith.

BENSON, N. C.

610-2m.

## 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 Beck with 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 child en, 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

## GENTS' FURNISHING GOODS.

Don't buy your goods until you get my prices, as I am sure that I can save you money, as I discount all of my bills and will give my customers the benefit of it.

## W. G. Yelvington,

SMITHFIELD, N. C.

## FARMERS Can Save Money

BY BUYING MONEY-SAVING TOOLS.

We want to send catalogues of each of the following to every farmer in the State. WRITE A POSTAL CARD FOR ONE: THE CORN CROP can be doubled by using a HUSKER and SHREDDER. It husks the corn and delivers into wagon or crib and shreds or cuts the stalk and fodder at the same time into splendid feed and delivers it into barn or stack. FEED MILLS, which grind corn and cob or shelled grain into meal. HAND or POWER FEED CUTTERS, with travelling feed table.

HORSE POWERS with FEED MILLS attached, and for running Feed Cutters. Wood Saws, FANNING MILLS for grain and seed. GRAIN DRILLS, with disc and hoe. Bugles, Carriages, Wagons and Harness, from the best to the humblest. We have the largest stock in the South. SORETHUM BILLS and Evaporators. WIRE FENCING of all kinds. The best and cheapest and will last a lifetime. Wood Patent SWISS CHURNS by

SEND FOR CATALOGUES OF ALL THESE TOOLS.

THE IMPLEMENT COMPANY, 1302-1304 East Main Street, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA