READING *THE CENTURY ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE*: AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE, 1870-1893

By

Mark James Noonan

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

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Abstract

READING *THE CENTURY ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE*:

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Mark James Noonan

Adviser: Professor Marc Dolan

This dissertation investigates how the most influential genteel family magazine of its day reflected and created public tastes and desires, established schools of writing, and even "manufactured" readers. Founded in 1870, *Scribner's Monthly* (later *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*) was part of the heightened organization and stewardship of American culture by the middle- and upper-middle classes (largely Anglo-Saxon Protestants) following the Civil War. In its text and accompanying illustrations, *Scribner's-Century* encouraged its immense readership to revere culture, to actively pursue mental cultivation and good manners, to heed Christian ethics, and to view America as eternally progressing and rightfully propelled by refined, propertied males of the Anglo Saxon race.

Desiring to project the nation as a "knowable" and illustrious community, the magazine addressed contemporary issues with reassuring analysis, lauded and explained new developments in science, published biographies of eminent men, and, via its magnificent wood-cut illustrations, sought to picture America in glowing terms and to showcase the work of its emerging artists. To

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further encourage national harmony and pride, the editors also helped give rise to an enduring American literary canon, promoting, most notably, the work of women writers and Regionalists in the 1870s and practitioners of High Realism (almost exclusively male) in the 1880s.

Utilizing a new manner of understanding literature that attends to the fact that most American fiction between 1870-1900 first appeared in periodical form, this dissertation investigates why specific genre forms such as Realism and Regionalism appeared at certain times and the extent to which they served the ideology of the magazine in which they were published. Part of this investigation also explores how these genres sought to produce new types of readers for culturally specific reasons and how the "gradual, enduring, and open-ended" form of serial fiction affected readers in ways significantly different from literature appearing in book form. Most significantly, this dissertation considers the fascinating ways in which some periodical fiction disrupted the seemingly unified, genteel "voice" of *Scribner's-Century*, presenting regional dialects and inflections that narrated "resisting" stories outside the magazine's preferred purview.

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INTRODUCTION:

"A NATIONAL FACTOR OF NO LITTLE IMPORTANCE"

> In a country like this, of enormous extent, and wide divergences in local opinions, customs, and legislation, the modern 'popular magazine'—with its fresh and graphic records of the various geographical, social, industrial, educational, scientific, artistic, and religious phenomena and enterprises of our great democratic empire—is a national factor of no little importance.
>
> Richard Watson Gilder
> *Century Magazine* (30:164: May 1885)

The year 1870 marked the inaugural edition of an illustrated family magazine that along with *Harper's Monthly Magazine* (1850-present), *The Atlantic Monthly* (1857-present), and *Scribner's Magazine* (1887-1941) would strongly influence American literature and culture into the twentieth century. Founded by the popular poet and evangelical essayist Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland, the entrepreneur Roswell Smith, and the eminent publisher Charles Scribner, *Scribner's Monthly: An Illustrated Magazine for the People* (later *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*) was a self-proclaimed "democratic" periodical brimming with historical and biographical essays, serialized novels, updates on science and technology, and manifold discussions of contemporary events and issues that both instructed and entertained its predominantly middle-class readership. Although begun with the help of English contributions, within a few years, the periodical became an immensely popular "American Magazine" which came to publish fiction and essays predominantly "from the American stand point," concerned with every section of the nation ("The Magazine's New Year" 11:123; Nov. 1875). As its issues were widely circulated, Richard Watson Gilder was hardly exaggerating when he explained to his readers in 1885 the "grave" responsibility of

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conducting "a periodical which, twelve times a year, reaches an audience of not much less than a million of people." By that time, the magazine whose mantle Gilder had inherited upon the death of Holland was indeed, as he remarked, a "national factor of no small importance" (*Century Magazine* 30:164; May 1885).

The year 1870 also marked the founding of the Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, soon followed by the founding of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (1876), the Chicago Art Institute (1879) and a host of municipal libraries, symphonic halls, large private universities, up-scale theaters, and public parks. That so many institutions of high culture emerged at about the same time is hardly a coincidence. As Lawrence Levine argues in *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*, it was during the 1870s that the organization and stewardship of American culture by the middle- and upper-middle classes (largely Anglo-Saxon Protestants) began to take hold on a mass scale. New York-based *Scribner's-Century* was a major player in the cultural stewardship of this country, a role it assumed consciously and seriously. In a process akin to what Alan Trachtenberg has termed "the incorporation of America," the magazine tried to corral disparate and far-flung geographic regions and cultural topics into a coherent publication, performing "America" with every issue—each performance an effort to define and control the meaning of the term.

As this dissertation will show, *Scribner's-Century,* in both its text and illustrations, created a "symbolic universe" that signified the manner in which a broad spectrum of Victorian Americans should act, think, and conceive of the world. According to this universe, the magazine encouraged its readership to revere culture, to actively pursue mental cultivation and good manners, to heed Christian ethics, and to view America as eternally

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progressing and rightfully propelled by refined, propertied males of the Anglo-Saxon race. Though internal divisions at times conflicted with the aims of the magazine (a topic I will also discuss), for a quarter of a century, the magazine was the leading literary "gateway" to the public, helping to forge a nation, whose Victorian contours we still recognize today.

By "symbolic universe" I refer to the term theorized by sociologists Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann and subsequently used by Robert W. Rydell in his ground-breaking work, *All the World's a Fair.*[1] Berger and Luckmann describe a "symbolic universe" as a structure of legitimization that provides meaning for social experience, placing

> all collective events in a cohesive unity that includes past, present, and future. With regard to the past, it establishes a 'memory' that is shared by all the individuals socialized within the collectivity. With regard to the future, it establishes a common frame of references for the projection of individual actions. (103)

"The symbolic universe," according to Berger and Luckmann, "links men with their successors in a meaningful totality, serving to transcend the finitude of individual existence and bestowing meaning upon the individual's death" (104). A symbolic universe is, in essence, an organized realm of mythical structures, ritualized patterns, and rationalized explanations that lead men and women to understand the world in which they live in specific ways and to act and think according to these structures. Concurrently, it is a view of the world that seeks to block out competing claims to reality so that "everybody may 'inhabit' that universe in a taken-for-granted attitude" (104).

Beginning in the 1990s media scholars such as Jan Cohn, Richard Ohmann, Michael Schneidrov, and Christopher Wilson have called attention to the significant cultural work

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[1] Rydell's work uses the concept of the "symbolic universe" to explain and analyze the manner in which turn-of-the-century world fairs reflected the vision and priorities of America's business, cultural, and political leaders. His central contention is that white racial dominance and national economic growth were intricately intertwined with the notion of American progress.

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performed by American magazines paying specific attention to the "symbolic universes" of social knowledge created and promoted by late-nineteenth-century mass distribution periodicals. Cohn, for example, argues that Horace Lorimer's *The Saturday Evening Post* sought to represent a "construct, idea, or image" (9) of America as embodied in the conception of the businessman. According to Cohn, Lorimer's *Post* created a symbolic construct in which being an American meant adhering to the traditional values of common sense, thrift, diligence, and hard work, while opposing immigration, unions, and the poor. In looking at *McClure's, Munsey's*, and *Cosmopolitan,* Ohmann and Wilson argue that the cohesive explanatory symbolism found in these magazines were designed by corporate capitalism's "managerial elite" who sought to promote in readers consumerism, status consciousness, and dependence on professional expertise. Accordingly, both Wilson and Ohmann link late nineteenth-century magazines, and their increasing reliance on advertising to garner revenues, to the birth of mass culture. Schneidrov also sees late nineteenth-century popular magazines as forerunners of mass culture, but argues against Ohmann's and Wilson's thesis that these periodicals were primarily vehicles designed to encourage consumerism. According to Schneidrov, a notable number of periodicals of this era were preeminently a "national forum for an assortment of ideas" seeking to influence readers to create a "a new social order" based on political, economic, and social reform (10).

Approximately two decades in advance of the magazines that Schneidrov and others discuss, *Scribner's-Century* was an important model for subsequent publishing endeavors. Especially influential were its advanced marketing techniques, original use of advertising, modern corporate structure, wide array of topical subject matter, and emphasis on illustrations to sell copy and frame a particular vision of the nation. Its symbolic universe,

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however, was decidedly pre-Modern. Like the older family house magazines *Harper's Monthly* and the *Atlantic*, *Scribner's-Century* was part of what John Tomisch has called the "genteel endeavor"—the attempt by northeastern elites to guide and improve the taste, manners, and behavior of America's middle, and sometimes, lower classes according to their own values.

Yet even as *Scribner's-Century* rightly falls under the heading "genteel," this is not to say that the "universe" it sought to project was identical to the aims and cultural work of its primary rivals. Unfortunately, this is a mistake literary historians continue to make. Nancy Glazener, in an otherwise stupendous work that greatly informs my own research,[2] for example, misleadingly corrals all genteel publications under the umbrella term "*Atlantic*-group magazines" citing the *Atlantic Monthly* as the literary authority which "epitomized the influence that these magazines were designed to exert, as they mediated between the publishing industry and readers" (5). By eliding crucial distinctions amongst individual periodicals, Glazener promotes the idea that all genteel magazines were more or less like the *Atlantic*, which was, in fact, anomalous in several significant ways. For one, its relatively small circulation (circa 14,000 in its heyday) and predominantly northeastern distribution insured that only a small segment of the population actually read the magazine. The fact that it catered to an elite cadre of literary and cultural connoisseurs with an air of New England provincialism also insured limited circulation. In addition, its absence of illustrations,

[2] Even in its day, *Century's* editors cringed at the mistaken belief that the "big four" (also including *Harper's*, the *Atlantic*,and *Scribner's Magazine*) were all but identical. As Robert Underwood Johnson writes, one of *Century's* rules "was to keep off the preserves of other magazines, not knowingly duplicate their projects or to invade the list of writers identified with them.... Aside from the ethical point involved, we thought it injudicious that the magazines should be allowed to grow similar ... we felt that there would be much more public support for each if every one preserved its individuality" (129).

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recalcitrance in printing the names of contributors,[3] unimaginative organization and layout of its pages, and dense typography further guaranteed—and proudly symbolized—its status as a decidedly elite cultural production.

Similarly, *Harper's Monthly,* which had a far wider circulation than the *Atlantic* (circa 200,000 at the time of the Civil War), was *sui generis* in that it was closely tied to Harpers and Brothers, an extremely successful book publishing house based in New York City. Especially in its early decades, the magazine served primarily as an accessory to the books Harpers published and as a "transfer" publication that, like today's *Reader's Digest*, essentially reprinted material that had been published elsewhere, usually in the English magazines. It was particularly renown (often disparagingly so) for regularly "pirating" English novels causing its pages to be top heavy with foreign authors.[4]

Though its influence would eventually be felt across the field of publishing, *Scribner's-Century* was different from these and other quality magazines in several important ways. For example, two important distinctions that allowed *Scribner's-Century* to establish itself quickly and gain readers at an unprecedented clip were its modern corporate structure and progressive approach to the business of publishing. Like the reader-friendly layout of the magazine itself (which consisted of numerous, clearly delineated departments and well-organized sub-headings), the superintendence of the publication was departmentalized so that

---

[3] As Robert Underwood Johnson writes, *Scribner's* decision to print the names of contributors was "a marked innovation of custom... This was done first in the table of contents and afterward with the contributions, and later full credit was given also to draftsmen and engravers" (88).

[4] *Scribner's Magazine*, which at first had a difficult time explaining its complete independence from what had formerly been known as *Scribner's Monthly*, was also conspicuously at odds with Holland's earlier magazine as well as *Harper's* and the *Atlantic*. Possessing a modern sensibility, editor Edward Burlingame eschewed didacticism and avoided all discussion of theology in his magazine. Seeking a publication of exceptional polish and sophistication, the editor published writing of high literary merit (including the work of Stephen Crane, Richard Harding Davis, Theodore Roosevelt, and Edith Whartoon) and, most famously, showcased the elegant work of illustrators such as Reginald Birch, A.B. Frost, Charles Dana Gibson (of "Gibson Girl" fame), Edward W. Kemble, and Frederick Remington. See Burlingame's memoir, *Of the Making of Many Books.*

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each division could concentrate on what it did best. In line with the rise of professionalism and specialization in the postbellum era as discussed by Burton Bledstein and other historians, each department was run by extremely skilled, well-trained personnel who "knew their business" in winning (and even creating) a significant marketplace share (Bledstein 80-127).

The editorial department, for example, was initially headed by the outspoken Josiah G. Holland, who saw the magazine as a platform for furthering his influence as a popular moralist and commentator on current events. As head of the business department, Roswell Smith, for his part, insured that *Scribner's-Century* would be unlike any before it. Creating precedents for modern mass distribution periodicals, his department regularly experimented with new marketing techniques and ideas, and practically invented the science of utilizing advertising revenue as an important source of profit. The art department, headed by Alexander Drake, and the printing house of Theodore De Vinne, also played important roles in setting *Scribner's* apart from the competition. In addition to creating elegant covers, page layouts, and introducing the Century typeface that remains popular, Drake and De Vinne were responsible for the production and printing of *Scribner's* internationally renown wood-cut illustrations.

Arguably more deserving of signaling the advent of Guy De Bord's "society of the spectacle" than the much heralded first printing of Stephan Horgan's photograph "A Scene in Shanty Town" in the *New York Graphic* in 1880 (Scholnick 46), *Scribner's* was from its first issue renown for offering readers copious images of America on a regular basis. Displaying, for example, portraits of eminent men, glowing depictions of burgeoning cities, exciting new inventions, exotic scenes of the Far West, the Deep South, and other regions, *Scribner's*

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illustrations depicted an America that correlated with the magazine's incessant themes of progress, order, and race and class pride.

Believing that art and literature could symbolize national greatness and guide the public taste, the magazine's editors also regularly featured illustrated articles on American artists and art exhibitions and showcased an astounding array of indigenous fiction. In *Scribner's-Century* America at last had the national publication that would quiet the long line of critics echoing the claim made by *Appleton's Journal* in 1869 that "the American soil is not yet rich enough to grow a luxuriant plant" (qtd. in Levine 214).

Of particular interest to this study, *Scribner's Monthly* began its cultural ascent in the 1870s, in part, by being an early forum for the writings of women such as Frances Hodgson Burnett, Rebecca Harding Davis, Mary Mapes Dodge, Gail Hamilton, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and Constance Fenimore Woolson. Indeed, in the first decade of the magazine, women writers virtually guided the direction of American fiction single-handedly as it appeared in the nation's most popular and influential monthly. Along with *Scribner's* "scribbling women" (who I hope to show were unusually well-trained, gifted, and influential) came important Regionalist writers (both male and female). Especially in the 1870s, writers such as Boyeson, Eggleston, Harte, Jackson, and Powell each wrote about a distinctive part of the United States he or she knew best.

This dissertation explains the initial success of female writers and the development of Regionalist writing in the pages of *Scribner's-Century* as part of its symbolic universe which stressed the importance of promoting Americanism and uniting a seemingly disparate nation. It will also trace an important change in the early 1880s when the magazine began shedding its feminized and evangelical character as it became the leading forum for literary High

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Realism, a genre dominated by men and associated with secularized humanism. Just as a Romantic literary renaissance occurred between 1850 and 1855 (the publication years of *Leaves of Grass, Moby-Dick, The Scarlet Letter, Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and *Walden*), it is clear—though rarely acknowledged—that a renaissance in the Realistic novel occurred within the pages of *Century Magazine* itself. Remarkably, the years 1879-1892 saw the serial publication of George Washington Cable's *The Grandissimes* and *Dr. Sevier*, William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance, A Woman's Reason, The Rise of Silas Lapham* and *The Minister's Charge*, Henry James' *Confidence* and *The Bostonians*, Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and sections of *Huckleberry Finn* and *A Yankee in King Arthur's Court* as well as important Realist works by John Hay, Hamlin Garland, and others.

The first aim of this book then is to discuss the "Americanness" of *Scribner's-Century's* symbolic universe and how the magazine's desires for the nation sought not only to influence its readers, but to a certain extent established the subject and form of many of its literary products. Still demanding commentary, however, is the very fact of periodical fiction itself, which played a crucial role assisting—and sometimes counteracting—this enormously influential magazine "perform" America.

As Linda K. Hughes and Michael Lund in *The Victorian Serial* have begun to explore, periodical fiction (both in England and America) was dramatically different from the form in which people today read or understand this material. Rather than "immediate, dramatic, and clearly delimited" in book form, much periodical fiction appeared on an installment basis impacting readers in a manner that was "gradual, enduring, and open-ended" (13). The full implications of reading "continuing stories" with enforced

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interruptions is difficult to assess, but Hughes and Lund suggest that the serial form worked well with the assumptions and values of the dominant Victorian middle class. As they write:

> the confident capitalist framework during the booming years of nineteenth-century economic expansion had a kind of literary analogue in the serial form. The assumption of continuing growth and the confidence that an investment (whether of time or money) in the present would reap greater rewards in the future were shared features of middle-class capitalism and of serial reading.... In addition, the perseverance and delay of gratification necessary for middle-class economic success were, in a sense, echoed in serial reading, which required readers to stay with a story a long time and to postpone learning a story's outcome. (4)

As Hughes and Lund work shows, the serial form of literature like that appearing in *Scribner's-Magazine* served to reinforce the themes of stability, morality, and progress promoted by Victorian editors such as Holland and Gilder.

If the form of serial fiction worked in various ways to reinforce the symbolic universe of *Scribner's-Century*, it could also create controversy and contradiction. As with the novel provocatively theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin, literary works appearing in magazines are shaped by their dialogic "heteroglossia," but with the importance difference of being influenced by a polyphony of voices from without as well as from within. For example, in addition to the internal, varied, and sometimes dissenting voices within texts themselves, periodical fiction and non-fiction "call and respond" to the features, essays, illustrations, advertising, and other literary forms appearing in the same issue and sometimes literally across the page. This heterogeneous dialogue is, in turn, met with the unified "voice" of the editorial staff producing a contention of centrifugal and centripetal forces in which the former tends toward an "official" language and plot, while the latter includes regional dialects and inflections, i.e. individual voices and concerns, that may not fully adhere to editorial inclinations.

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Accordingly, this dissertation addresses two primary concerns: the world view projected by the magazine's editors, and the fate, at various points, of this construction. To achieve these primary aims, chapter one provides an overview of the magazine's first decade and delineates its symbolic universe. Founded with a great deal of capital, brand name recognition (in Holland and Scribner), and business talent (in Smith), *Scribner's Monthly* attained an immense audience through the use of illustrations, fiction by women and Regionalists of every stripe, and editorials designed to educate and uplift. This chapter will also show how the editors, in their effort to embody the nation in its pages, sought to contain problems and slant issues according to their own value system utilizing a discourse lately known in critical circles as "whiteness."[5]

Chapter two, entitled "The Ladies Who Launch," discusses the large role the women of *Scribner's* had in advancing American fiction and developing the literary marketplace in the 1870s. Against the thesis posited by Ann Douglas that these women were "impoverished," sentimental writers, who wrote out of financial necessity and from a position in society that "barred them ... from talking directly about politics and economics [and] ... sexual experiences" (23), female contributors to *Scribner's* generally viewed themselves as both professional writers *and* literary artists, who aspired to a good paycheck as much as a well-wrought story. Expected by Holland and Gilder to write with grace,

[5] Influenced by the essays and fiction of Toni Morrison, academics in the 1980s and 1990s began interrogating "whiteness" as a powerful presence in Western society in ways that went beyond traditional understandings of race. According to "whiteness studies" scholars such as Theodore Allen, Valerie Babb, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Ruth Frankenberg, David Roediger, Alexander Saxton, and others, "whiteness" implies a privileged position in society that clearly relates to but extends beyond pigmentation, offering a "wage" to those who benefit from its usage in discourse and practice. Though white pre-eminence has often been given biological sanction throughout history, it is in fact socially constructed. As Babb writes, "Its existence depends as much upon ideas, attitudes, and cultural practices as it does upon biological factors that cause differentiation in skin color, or hair texture" (10).

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delicacy, fastidiousness, and ideality, these writers often wrote with directness and vigor on everyday, and, at times, controversial subject matter and in a wide variety of genres.

Chapter three, entitled "Discovering Regionalism and the Making of Modern Nationhood," discusses how Edward King's 400+- page ethnographic study entitled "The Great South" discovered, and, to a certain degree created, the post-Civil War South for *Scribner's* predominantly northern readership. King also literally discovered the Regionalist fiction of Cable, whose fictionalized interpretations of New Orleans culture, *Scribner's* published to wide acclaim. Yet, even as the magazine hoped to present a view of a South that was fully reconstructed and ready to enter the Union (the view presented in King's series), Cable's fiction increasingly questioned this position and ultimately demanded the just treatment of former slaves and the abolishment of a rigid caste system that hindered class-wide social mobility. Drawing on Barbara Ladd's theory of race construction in *Nationalism and the Color Line*, this chapter argues that within *Scribner's* two contradictory discourses concerning nationhood were played out—King's version ultimately being the dominant (and preferred) discourse.

Chapter four, entitled "Modern Instances: Vanishing Women Writers and the Rise of Realism," examines the changing character of *Scribner's-Century* as it became a leading promoter of High Literary Realism. A somewhat evangelical and feminized publication in the 1870s, by the 1880s the magazine had become increasingly secular and dominated by the literary productions and dictates of men. This rupture is symbolized in Howells' groundbreaking realistic novel, *A Modern Instance*, which began serialization in *The Century* in 1880. Ostensibly concerned with the theme of divorce, the work also argues for a socially conscious literature that will guide a largely female reading public to high moral ground and

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reason. In his groundbreaking essay on the fiction of Henry James and in his novels, *A Woman's Reason* and *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, Howells further promotes High Realism as a genre set in opposition to feminine values. To advance this point, the chapter also discusses selected works of Henry James published in *Scribner's-Century*. As Sara Blair, Alfred Habegger, and other feminist critics have noticed, one sees in James' fiction, especially *The Bostonians*, an increasing concern with an effeminized culture, which the author suggests, requires disciplining.

Chapter five, entitled "Preserving America: The Controversial Texts," shows how *Scribner's-Century* tried to present a whitewashed vision of America by avoiding harsh facts and downplaying controversial topics. It first examines Frances Hodgson Burnett's extraordinary novel *Through One Administration,* which concerns lobbying in Washington and adultery. Recently promoted to chief editor, Gilder tried his utmost to bowdlerize and contain "the deep-seated evil" of the work, but with limited success. It next looks at the heavily bowdlerized classic of American Realism, *The Bread-Winners,* by John Hay. The censoring of this work demonstrates the degree to which *Century's* editors would go to protect the sensibilities of their large female readership. More problematic is the theme of the book. Arguing in favor of labor management and against the rights of labor, this work clearly demonstrated the magazine's upper-class leanings.

Chapter six, entitled "'Dey's Mightily In De Grass': Reconstructing the 'New' North in the Plantation Myth Fiction of *Scribner's-Century*," examines the rise of the Plantation Myth School in the magazine's pages. In works by James Lane Allen, Thomas Nelson Page, Irwin Russell and others, one sees the role the editors played in assisting southern writers perpetuate the myth of "The Lost Cause" and argue for racially segregated nation. While

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exhibiting traits that mark a direct line of descent to antebellum blackface theater known as minstrelsy, the Plantation Myth School as it appeared in *Scribner's-Century* from the 1870s through the 1890s is a complex and vastly influential cultural phenomenon in its own right.

Chapter VII, entitled "The War of *The Century*," draws on David Blight's recently published *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* to argue that *Century*'s renown historical series "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" (1884-1887) is, in fact, more about North/South reconciliation and self-parading bombast than accurate history. As the bowdlerizing of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, and the appearance of Page's plantation myth tales also demonstrate (all of which ran during the Civil War accounts), it is clear that *Scribner's-Century* preferred social harmony to confronting pressing issues relating to race, class, and gender. Despite the magazine's cautious editorializing, counter-hegemonic forces reveal themselves nonetheless. The appearance of texts such as Twain's "Private History of a Campaign that Failed" and Cable's essays decrying racial inequity in the New South suggest that ideology may in fact *require* a degree of resistance to achieve its effects, rendering such resistance, by and large, ineffective.

The conclusion, entitled "Towards the End of *The Century*," discusses how after successfully leading America according to elite, Protestant values for over two decades, the magazine, by the mid-1890s, had lost its dominance as cultural custodian due to market and cultural forces beyond its control. As Richard Ohmann in *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* writes, the financial panic of 1893 doomed the leading monthlies which suddenly faced cut-throat competition from magazines such as *Munsey's, McClure's*, and *Cosmopolitan*, which offered lighter literary fare at a far cheaper price.

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By "reading" the fiction of *Scribner's-Century* as it relates to, and sometimes contradicts, the ideology of the magazine's editors—which will be one of the central methods of this work—this dissertation strives to achieve a number of goals.[6] First, it shows how the most influential genteel magazine of the day attempted to produce a version of America motivated by the interests of the northern intellectual elite, largely white male Protestants, who sought to project a vision of the nation with which they could identify. Secondly, it shows how certain literary works called into service to reinforce the magazine's nationalistic goals, at times, reacted against this mission, demonstrating, as Janet Todd writes, that though "Literature inevitably colludes with ideology ... it does not simply affirm, and it can expose and criticize as well as repeat" (86).[7] Finally, it utilizes a recent manner of reading nineteenth-century American literature effectively employed by American studies scholars such as Daniel H. Borus, Sara Blair, Richard H. Brodhead, Nancy Glazener, and Kenneth Warren that recalls the crucial point that this was "a century in which most literary reading was done in magazines" (Brodhead "Literature and Culture" 471).

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[6] I wish to point out the obvious, but important point that by "reading" *The Century* I intend my own reading as a modern day scholar as opposed to envisioning how Victorians may have read the magazine. Although much important work is being done to understand the multifarious ways in which specific reading communities at different moments in history comprehended the "intellectual pabulum" they ingested (including noteworthy works such as Michael Denning's *Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America* and Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Culture*) such an endeavor is beyond the scope of this work. One of my stated objectives, however, *is* to make clear how *Century's* editors most likely intended their readers to understand their philosophical and social aims.

[7] Beginning with Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," the academic literature on "ideology" is enormous, yet crucial for understanding how "dominant cultures" achieve their status and power. A superb overview of this literature is discussed in Terry Eagleton's *Ideology: An Introduction*. Especially helpful in informing how *Century Magazine* attempted to legitimate the values and beliefs of its editors, and the genteel class to which they belonged, are the *Prison Notebooks* of Antonio Gramsci. Arguing that ideology is more a matter of consent, than coercion, Gramsci shows that in order to achieve hegemony (which is neither inherently negative or positive), a group, such as the American Victorian middle class, must diffuse its views widely so that the majority of citizens come to equate their wants with the world view of those who wish to claim leadership (moral, political, and/or intellectual). Paramount in "defending and developing the theoretical or ideological 'front'," Gramsci writes, "is the press in general: publishing houses (which have an implicit and explicit programme and are attached to a particular tendency), political newspapers, periodicals of every kind, scientific, literary, philological, popular, etc., various periodicals down to parish bulletins" (389-90).

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As Brodhead writes, if we are to have a fully contextualized understanding of the shape and shaping of American writing during the nineteenth century, "we need to look behind individual authors to the changing life of literature itself as a cultural institution" as well as the "institutional changes in which it is possible to become a writer." We need, Brodhead argues, to look at "cultures of letters" such as the "quality" journals of the late Victorian era, "which created a new kind of world for authors to work in" ("Literature and Culture" 467). This dissertation will provide such a glimpse in the hope of shedding new light on literature and publishing during this period, while disposing of certain lingering misconceptions.

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CHAPTER I: "MONEY DID IT":

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY AND THE INCORPORATION OF CULTURE

> Emily Dickinson to Rev. Josiah G. Holland (via telegraph):
> *"Doctor—How did you snare Howells?—Emily"*
> Dr. Holland's reply:
> *"Emily—Case of Bribery—Money did it—Holland"*
>
> (qtd. in Bianchi 82-83)

Scribner's Monthly was founded during what magazine historian Frank Mott has called "the mania of magazine-starting" (the years 1865-1885)[8] by three men from the newly emerged professional managerial class,[9] each representing a particular area of expertise. Charles Scribner, head of the eminent publishing concern that bore his name, offered extraordinary industry experience, brand name recognition, and key contacts in the publishing world. Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland, former assistant editor of the *Springfield Republican* and one of only a handful of Americans to have achieved fame and fortune from advice books and sentimental verse,[10] represented the literary end of the venture (twenty-six year old Richard Watson Gilder, the future editor of *The Century*, would be his assistant). Roswell Smith, a lawyer by training and proprietor of coal-rich lands in Indiana, offered exceptional business acumen to complement his deep pockets.

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[8] Mott writes that "in the period of expansion immediately following the war, when money was plentiful, when improvements in presses, stereotyping, and engraving encouraged periodical publication and when a spirit of optimism was abroad in the entire North and West, a boom in magazines set in.... A calculation based on census figures and the advertising directories of the period gives a scant 700 periodicals for 1865, somewhat over 1,200 for 1870, twice that many for 1880, and some 3,300 for 1885" (5).

[9] Alfred D. Chandler in *The Invisible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* argues that the first representatives of the PMC (Professional Managerial Class) were "salaried middle and top railroad managers" (95) who formed this new economic group shortly before the Civil War. In Chandler's view, the railroad companies were the first modern business enterprises.

[10] Holland first attained national recognition with *Timothy Titcomb's Letters to Young People, Single and Married* (1858), which he immediately followed with *Bitter-Sweet, a Poem in Dramatic Form* (1858). *Katrina, Her Life and Mind in a Poem* (1867) sold over 100,000 copies, a sales figure (for a book of verse) exceeded only by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Hiawatha*. See Scholnick's "J.G. Holland and the Religion of Civilization in Mid-Nineteenth Century America."

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At first Charles Scribner was reluctant to take Smith on as a third party who would share in the magazine's profits, but his impeccable business credentials and high ethical standards based on Christian principles, convinced the well-known publisher that the magnitude of the new magazine's vision would command a "great success" which "we will be more likely to secure if we have an efficient business organization" (qtd. in John 11). Scribner's decision to bring Smith's organizational talents and financial acuity into the fold was prescient. As the historian Maury Klein notes, running a successful business in the emerging industrial order of the post-Civil War era could no longer be accomplished by individuals on a "casual, freewheeling basis." Instead, Klein writes,

> the more specialized and complicated activities became, the more they required planning and coordination to operate efficiently. Improvisation, which Americans had elevated to an art form, still had its place, but not in a complex industrial system. Grudgingly, it gave way to systemization and integration. (43)

Roswell Smith, it turned out, would be a master of systematizing the operations of *Scribner's* and planning its strategies. His introduction of pre-paid postage and inexpensive, large scale advertising,[11] and his willingness to spend huge sums of money for visionary projects such as Edward King's long-running "The Great South" (Nov. 1873 - April 1875), the celebrated Civil War series (Nov. 1884 - Nov.1887), and the 6-volume *Century Dictionary* (1889-91)[12] quickly propelled *Scribner's-Century* into a dominant position in family magazine

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[11] Other magazines such as *Harper's Monthly* advertised products before *Scribner's-Century* did, but none before had made it so profitable and, ultimately, so essential for succeeding in a crowded literary marketplace. For example, whereas *Harper's* charged from $500 to $1000 a page for the occasional advertising it did include in the 1880s, *Scribner's-Century* charged from $100-$200, which led to an average of 150 pages of advertising per volume during this decade. This increased advertising was a primary factor allowing *Scribner's-Century* to pay leading rates to its contributors. Essentially, it was Smith who designed the by now universal strategy of including more advertising at cheaper rates and using this revenue to insure a low cost, quality publication that substantially increased circulation and company revenues on a yearly basis for over two decades (Smith 18-20).

[12] Initially allotted three hundred thousand dollars, the *Century Dictionary*, with a staff of fifty (including the assistance of 500 readers and expert consultants), ended up costing over a million dollars. It was published in six volumes between 1889-1891 to wide critical and popular acclaim (John 135).

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publishing. The successful strategies produced by the coordinated efforts of Holland's seasoned literary and editing talents, Charles Scribner's publishing expertise, and Smith's managerial and business skills, in turn, exerted a strong influence on how almost every mass distribution magazine publisher would come to do business by the turn of the century.[13]

Imperative for *Scribner's* rise to domination in the field of periodical publishing was the fact that the magazine was a joint-stock venture, or corporation—only the *financial* dividends stayed with the three primary shareholders, Smith, Holland, and Scribner.[14] One could believe, however, that its readers were the shareholders of Scribner & Company (the umbrella company formed for the magazine),[15] for at the end of its first decade *Scribner's* published an index to its published writings with a preface that reads like a Wall Street annual report. So compelling is this brief "shareholders" report for the understanding of the magazine and American culture in the postbellum era, that I cite it verbatim:

> We present, in this little volume, an exhaustive index to the first ten volumes of *Scribner's Monthly*. It will add much to their value as works of reference, and transform them into a little library of fiction, travel, poetry, polemics, criticism, philosophy, and practical science, of which every item may be easily found.
>
> The preparation of this index has brought under review many interesting facts connected with the production of the volumes which it covers, that may possibly interest our readers as it has interested ourselves. There are very few

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[13] Evidencing the influence of *Scribner's Monthly*, Roger Burlingame, son of the founding editor of *Scribner's Magazine,* writes: "It might have horrified the founders of *Scribner's Magazine* to say that the *Monthly* served it as a model, but, looking back over the sweep of American literature, it seems to have been a sound archetype in form and variety of substance of American magazines in general, at least up to the 'slick' era" (Burlingam 198).

[14] Per their agreement, Holland and Smith each received 30 percent of the Scribner's & Company stock and Scribner received 40 percent.

[15] It is important to keep in mind that Scribner's and Company, formed solely for the purposes of publishing *Scribner's Monthly*, was distinct from Charles Scribner's publishing firm, Charles Scribner & Company. This confusion in names was the source of some trouble in 1880, when Scribner and Company began publishing its own books in direct competition with Charles Scribner & Company. In 1880, Charles Scribners agreed to sell his stake in the company, and Scribner and Company became The Century Company, publisher of *The Century Illustrated Magazine.* At the time of the break-up, it was agreed that Charles Scribner & Company would wait five years before publishing its own monthly. In compliance with this decision, it was not until 1885 that the inaugural edition of its very own monthly, *Scribner's Magazine*, appeared.

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> who imagine the cost, in labor and money, of works which they secure for a comparatively trifling sum. The Index itself will sufficiently reveal the immense amount of detail involved, but figures only can measure the magnitudes of expense. We have paid for illustrations nearly one hundred thousand dollars; for literary contributions and editorial work, a very much larger sum. This statement will give some idea of what it costs to prepare a single number of the magazine for the printer. Thousands of dollars must be expended on each number before a work is placed in type. After this, the expense depends largely upon the number printed. We assure that we paid more than $125,000 to the printers of these ten volumes, and but little less than a quarter of a million dollars for paper, they will realize, first, that publishing a magazine is no child's play, and, secondly, that they obtain the results of a vast outlay of money and labor for a very small consideration.
>
> We have printed in these volumes two thousand seven hundred and forty-five engravings, or a round average of 550 per annum, costing each more than the average sum of thirty-three dollars. One hundred and thirty-three stories, long and short, have also been printed in these volumes; and from these, and from essays and other material, have been published fifteen books, while others are in course of preparation. It is our intention to make the next ten volumes better than these.
>
> Scribner & Co., 1881

Written about the time of Dr. Holland's reply to a telegram from Emily Dickinson, who had asked the editor how it was that his periodical was publishing *A Fearful Responsibility* by the eminent William Dean Howells, the preface to the index reveals a core secret to *Scribner's* success in winning readers as well as the works of famous writers: money. In almost every other sentence, the Scribner & Company founders emphasize the enormous cost of their venture, and the relative low cost of each issue to the customer/shareholder/reader. Having spent over $100,000 on illustrations, over $100,000 on contributions and editing work, $125,000 on printing costs, and $250,000 on paper, the publishers want their readers to know how much they care about and, thus, have provided for, their interests and wants. Not just your standard magazine fare, the reader, so she is told, receives literature and images worth permanently preserving in a library. In return for its

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efforts and expenditures, *Scribner's* quietly yet insistently asks only for continued support, implying that such would be the rational decision of any intelligent reader.

Taste, or rather tasteful articles, essays, and images are precisely the commodities for sale in *Scribner's* pages. As Scribner & Co.'s index demonstrates, by 1881 the connection between culture (importantly, "high" culture) and commerce was already tightly intertwined. Beginning with their inaugural issue, the editors of *Scribner's,* in alliance with other self-anointed custodians of culture of the Victorian era, had consciously promoted the view that "culture" (newly defined in the 1869 edition of Webster's dictionary as "the state of being cultivated," or "enlightenment and discipline acquired by mental training")[16] should be the crowning achievement of an individual, family, and, by extension, a nation that has attained economic prosperity and status.

Yet, as Richard L. Bushman writes in *The Refinement of America*, the close relationship of gentility and capitalism would seem to have been a contradiction that should have produced warring ideals. As Bushman writes:

> To flourish in a capitalist economy one had to husband resources for investment and devote oneself doggedly to productive effort. Success in a capitalist world depended on engraining thrift and industry into habits of the heart ... Books on gentility depicted a world of leisure and consumption where the inhabitants engaged in conversation, dancing, and cards, where they surrounded themselves with fanciful, costly, and decorative objects that were useless for purposes of production. Refined persons were never shown at work or taught to save. They met for balls and talk, walked in gardens, and drank teas, spending but never getting. Capitalism and gentility should have been enemies. (xvii)

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[16] Historians such as Lawrence Levine have discussed the changing definition of culture over time. Levine writes how "in the early nineteenth-century editions of Webster's dictionary the primary definition of *culture* was agricultural: 'The act of tilling and preparing the earth for crops.'" By the 1830s, a second definition relating to self-culture soon began circulating, defined by William Ellery Channing in *Self-Culture* (1838) as "the care which every man owes to himself, to the unfolding and perfecting of his nature." With the publication of Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), widely read in America, the term came to mean both a source of intellectual and aesthetic enrichment ("getting to know ... the best which has been thought and said in the world") and the means for repairing defects in industrialized society ("the great help out of our present difficulties") (Levine 224-225).

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The efforts of Smith and his associates at *Scribner's-Century*, however, lend support to Bushman's claim throughout his important book that a nation of producers also needs its consumers and that the guardians of high culture played an important role in supplying both. In the case of *Scribner's*, in addition to convincing American readers to work diligently and to postpone gratification (largely in Holland's monthly exhortations on the American way), the magazine also exhorted its readers to "spend" their hard-earned leisure and money, buying and enjoying items that instilled, or at least connoted, gentility such as Parlor organs, calligraphic pens, corsets, venetian blinds, Wakefield carriages, newly issued books, a revitalizing stay at Dr. Walker's Mountain Resort, and, of course, subsequent issues of the magazine itself.

By the mid-1870s, for each issue, the table of contents of the magazine was literally surrounded by advertisements, generally followed by several pages of new book listings by Charles Scribner's Sons' and other publishers [Figure 1]. As Richard Ohmann writes, the meaning of this new marriage of culture and commerce first seen in magazines also reflected a significant change in the structure of American society. From a nation comprised of predominantly agrarian, self-supporting family and community networks, therise of the shop and factory produced ever-increasing numbers of wage-laborers, newly dependent upon the anonymous marketplace for most goods and services. Once relatively self-sufficient, Americans after the Civil War began to "turn to stores, mail order catalogs and specialized producers for what they used to make at home—soap, clothes, food, furniture, the home itself—and for many new products—gum, cameras, bicycles, telephones, and electric lighting" (48). With per person GNP on the rise and a host of new products and product brands now available to consumers, manufacturers, in turn, began relying on advertisers, i.e.,

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professional engineers of consumption, to help "move the goods." In many respects, this process was mirrored in the publishing world. Growing levels of literary production, due largely to an increasingly literate citizenry seeking useful information and cultural capital, required publishers like Holland and Smith to guide readers in what to read, to promote the very act of reading, and (in the case of their own magazine) to encourage them to gaze at pictures (and ads) with admiration and/or longing.

The preface, which was actually just another advertisement among many filling a mass distribution periodical for the first time, exposes the conjunction of money and self-promotion to corporate growth in the post-Civil War economy. Like the rise of so many cooperative commercial enterprises during this time, it is clear that the emergence of *Scribner's* was tied to the pooling and expending of large amounts of capital and the concomitant investment in the language and tactics of advertising to recoup and sustain revenues by promoting wares, literary or otherwise, all the while creating consumers dependent upon professional guidance.[17]

It is, of course, what *Scribner's* did with its ample financial resources as well as its fortunate cultural position at the time that ensured its success. It is significant, for example, that the magazine's first move upon incorporation was to establish an office near Union Square in New York City. *Scribner's* chose an unassuming third floor space at 743 Broadway, two floors above the elegant and spacious Scribner bookstore. Named in the eighteenth century for the junction of Bowery and Bloomingdale Road (now Fourth Avenue and Broadway), the Union Square area was initially an elite residential district that soon

[17] Also helping *Scribner's* attain immediate market share was the fact that, like so many major corporations today, the magazine disposed of potential competitors by merging with them. Itself evolving out of the evangelical magazine *Hours at Home: A Popular Monthly of Religious and Useful Literature*, *Scribner's* soon purchased *Putnam's New Monthly Magazine* (1868-1870) and, in 1875, Edward Everett Hale's *Old and New*.

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became the site of several cultural institutions such as the Academy of Music, the Century Club, the New York Historical Society, and the New York Society Library. However, as Tami Thompson writes, "Union Square's history as a wealthy upper class enclave was brief; by 1860 the march of commerce uptown had begun" (138). By 1870, vestiges of high culture and gentility (including Union Square Park) remained, but the area was by now better known as a place for retail as attested by the original site of Macy's Department Store at 6th Avenue and 14th Street.

Among the most desirable commodities, particularly in prosperous, sophisticated Manhattan, were books and magazines. As the historian of American Victorianism,[18] Louise Stevenson, writes, "by 1860 almost all native-born American whites could read . . . with literacy rates highest in the Northeast."[19] Citing evidence that a high majority of middle-class families owned at least three books, Stevenson infers that "book ownership and literacy rates were even higher for Victorian families, who belonged to the middle and upper classes, and for people living in the more prosperous urban areas" (30).[20]

New York City was more than just a strategic place to sell literary wares. By 1870 it was the nation's publishing center and had slowly begun its ascent as America's culture

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[18] As Daniel Walker Howe in "American Victorianism as a Culture" points out, the term American Victorianism is now used instead of Victorian American as a reflection of the fact that Victorianism, though dominant in the 1850s-1890s, was only one of a wide array of cultural systems vying for power and place in nineteenth century America.

[19] Along the lines of Stevenson, Daniel Borus writes that "ever since the inception of the republic, foreign observers had noted with admiration the high degree of reading among Americans of all classes. If the quality of American writing was open to question, the quantity of American readers was not" (48). Owing to intense common school reform between 1850 and 1859, followed by the appearance of compulsory education laws throughout the 1870s, illiteracy rates in the U.S. after the Civil War were the lowest in the world. In addition to guaranteed education, "increased privacy, expanding leisure time, and rising disposable income" also served to increase the reading pool following the Civil War (48).

[20] With the rapid growth of readership came a concomitant increase in media forms vying for America's attention including mass circulation newspapers, "dime" novels, religious periodicals, novels, as well as the "quality" family house magazines. As we will come to see, the editors of *Scribner's-Century* zealously promoted the salutary effects of reading their magazine, while denigrating rival fields of cultural production, largely in the hopes of gaining entry into the parlors of the households Stevenson describes.

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capital as well. This meant that not only were the resources for running a large publishing firm—including talent and the latest technological advances in printing, stereotyping, and engraving—readily available, but growing interest in cultural institutions began to give the town a new dimension. With the opening of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the expansion of the New York Public Library system, and the proliferation of new concert halls, opera houses, auditoriums, and theatres, New York City began to vie with Boston for national leadership in the arts, a distinction it achieved by the end of the following decade. The culmination of this shift is perhaps best symbolized by William Dean Howells (the "Dean" of American letters at the time) relinquishing his editorship of Boston's *Atlantic Monthly* in 1880 in order to write for New York-based *Scribner's-Century* and *Harper's Monthly* and his decision in 1889 to move to Manhattan (Kazin 4).

At the soon-to-be epicenter of the arts, *Scribner's Monthly* served as the ideal clearinghouse for disseminating culture and refinement, a mission it took up willfully and enthusiastically. Fortunately for the magazine, new developments in the distribution of goods were also in place by 1870. Most significant, a single national rail system had been established and integrated with other modes of transportation and distribution. In addition, the American News Company had recently been founded (in 1864) which expertly managed the mass circulation of periodicals and newspapers by serving as an intermediary between publishing houses and local news dealers. In the following decade, the Postal system was modernized to the benefit of national magazines such as *Scribner's* and *Harper's*, most importantly, by making inexpensive postage available for mass mailings (largely at the instigation of Roswell Smith) (Chandler 79-144; John 13; Schneidrov 67).[21] These modern

[21] Another important technological development was the high power cylinder press, especially Hoe's new perfecting machine, which *Scribner's-Century* used in place of the far slower flatbed press. According to John

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developments, crucial processes in the systemization, organization, and "incorporation" of America, insured that formerly isolated areas of the country suddenly found themselves linked to large urban centers such as New York, Chicago, and Boston. *Scribner's Monthly* was established at the right cultural moment to take full advantage of what Robert Wiebe has called this newly "distended society," a network of small towns falling "into satellite patterns about a larger center, to which they looked for markets and supplies, credit and news" (3). For the first time, America's small towns constituted a national market, and *Scribner's*, like so many other new corporations, hoped to reap the benefits of a potentially enormous customer base.

In 1870 the editors of *Scribner's Monthly* viewed the publishing market ripe not only for disseminating current events and modern developments to distant customers, but also to bring them culture (with a capital "C"). As historians such as Richard Bushman, Karen Haltunnen, John Kasson, and Michael Schneidrov describe, a large-scale attempt to market refinement in morals, manners, and taste by writers of etiquette books and other cultural entrepreneurs had begun during the 1830s. The impetus for this interest appears to be three-fold.

Especially in the earlier part of the Victorian era, middle-class men and women had become concerned that the public sphere was infested with threatening individuals such as confidence men, gamblers, and political sharks, who sought to lure the youth into vice and sin. In response, woman's magazines such as *Godey's Ladies Book*, child-rearing guides, and other self-help literature provided advice on how to discern deceit in others as well as

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Wilson, son of the famous Cambridge printer, in an address to the Master Printers' Association of Boston in 1888, an edition of a work which in 1840 would take fifty days to complete "today, on a two-revolution press, we could print the edition in a little over five days, and on a Hoe perfecting machine in five hours! De Vinne of New York prints, cuts and folds 32 pages, 8vo., of the *Century Magazine*, on Hoes' new perfecting machine, at the rate of 3,000 an hour..." (qtd in Lehmann-Haupt 166).

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how to exhibit genteel manners (especially "perfect sincerity") as a means of distinguishing oneself (Haltunnen 53).

The desire to acquire vernacular gentility was also a response to the growing performativity of American life in another way. In a nation where rank was not determined by inheritance, vast numbers of Americans associated genteel manners with the important status of being middle class. The advantages of this distinction were many. Economic mobility was at the heart of the matter, but social prestige and the security of belonging to a dominant group also provided incentives (Bledstein 1-45). As Holland explained in *Timothy Titcomb's Letters to Young People* (1858), his enormously popular guidebook for rising in the world, "young men generally would doubtless be thoroughly astonished if they could comprehend at a single glance how greatly their personal happiness, popularity, prosperity, and usefulness depend on their manners" (34).

Good fortune seemingly awaited all members of this club, so long as they presented a clean-cut appearance, exhibited signs of moral probity, and abided the law and conventions. Whiteness of skin and shared cultural assumptions were also requirements for belonging to this group. Another leading appeal of middle-class association, after all, was that it served to separate the chosen Americans from "the lower orders," generally blacks and non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants (i.e. whites "of a different color") who, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, were to be increasingly viewed as irredeemably "un-American."

Following up on market demand (reinvigorated after the Civil War), *Scribner's Monthly* offered the keys to material success, quality living, and spiritual refinement. In its "Home and Society" department, for example, readers could find advice on holiday shopping, the latest European fashions, Christmas decorations, when to plant hyacinths, and

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related personal and domestic matters. If a female reader (at whom the department was aimed) considered adding lace to her fashion accessories, *Scribner's* advised her of its most practical benefit, namely that it "is never out of fashion." Which lace then to buy? "The costliest laces are preferred. Point d'Alnecon, whose very mesh is worth a golden coin; Chantilly, Brussels, Mechlin, Alenciennes, mock the longing gaze in shop-windows with unattainable beauty" (1:677; April 1871). With *Scribner's* as a guide, no woman would lack up-to-date style or the latest in domestic know-how.[22]

The "Home and Society" pages also considered manners and morality. Women were instructed in such matters as when to send wedding-cards and told that it was primarily their responsibility to keep a sober household by "utterly discountenancing all drinking in your house" (1:344; Jan. 1871). Instruction occasionally applied to husbands as well.[23] They were regularly reminded, for example, to maintain high standards of professional morality in business affairs and to avoid "vulgar displays" when traveling in Europe, for the best traveler "is a quiet person, who minds his own business, takes quickly the best habits of the country in which he finds himself, pays his bills, and commands universal respect" (2: 654; Oct. 1871).

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[22] Aimed at practicality *and* cultivation, this example shows the contradictions and tensions latent in the early stages of the shift from a largely republican, producer nation to one in which gentility and consumerism play increasingly important (and related) roles. *Scribner's Monthly*, it is clear, helped Americans adjust to consumerism, in part, by providing an ideology that justified the purchasing of luxury items that did not *seem* to contradict the fiscal conservatism of another age. This naturalizing of a new social reality (the myth of consumerism) is usefully explained by Roland Barthes, who writes, "Myth does not deny things, on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification, it gives them a clarity which is not that of an explanation but of a statement of fact." In *Mythologies* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972): 143.

[23] As historians have established, it was in the beginning of the nineteenth century that the domestic and public spheres became separate and gendered. With the rise of industrialization, men became associated with earning money and engaging in public affairs, while women stayed at home creating for the family a "moral nursery ... the privileged domain of refinement, aesthetic sensibility, and higher learning" (Trachtenberg 143). By entering middle-class Victorian parlors, a genteel magazine such as *Scribner's Monthly* sought to exert enormous influence on its female readers, and the members in their household, who they, in turn, influenced.

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Good manners, strong character, and high ethical standards were also stressed in Holland's "Topics of the Times," his monthly column which set the tone for the magazine even after his death. In essays such as "The Shrinkage of Values," "Character and Commerce," "Poverty as a Discipline," "Professional Morality," and "The Falsehood of Extremes," the editor heralded the virtues of industry, integrity, discipline, thrift, and self-sacrifice, "all rooted," as Daniel Walker Howe has written about American Victorian attitudes in general, "in the assumption of objectivity and universality of moral principles" (525).

Scribner's attention to the refinement of the home, the cultivation of manners, and the improvement of individual morality was more than simply a matter of selling issues to readers seeking social approval and economic advancement. The editors believed that they had both a duty and right to create and enforce a well-mannered, well-educated, ethical populace. In the America they projected, there would be neither rudeness nor servility. Against the force of gentility, class-consciousness and social aggression would also be muted. Ideally, the nation would be characterized by its sobriety, industry, cultivation, Christian ethics, and sense of community.

From the beginning, *Scribner's-Century* played an important role defining middle-class, Protestant values and filtering them across class lines during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Dr. Holland's first editorial, for example, explained the unique qualities and special mission of the magazine under his care:

> The feature of illustrations has been adopted to meet the thoroughly pronounced popular demand for the pictorial representation of life and truth, and in the well-assured belief that there is no person, young or old, learned or illiterate, to whom it will be unwelcome. With this popular auxiliary we shall try to make a magazine that is intelligent on all living questions of morals and society, and to present something in every number that will interest and

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> instruct every member of every family into which it shall have the good fortune to find its way. (1:106; Nov. 1870)

As Holland writes, by flooding its pages with numerous high quality illustrations and by covering a broad range of topical issues and subject matter, *Scribner's* sought to "interest and instruct" a broad base of readers in regards to "life and truth." Precisely whose "lives" and whose version of "truth" *Scribner's Monthly* in the 1870s sought to present are important questions deserving further scrutiny.

Although a majority of its readers were women of the middle- and upper-middle classes, the magazine viewed itself as an agent of democracy designed to spread culture, knowledge, and guidance on manners and morals to all readers regardless of regional, educational, gender, and class differences. Demonstrating its self-conscious role as cultural custodian, spiritual beacon, and information broker for all, the magazine advertised itself as *An Illustrated Magazine For the People.* Despite such democratic pretensions, *Scribner's* was not really meant for everyone, for, as Stuart Hall, Priscilla Wald, Raymond Williams and other cultural historians have demonstrated, "The People" is an arbitrarily constructed term devoted to exclusion as well as inclusion. *Scribner's* appears to have meant those readers who would favorably receive and respond to its cultural program of self-improvement and adhere to its Protestant values. In a word, those who read *Scribner's* were, or would soon become, Americans. Those unwilling to accept *Scribner's* prescriptions and view of the world were by implication, un-American.

Americanization as a process in the making is apparent throughout the pages of *Scribner's* in many ways. In its "Home and Society" section for May, 1875, for example, *Scribner's* advises a reader about what to do with back issues. After jesting that the reader use them as "kindling," the editor earnestly adds that:

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> We confess to being a little selfish in this matter of magazines; like the Rothschild, who gave guineas to beggars just for the fun of it, we give all the old magazines that we don't want to a certain bright little Irish girl, whom we happen to know, and who manifests the most amusing delight in their possession. Not only she, but her whole family of brothers and sisters, not to say fathers and mothers. (117)

Implicit in this editorial "confession" is the notion that by circulating *Scribner's* to others (especially the less fortunate), the magazine will perform enormous good no matter who encounters it.

The trust placed by the editors in the entertaining, enlightening, and improving powers of the magazine for a wide audience is reiterated by a follow-up letter. In it, the subscriber writes how after his family of eight had finished their May and June issues, he heeded the editors' advice and

> gave them to a young laboring man to show his wife and children, all of whom, he assures me, enjoyed the reading and illustrations hugely. After they had consumed the magazines they turned them over to a neighbor who followed suit. These copies have now passed through ten families, and been read by about seventy people. (11:131; Nov. 1875)

As this letter shows, *Scribner's Monthly*, generally read by middle-class readers who could afford its .35 per issue cost, did indeed sometimes reach members of the working class, some of whom seemed to enjoy the experience and were even impelled to share their good fortune with others.[24] Such grass-roots distribution, the magazine believed, would help spread a common set of shared "American" values and good taste across the land.

Aside from the obvious desire to make a profit, what is unusual about *Scribner's* concerted efforts to spread American middle-class values is that its clients were already

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[24] As Ellen Gruber has established, magazines, especially the quality ones, had a large secondary readership beyond subscription and newsstand figures. One of her sources, for example, "mentions used magazines as an item that arrives in bundles from the east in the 1880s." Another source reports "growing up in a Colorado mining town ... reading 1890s issues of '*The Cosmopolitan*, much dog-eared by the time it got around to us,' along with other publications as least ten years old" (188).

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Americans, most of whom—by virtue of having purchased the magazine—had already achieved middle-class status.[25] In the 1870s, however, this group status was still not fully formulated, and deciding who to follow as guides to culture and society, was not as clear as it would become.[26] On one hand, the magazine, in promoting itself as a positive influence for all who read it, was essentially attempting to legitimize its own cultural leadership—and by extension that of the northeastern bourgeoisie. The editors' interest in having their issues read far and wide reminds us, as Antonio Gramsci has written, that legitimization in modern society requires hailing, or "interpellating," subjects, who alone give sanction to hegemonic sway.[27] On the other hand, the hailing of the working class shows that, as Stuart Hall writes, no class or grouping has a "pure" identity; classes are in fact constructed on the basis of relations. By presenting its cultural fare as something the lower classes desire, but do not possess, *Scribner's* helped its predominantly middle-class readership secure its own status vis-à-vis others.[28]

Helping to create middle-class tastes, and instill the very idea of distinction, was one of the magazine's more popular departments, suggestively named "Culture and Progress," which reported on recent developments in literature and the arts "at home and abroad." If a new book were published by a leading literary lady such as Louisa May Alcott or Elizabeth

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[25] Given that *Scribner's-Century* was a leading promulgator for middle-class values, it is hardly surprising that *The Century Dictionary* (a production of The Century Company) was the first reference text to define "middle-class." Its 1889 edition, for example, described the term as "that class of people which is socially and conventionally intermediate between the aristocratic class, or nobility, and the laboring class; the untitled community of well-born or wealthy people" (Bledstein 13).

[26] As Brodhead writes, the upper class immediately after the Civil War "was not an already integrated 'group' but a group in the process of self-grouping ... and in this process of self-grouping, Culture played a crucial role" (123).

[27] Gramsci argues that ideology is more a matter of consent, than coercion. He shows that in order to achieve hegemony (which is neither inherently negative or positive), a group, such as the American Victorian middle-class, must diffuse its views widely so that the majority of citizens come to equate their wants with the world view of those who wish to claim leadership (moral, political, and/or intellectual). See *Selections from the Cultural Writings*, Eds. David Forgacs and Geoffrey Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985): 389-90.

[28] Stuart Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular,'" in Raphael Samuel, ed., *People's History and Social Theory* (London, Boston, Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981): 227-40.

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Stuart Phelps or a newcomer such as Emma Lazarus, *Scribner's* readers were sure to hear about it. If a new play featuring the nationally famous actor Edwin Booth was in production, the drama would be thoughtfully reviewed and Booth's every move dissected and commented upon. If Clara Louise Kellogg, America's "finest Soprano," was singing in Canada, *Scribner's* was there to report on the "delicate grace, poetic feeling, sweet, appropriate simplicity" of her music (1:686; April 1871). If a water-color exhibition at the New York National Academy of Design or the annual show at London's New Royal Albert Hall were being held, readers could expect a *Scribner's* review to appear in the very next issue. A lecture by Dr. McCosh, President of Princeton, on "Natural Theology and the Evidences of the Christian Religion," directed at "prevailing errors of the day ... in reference to the speculations of Professor Huxley, Professor Tyndal, and Mr. Herbert Spencer" (9:508; Feb. 1875) would certainly be covered as would a review of the first American production of Wagner's "Lohengrin" at the Stadt Theatre in the Bowery.

In 1871, at the suggestion of assistant editor Gilder, *Scribner's* also began to feature a "Living American Artist" series by the eminent art historian, D. O'C. Townley. Designed to encourage native talent as well as guide public taste, these short features discussed the painting and sculptures of established, though not yet popularly known, artists such as Albert Bierstadt, Asher Brown Durand [Figure 2], Daniel Huntington, Henry Peters Gray, and J. Q. Adams Ward ("the Dean of American Sculptors").

Generally accompanied by portraits of the artists themselves,[29] the series served to demystify art so that a growing mass public could enjoy and benefit from it. A decade or

[29] Like the selling of brand names in its advertising section, providing illustrations of the artists themselves marked the rise of the artist as a celebrity figure. This development can be traced throughout *Scribner's-Century's* history as it often included full-page frontispieces of literary greats as well as extended appreciations evaluating the work of leading cultural figures.

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more before the mass circulation of photography in periodicals as discussed by Walter Benjamin, *Scribner's* helped relieve art of its "aura" by explaining and evaluating it on terms the general reader could comprehend.[30] In May and July of 1880, for example, William Cary Brownell thoughtfully and patiently reviewed the work of J. H. Twachtman, Wyatt Eaton, Thomas Eakins, and William Merrit Chase in a feature entitled "The Younger Painters of America" (20:1-15; 321-35), which was shortly followed by Clarence Cook's "Spring Hereabouts," an analysis of the works of Winslow Homer, Eakins, Arthur Quartley, and Robert Blum (20:161-69; June 1880). As Arthur John writes, by the 1880s, *Scribner's-Century* had featured the work of almost every American and European artist of stature and had even, in 1878, begun advertising itself as "A Magazine of Art" (84). Also significant for promoting the American Renaisance in art (which the magazine first coined in 1880) were numerous illustrated essays discussing the decorative arts, architecture, the American school of wood engraving, new developments in sculpture, and arguments on behalf of the city beautification movement.

Significantly, Holland's interest in supporting the fine arts and high culture had little to do with the "art for art's sake" movement gaining popularity in Britain at about this time (Scholnick 56). A liberal Christian reformer who had made a name for himself as a didactic poet, novelist, essayist and lecturer, Holland was interested in the arts primarily as a beacon of high moral purpose. In editorial statements such as "Art as a Steady Diet," Holland warned against "the new gospel" of "art and ideas" on the grounds that it would only lead to "inadequate wages" and death by "starvation" for young artists (17:438-39; Jan. 1877).

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[30] Though in literary circles the period known as the American Renaissance applies to the efflorescence of works by major writers of the ante-bellum period, this academic label, coined by F. O. Matthiessen in 1941, was actually *used* by American artists to describe the last quarter of the nineteenth century during which they lived. The first appearance of the term, in fact, occurs in Brownell's "The Younger Painters of America" (20: 1-15; May 1880).

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Similarly, in "Character, and What Comes of It," the editor insisted that "the further art is removed from ministry ... the more illegitimate does it become ... Value in character makes value in verse. Value in character makes value in pictures, in sculptures, in all embodiments of art" (21: 469; Jan. 1881).[31]

Largely influenced by his younger editors, Holland would slowly come to accept a place for style and beauty in literature and art, even as he adhered to a stern faith in art's instructional value and necessary morality. It was especially the persistent efforts of his assistant editor Richard Watson Gilder, who sought to advance his own long-standing interest in poetry, art, and aesthetics, however, that ultimately led *Scribner's Monthly* to its position as a premier promoter of American and European art as well as literature of genuine aesthetic merit. An increasingly well-known poet of the idealist school of verse then in favor, but now regarded as sentimental and platitudinous, Gilder espoused the view that art should produce spiritual uplift and "right feeling." In a position that would become

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[31] Not content with sermonizing about the proper uses of art, Holland at times attempted to enforce his Puritan views on other editors. For example, when the Wall Street broker/literary critic Edmund C. Stedman sought to review the work of the poet Algernon Charles Swinburne favorably in his essay on Victorian Poets, Holland objected that the writer was too "prurient" and offered "no instruction at all" (qtd. in Scholnick 76). Another well-known instance exemplifying the editor's insistence on moral scruples over aesthetic considerations was Holland's response to the poetry of Walt Whitman. When Stedman wished to include a discussion of the poet's work in a series focusing on American Poets, Holland declared Whitman's poetry far too "anatomical and malodorous." In the end, Holland agreed not to press his objections, though he would later write an extended editorial entitled "Is it Poetry?" lampooning Whitman's right to even call himself a poet. In this piece, Holland describes the poet's verse as comparable to the *prose* of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thomas Carlyle *at their least "rhapsodic."* In perhaps one of the greatest misjudgments in the history of literary criticism, the cantankerous review concludes: "We believe that in his theories and performances he is radically wrong—that he is doing nothing but advertising himself as a literary eccentric, and that he ought to have, and will have, no following" (12:123-125; May 1876). The mutual acrimony between Whitman and Holland began when the poet submitted his poem "Eidolons" to *Scribner's* in 1875. As Whitman recounted, "I sent a poem, which was rejected—not rejected mildly, noncommittally, in the customary way, but with a note of the most offensive character. I was sick and blue at the time: the note provoked me: I threw it into the fire. I was always sorry I destroyed it: Had I been well I should not have done so: it was a good specimen insult for the historian" (Traubel 184). Representing two distinctive poles in literary production, Holland, the arbiter of genteel propriety, and Whitman, the modern innovator in language, style and subject matter, were almost natural enemies. Adding further strain to the relationship was the irony that Holland had achieved the status Whitman most coveted, that of "the People's Poet." See Robert Scholnick's "J.G. Holland and the 'Religion of Civilization' in Mid-Nineteenth Century America." *American Studies* 27 (1986): 55-79.

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increasingly clear when he was at the helm of *The Century*, Gilder believed art should look upon "the good, the true, and the beautiful," and direct people to a higher, purer realm.[32]

Ultimately, the combination of moral instruction (stressed by Holland) and spiritual elevation (stressed by Gilder) would be emphasized more and more as *Scribner's* (and later *The Century*) sought to forge a genteel nation that valued beauty, style, and morality as civilizing forces. In response to a nation that was becoming progressively industrial, economically competitive, and materialistic, the magazine came to promote the view that art appreciation would not only improve readers' tastes and ethics (ultimately making for good citizenship), but would also provide an antidote to a brazen world. Begun as a family magazine openly guided by Christian principles (itself a response to the increasing secularization of the pulpit, as David S. Reynolds describes in *Faith in Fiction*), and including in each issue at least one article of "spiritual significance" (Johnson 113), *Scribner's-Century,* by the time Gilder took command, had found a new religion and code of ethics in art and literature.[33] As the country became more secular, so did *Scribner's-Century*,

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[32] Prior to his position at *Scribner's-Century*, Gilder had worked as a reporter at the *Newark Advertiser* and then came to edit anonymously *Hours at Home,* an evangelical publication owned by Charles Scribner and Company. This magazine was predominantly designed to stimulate the sale of Scribner's and Son's books, but came to an end with the founding of *Scribner's Monthly*, which though partially owned by Charles Scribner, was an autonomous company which deliberately sought a national audience. Gilder, essentially, came with the founding of *Scribner's*. Though he did not have the final word in dictating editorial policy, he initially shared much of the editorial work with Holland by soliciting and selecting manuscripts and proof-copying the magazine. From the beginning of his reign, he also conducted "The Old Cabinet," which contained some of his own verse as well as discussion of a wide variety of aesthetic topics. By the late 1870s Gilder's duties and responsibilities would dramatically increase as Holland began to spend most of his time away from his New York City office and became, by and large, a contributor and editor-at-large (Smith 18-20).

[33] It appears that the genteel aesthetic found in family house magazines such as *Scribner's* also played a cultural role similar to that of mid-century "woman's fiction." As Nina Baym writes, "domesticity is set forth as a value scheme for ordering of all of life, in competition with the ethos of money and exploitation that is perceived to prevail in American society." As I argue in chapter four, this similarity is not incidental; the male-led "genteel endeavor" in many ways took over the "feminization of America culture," handling its controls, while blaming its shortcomings on the "weaker sex" and weak morality generally.

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though an underlying strain of Protestantism would dictate the tone of the magazine until its final issue.

In addition to promoting culture and refinement, *Scribner's* also satisfied readers' desire to learn more about their country and advances taking place in it (and the world generally). Since the war had ended, Americans, for example, were curious to read about the many regions that comprised the reunited United States. As David Shi writes, nineteenth-century Americans were also on a fact-finding mission to discover the latest developments in science and technology, politics, philosophy, and art. Owing to the natural curiosity of living in a rapidly changing world, a break-down in traditional religious beliefs (which no longer seemed to provide solutions for achieving stability in a chaotic world), as well as a positivistic faith in science and observation to comprehend the world and, perhaps, solve its problems, Americans during the second half of the nineteenth century had a "reverence for concrete facts and the visible" which, according to Shi, "coalesced into a self-conscious cultural movement" (3).

Both feeding and responding to the demands of its readers, *Scribner's Monthly* examined the various regions of America in ethnographic reports, accounts from scientific expeditions, and fiction. In 1872, for example, Roswell Smith authorized $30,000 for a commission to send 25-year-old Edward King on a state-by-state tour below the Mason-Dixon line. Advertised as an elucidation of the "Life, Condition, and Resources" of the southern states, "The Great South" revealed an exotic land of moss, alligators, and dilapidated cotton plantations that fed the northern imagination, while seeking to promote investment and development there [Figure 3].[34]

[34] The series was also a bold and, ultimately, extremely lucrative business decision. According to Arthur John, Southern response to King's reports was overwhelmingly positive. New subscribers

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In its early issues *Scribner's* also published Nathaniel Pitt Langford and Ferdinand V. Hayden, whose accounts exploring Yellowstone and Yosemite (illustrated by talented artists such as Thomas Moran) were exciting, eye-opening events for the magazine's readers who watched the West literally unfold before them. Demonstrating the majesty of the West and furthering the pride of Americans (who learned by reading *Scribner's* that their natural monuments symbolized national greatness),[35] these articles were influential in securing national park status for these areas as well as in setting precedents for future preservationist movements.

Also noteworthy were the scientific explorations of the Colorado River Basin by Major James W. Powell and his crew. The adventures Powell and his party experienced navigating the previously unexplored Grand Canyon rivers—like the Western tales of Bret Harte also published in *Scribner's* (often in the same issue)[36]—contributed to the notion of the West as a land of danger and adventure, the last great frontier [Figure 4].

In stories by H.H. Boyeson and Edward Eggleston, *Scribner's* also informed readers about life in the mid-West. Eggleston—before becoming famous for his landmark of literary Regionalism, *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*—contributed numerous tales of life in rural Indiana.

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came in by the thousand as *Scribner's* became the first Northeastern journal after the war welcomed in Northern and Southern parlors alike (John).

[35] In an editorial commemorating the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, Holland boasts how "The Yankee in the story-book claimed that America could boast of bigger lakes, larger rivers, louder thunder, and forkeder lightning than any other country. If any one doubt this hereafter, we shall refer him to the Yellowstone Park ... While European potentates spend millions on millions of francs to dig out little rills or lakes, or painfully heap up little nuggets of rock-work in their artificial pleasure-grounds, Nature has given us one here, ready made which dwarfs every other, natural or manufactured." ("The Yellowstone National Park" 4: 120; May 1872).

[36] From the inception of the magazine, Holland tried to persuade Bret Harte to contribute stories about the California mining camps and the wild escapades of frontiersmen. Harte initially had to fulfill a contract with the *Atlantic*, but in January of 1873 the editors received from him a ballad and four stories at the hefty price tag of $1,000 each. Apparently, the money Holland was able to dangle before Harte (at the behest of Smith) was too good to resist. In 1875 Harte sold the serial rights to the quickly written novel *Gabriel Conroy* for $6000, at the time the highest price paid for a novel, whose primary significance today is that James Joyce "stole" the name of the eponymous hero as well as the author's description of falling snow for his novella "The Dead."

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His "Huldah the Help: A Thanksgiving Love Story" (1: 189-196; Dec. 1870) was, in fact, the first short story to appear in *Scribner's*. Throughout the 1870s, the Norwegian-born H.H. Boyeson would also contribute stories about immigrant life (his tales often would be set in the outback towns of Wisconsin and feature stalwart Swedes and Norwegians adjusting to life in America) as well as translations of Ivan Turgenev.

Also significant in helping to map the United States in literature was a large cadre of talented women including Rebecca Harding Davis (who, in a proto-naturalistic style, documented life in the Mid-Atlantic states), Mary Halleck Foote (who submitted first-hand accounts from Mexico as well as from California's mining camps), Helen Hunt Jackson (whose rural New England tales under the pseudonym "Saxe Holme" caused enormous excitement amongst readers determined to discover the enormously talented "man" behind the art),[37] Constance Fenimore Woolson (who in the early 1870s visited and wrote about the Great Lakes region and, later, the South) and the English-born Tennesseen Frances Hodgson Burnett (whose brilliant *Scribner's* career included rich depictions of southern life in *Louisiana* and "Esmeralda").

Such Regionalist fiction and non-fiction that appeared in *Scribner's* throughout the 1870s was largely an attempt on behalf of the magazine's editors to create a diverse yet unified image of America and to foster its native writers.[38] *Scribner's* distinctively American

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[37] Especially noteworthy, beginning in the late 1870s, Jackson began her documentation of the atrocities committed against Native Americans. Out of these installments arose a book-length treatment of these abuses entitled *A Century of Dishonor*, which, in turn, led to the historical romance for which she is most famous, *Ramona*.

[38] The pride the magazine took in its service to the nation is demonstrated in numerous self-congratulatory essays and editorials extolling American exceptionalism particularly in relation to the rise in stature of its homegrown writers. For example, in "Poetry in America" Clarence Stedman boasts, "if the future is to have a greatness of its own, a study of new-world poetry is of equal importance with that devoted to the earlier or contemporary verse of the mother-land" (22: 540; August 1881). For his part, Holland, in an editorial written in 1878, speaks of how "gratifying" it is "to witness the growing interest in home writers, and to find it for the

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features and stories presented to its readers a nation of varied topographies and ethnic groups exhibiting exotic folkways and often speaking in amusing dialects. Despite these differences, regional people and places were presented in the process of amalgamation under an umbrella vision of America, viewed as illustrious, industrious, and justly dominated by the highly rational, omnipotent Anglo-Saxon race.[39]

A celebrant of American material progress and technology as well as the arts, *Scribner's* also featured inventions such as the typewriter, the aerobat, and the electric light. Interspersed between a serial novel and a biography of an eminent Victorian, one could also find explanatory accounts of such varied topics as how water pipes work, how canals are built, and how railroads are constructed. In a section called "Nature and Science," begun in 1872, *Scribner's* offered its readers yet more scientific knowledge, including the causes of scurvy, the effects of camphor on seeds, new antidotes for hydrophobia, the causes of the increase of insanity in England as well as "the principles and practice of house-drainage."

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interest of home magazines to discard the foreign writer, or to give the subordinate place which he ought to hold among the American readers of current fiction" (17:147; Nov. 1878).

[39] The Regionalist writings appearing in the quality magazines, writes Richard Brodhead, fulfilled a "profound social need ... to tell local cultures into a history of their supersession by a modern order now risen to national dominance" (121). What is unusual about this transformation, however, is that "old folkways" had not in fact disappeared, and some would continue into the twentieth century. Brodhead's point is that by printing regional fiction, the genteel magazines created a national fiction reflecting the desires of America's political and cultural leaders. On face value, it appears that by giving "space" and "voice" to exotic worlds and ways, a powerful magazine like *Scribner's* was acknowledging difference and seemingly valorizing it. In fact, by presenting regions as unusual and "out of history," the magazine inaugurated a standardized version of nationality and historical continuity that would make deviance "quaint" and increasingly invisible (Brodhead 120-21). The appearance during the 1870s of so much Regionalist writing in *Scribner's* supports two other key points made by Brodhead. For writers such as George Washington Cable and the extraordinary number of female Regionalist writers in the magazine, the genre served as a new place of "literary access" and source of income which encouraged a broad range of individuals to become authors.[39] In developing fiction writing as a profession open to the middle classes as never before, the magazine also played an important role in developing new notions of what constituted "the literary." Because of nationwide interest, particularly after the Civil War, of becoming one out of many, which regionalism urged, many formerly non-literary elements such as the use of dialect, an interest in "low" characters, a plain style, and environmental details entered into the field of "serious" literature. Though local color elements in American literature had thrived at least since Catharine Sedgwick's *A New England Tale* (1822), their appearances in the genteel publications of the postbellum era earned them a new warrant of respectability (even as these elements were generally used as signifiers set in opposition to gentility). Furthermore, by encouraging (almost exclusively) native material and a documentary style, *Scribner's* played a key role in insuring that "literature" serve nationalistic ends, a development Nathaniel Hawthorne had foreseen and brilliantly lamented in *The Marble Faun* in the previous decade.

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Accompanying many of these discussions of scientific inventions and discoveries were an endless supply of illustrations, "themselves," as Robert Scholnick shrewdly notes, "a product of scientific invention and discovery" (49).[40] Over a decade before the technology for reproducing photographs in magazines had become available, readers were able to view vivid images of American scenes and inventions in the wood engravings of *Scribner's Monthly*. Complementing the text with which they generally appeared, these exquisite illustrations (both artful and mimetic at the same time) decidedly contributed to the envisioning the nation as intended by the magazine's editors.

In *Scribner's*, civilization's latest developments and monuments to progress had never before appeared in such abundance and in such an ordered fashion before so many of the literate masses (in the comfort of their homes no less). Often appearing in departments appropriate to their classification (such as "The World's Work," "Culture and Progress," etc.), illustrated exhibits such as "The Illinois and St. Louis Bridge," Ernest Ingersoll's "The Making of the National Museum," Mrs. Schuyler Rensselaer's "Recent Architecture in America," and George B. Prescott's "The Telephone and the Telegraph" boldly and beautifully displayed American power, prowess, and creativity to a citizenry in the making [Figure 5]. What Tony Bennett calls the age's "exhibitionary complex" can help explain the America that these images (and *Scribner's* Regionalist writings) projected. Alongside the mid-Victorian society of surveillance that Michel Foucault hypothesizes in *Discipline and Punish* is the society of spectacle which involved

[40] Early in the 1870s, *Scribner's* art department learned to apply photographic processes to wood engravings, which gave the printed image an unusually vivid look. Prior to this time, wood engravings were slowly and tediously carved in reverse from photographs or original images. The results were "translations" of images rather than artistically rendered copies placing engraving barely above skilled hack work. When Drake introduced a system of chemically reproducing a photograph directly onto a wood block, which a skilled engraver would then re-carve, the results were dazzling. In fact, *Scribner's* artistic renderings of actual scenes served as the catalyst for opening new schools of engraving and its status as a high art form (Lehmann-Haupt 166).

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> the transfer of objects and bodies from the enclosed and private domains in which they had previously been displayed (but to a restricted public) into progressively more open and public arenas where, throughout the representations to which they were subjected, they formed vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power ... throughout society. (333)

Though Bennett refers specifically to museums, art galleries, expositions, and department stores, it is clear that these institutions' interest in "ordering objects for public inspection and ordering the public that inspected" (333) applies to the illustrated pages of *Scribner's* as well.

Edward King's illustrated feature on Baltimore titled "The Liverpool of America" (9: 681-695; April 1875) exemplifies *Scribner's* glamorous envisioning of America for public view (while acknowledging England as its leading competitor in economic and cultural might). The opening scene, for example, depicts a dazzling view of the city's port, where industry (depicted in the foreground by a coal yard, barges, and a steamboat) and refined living (symbolized by a church spire, the Shot Tower monument, elegant buildings, etc.) harmoniously co-exist [Figure 6]. Also exhibiting modern civilization in exquisite array are wood-cuts of the "oldest house in Baltimore," the grandiose stock exchange building, the new city hall, the magnificent entrance to Druid Hill Park, and the imposing Peabody Institute of Scientific Research. In many of its scenes, citizens stroll through the streets either on leisurely jaunts or contently bringing goods to and from the market. The majority wear elegant clothes and ride in fine carriages. Significantly, nowhere is visible the underbelly of urban life: the tenement housing, the lurking criminals, the prostitution zones, or the bands of discontented laborers. Most incredulous, not a beggar or "tramp" is in sight even as a June editorial admits of how "the hard times for ... the whole country continue" in which "there is not business enough to employ the men and the capital that are devoted to it" (10: 242; June 1875).

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Clearly, the staging of America in *Scribner's* pages is a performance that seeks to flatter. The viewers, it is hoped, will be invested in these porcelain images, treat them as possessions, and indeed become possessive of them, identifying themselves as "owners." As Bennett has it, the effect of the "exhibitionary complex" on the magazine's mainly white middle- and upper-middle-class audience is

> To identify with power, to see it as, if not directly theirs, then indirectly so, a force regulated and channeled by society's ruling groups but for the good of all: this was the rhetoric of power embodied in the exhibitionary complex—a power made manifest ... by its ability to organize and co-ordinate an order of things and to produce a place for the people in relation to that order. (339)

A wood-cut of Baltimore's "City Jail and Penitentiary" suggests another side to *Scribner's* display of progress, namely that civilization's high achievements are the result of an orderly body. It is in this way that Bennett's second point emerges; by viewing America on "exhibition," *Scribner's* readers were also learning to be self-regulating. In a modern society in which the traditional local authority of church and state has waned, citizens are subliminally urged to monitor themselves in service to a greater good called nationalism. Ownership, after all, entails personal responsibility.

Despite *Scribner's* purported aim to disseminate "culture" and advance the idea of progress widely to all Americans, the reality was that the the magazine primarily reached literate middle and upper-middle-class readers, who shared the editors's views and values and wished them to dominate. This goal is apparent in many ways, most noticeably in the magazine's extensive coverage of the arts and advances in science and technology (as discussed), but also in the manner in which the magazine regularly showcased American cultural institutions and organizations such as museums, parks, colleges, and libraries. In the first volume from the year 1871 alone, *Scribner's* featured four profusely illustrated sections

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devoted to a park, two libraries, and a museum, respectively. These features are revealing as much for what they tell us about nineteenth-century American interest in parks and cultural institutions as for the insight they give about the values and intentions of the magazine.

Headlining the January issue of 1871, for example, is an illustrated feature on Philadelphia's Fairmont Park by Newton Crane. From the opening paragraph it is clear that the purpose of this exposé is to promote the idea of the public park:

> It is a healthy sign for the body politic when cities begin to estimate their relative importance by the size of their lungs. Our cities have grown rich and large with a rush, and too many of them are, in consequence, abnormally developed and positively ugly. Little or no space has been reserved for public parks and gardens. (1:226)

With eloquent descriptions of the various features and highpoints of the 2700-acre park as well as a history of its founding and development, *Scribner's* makes a strong case for a park in every city. On one hand, the article stresses how the beauty of parks such as Fairmont provide a place of spiritual uplift for city dwellers. The article also impresses on the reader the restorative qualities of "large urban playgrounds" which help to sustain the physical and mental health of citizens. In addition, fresh air and open space, the article claims, encourages virtuous behavior and good citizenship. As Crane writes, "more and more people of the city are pressing out of the dusty streets and stifled ways in search of Nature, thinking if they but seize her skirts or touch the hem of her garments, some virtue will be imparted to them." (226).[41]

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[41] As recent cultural histories such as Wybynski's *A Clearing in the Distance* show, Victorians had an enormous interest in nature and firmly believed that contact with it was both morally therapeutic and spiritually fulfilling. Indeed, the creation of public parks was part of a larger cultural movement of the time which witnessed the great popularity of American landscape artists such as Frederic Church and Albert Bierstadt and saw hordes of urban evacuees regularly weekend at such wonderlands of nature as Niagara Falls, the Hudson River valley, and the New England mountains and seacoast. By regularly partaking of Nature, Victorian Americans hoped to counteract the affects of urbanization and industrialization. In "touching the hem of Nature's garments," Victorian Americans sought both physical and spiritual health and hoped to return meaning and a sense of order to their lives.

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Emphasizing the civilizing and vitalizing effects of Fairmont Park are the numerous idyllic illustrations which present images of a genteel preserve far removed from the pressures of urban life. The lead illustration, for example, depicts a tranquil wooded scene by the Schuylkill River, where a family is picnicking. To the left of this party, a couple leisurely strolls arm in arm, while to the far right one sees a large group of people either engaged in conversation or gazing at the river's placid surface [Figure 7]. Other illustrations show city dwellers enjoying their free time in a variety of pastoral settings and healthful activities such as strolling across open fields, driving a horse and buggy along a wooded drive, cooling themselves before a fountain, or boating on the Wissahickon river.

In scenes such as these, one senses, as John F. Sears writes, the role of parks as providing "escape from the anxieties (and comforts) of everyday life; freedom from ordinary social relationships, hierarchies, and restraints ... playfulness and a feeling of liberation" (117). Sears suggests that what city dwellers (and we might add *Scribner's* large numbers of urban readers) seem to need respite from most of all is modernity itself. Urban parks such as Fairmont, as Sears explains, provided an outlet from "the overcrowding, dirt, disorder, and unhealthiness of the modern city and the stress caused by these conditions" (117).[42]

Despite the many images in *Scribner's* feature depicting scenes of harmony and calm which seamlessly conflate modernity with a preindustrial past, the reader learns that the maintenance of peace and order within Fairmont Park is not to be taken for granted. The text, for example, claims that controlling the use of the park and its visitors is a matter of great concern and effort:

[42] In *No Place of Grace*, T.J. Jackson Lears famously describes the ambivalence of "old-stock Northeastern elites" as they confronted modern life in its increasingly rationalized, industrialized, and capitalistic form. His term for this ambivalence is "antimodernism."

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> the park authorities provide a cordon of policemen who warn away intruders from the entrances and minister to the wants of the pleasure party. The efforts of the Commissioners in this respect are indicative of the light in which they regard the relation of the people to the park. They have thoughtfully sought to furnish to the masses of the people every facility of access to their property, and have only imposed such restraints to their enjoyment of it as were necessary to prevent unwarranted license. (231)

As this passage suggests, the bourgeois, middle-class project to provide retreats for physical regeneration and spiritual uplift in parks such as Fairmont inevitably required constant policing and controlling of those who had yet to embrace Victorian values.[43]

As Lawrence Levine writes, the sudden interest in parks, libraries, symphony halls, museums, and genteel magazines after the Civil War was tied to the "sacralization" of high culture in which certain activities came to denote and promote refinement, while promising social control.[44] As Levine explains, during an era marked by rapid industrialization, urbanization, and increased immigration, the middle and upper classes "were convinced that maintaining and disseminating pure art, music, literature, and drama would create a force for moral order and help to halt the chaos threatening to envelop the nation" (190). In both text and images, *Scribner's* feature on Fairmont Park illustrates Levine's claim well. One of over hundreds like it to appear in the magazine, the feature evidences that genteel escape and self-

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[43] The need to control the unruly in order to preserve the park as a place of contemplation and order was originally theorized by the father of American Landscape Architecture, Frederick Law Olmsted. To help remedy the ills of urban degeneration, Olmsted conceived of and promoted the idea of parks as providing a necessary antidote to the city. In his effort to reduce the stress of an increasingly industrial and urban society by providing publicly accessible open spaces, fresh air, and tranquility, Olmsted simultaneously sought to reform society. Parks, he believed, would not only refine the taste of the middle classes, but would tame the unruly passions of the "dangerous classes." See Wybynski's *A Clearing in the Distance*.

[44] Levine argues that prior to the war distinctions between cultural forms were not sharply delineated. Viewing Shakespearean drama, reading novels, attending operas and visiting museums curated by innovative showmen such as Charles Wilson Peale and P.T. Barnum, for example, were cultural experiences simultaneously popular and elite. "That is (they were) attended both by large numbers of people who derived great pleasure from it and experienced it in the context of their normal everyday culture, and by smaller socially and economically elite groups who derived both pleasure and social confirmation from it" (86). As the century progressed, however, a dichotomy emerged between serious and frivolous cultural experiences brought about by leaders of the middle and upper classes, who wished to not only distinguish themselves from the "vulgar" masses, but to insulate themselves from the "vulgar" aspects of modern America generally.

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improvement worked hand-in-hand with social control as the central aims of the genteel endeavor.

Another illustration of the magazine's conscious attempt to promote cultural enrichment while policing the lower classes is its appraisal of Boston's Public Library. Like an earlier feature on New York's Mercantile library, this article connects elite forms of reading with entrée into the rarified—and thus highly desired, albeit restricted—world of cultivation and refinement. In discussing the library's decision to remain a popular library, its author acknowledges that, according to "editors, librarians, lecturers, and other observers—the average intellectual taste and capacity of the great masses is very low" (3:155; Dec. 1871). Nonetheless, the philosophy of the library, which the editors of *Scribner's*—ever on the look-out for new conscripts—presumably endorsed, is to offer the fiction of "third and forth rate story-tellers" (155) in the hopes that readers may eventually turn to first-rate classics. Offering such material is better than nothing, the author explains, "for the self-education power of the mind is more likely to lead readers out of the ruts of common novel-reading than any deprivation of the power to gratify an inherent love of fiction" (155). As its feature on the Boston Public Library suggests, *Scribner's Monthly* was aware of the vast array of potential readers for their publication to win over and redeem from the perceived ill effects of "common" reading. Accordingly, *Scribner's* marketed itself as a periodical of taste and high culture. To further distinguish itself, it denigrated rival media forms such as "dime" novels, romance literature (associated with women), theatrical productions, and newspapers as inferior and even dangerous.[45]

[45] As mentioned, a frequent target of vitriol were "dime" novels and other products of "third and forth rate story-tellers." In "What Our Boys Are Reading" (15: 681-685; March 1878), Holland worried that "periodical literature for boys" (685), which "can be easily obtained, and easily concealed" (681), are being read "not only among the idle and vicious boys in great cities, but also among school-boys whose parents are careful about the

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Another submission shedding light on *Scribner's* self-acknowledged role as one of America's leading cultural custodians determined to both cultivate and regulate society is J. R. G. Hassard's "An American Museum of Art" (illustrated by William H. Beard), a fantastical proposal for the design of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (2: 409-415; Aug. 1871). Though never given serious consideration, Hassard's central innovation for the newly founded (though not yet built) museum was to include an underground passageway as the entry to the main building:

> Entering the Museum from the Park, we find, somewhere near the Eighth Avenue wall, the opening of a wide and well-ventilated tunnel.... On either side stands colossal stone Figures: Ignorance, with threatening aspect, and Superstition, with repulsive mien, barring the avenue to aesthetic culture. Passing these grim giants, we find ourselves in an irregular and slightly tortuous subterranean roadway.... In the obscurity of this passage symbolical of the rude origin of art, huge craven forms of beasts glare upon us from the shelving rock. The whole way is lined with figures, typical of the difficulties to be overcome before the student enters to the real enjoyment comprehension of the beautiful. In the distance is seen a light ante-chamber, where another colossal Figure, a benign old man, who may represent perhaps the guardian genius of the palace, sits by a staircase, surrounded with fragments of ancient armor.... A tablet of stone bears the names of the founders of the Museum, and beneath it Time lies sleeping—a delicate intimation of the immortality of fame which will reward the gift of a thousand dollars or so to the Museum. (1:413)

Hassard suggests that attaining access to art and culture should not be a simple matter. Thus, before reaching the entrance of the museum proper, his design shows several horrific exhibits, windy corridors, and natural formations that retard the progression of visitors. The long entrance passageway is filled with fearsome images that serve as warnings for failing to

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influences brought to bear on their children" (685). *Scribner's* also frequently lashed out against newspapers. In the "Morals of Journalism," for example, the editor writes: "Murders, suicides, seductions, adulteries, burglaries, thefts, scandal—all disagreeable and disgraceful things—detailed histories of events which appear to prurient tastes and a morbid desire for coarse and brutal excitements—are not these the leading material of a great multitude of our daily papers?" (492). In "Theaters and Theater-going" (9:501-2; Feb. 1875), the editor, while arguing that "the stage is better than it was" (501), urges potential ticket-buyers to utililize discrimination in choosing which shows to see so as to help theaters "build up a pure taste" (502).

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embrace the civilizing process. Most clearly, Hassard's passageway suggests that refinement and culture are accoutrements to be achieved through the Victorian values of hard work and perseverance.

In a telling image implying that refinement is distinguishable by physiognomy, and arguably by class difference, the entry to the museum is initially blocked by hunched-over sub-human figures identified as Ignorance and Superstition [Figure 8]. These carved giants, I believe, can be read in two ways. On one hand, they represent the great strides Victorian Americans have made on behalf of "Culture" and "Progress" and project an even greater future so long as the current cultural custodians in charge ("the benign old men") continue to have their sway. On the other hand, the figures represent the people the Trustees of the Metropolitan Museum are especially out to refine—presumably the lower, uneducated classes of America. The grotesqueness of these two statues and the fact that they are sculpted of stone suggests a more probable reading—that certain people are beyond redemption and should be viewed with suspicion.

Another interesting feature of Hassard's article is the suggestion that hard work and study are not the only ways to achieve entry into the hallow halls of culture. By donating money, "a gift of a thousand dollars or so to the Museum" (416), one can be assured of making one's name as immortal as any great work of art housed in the museum. Though the proposal was never considered by the Trustees of the Museum, it sheds light on Hassard's view—and by extension the view of the magazine in which he is published—on how the attainment of culture is achieved and who it is for: either those who will work for it or those who will pay for it, preferably, a combination of the two.

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Identification with power, as Hassard's museum proposal points out, implies its opposite: the identification of those who do not deserve or have not yet earned this right to power, the "non-civilized peoples." In the case of *Scribner's*, this would be the ethnic "other" or agitating "radical," both constructed as "un-American." Like other genteel periodicals of its day, the magazine quite clearly depicted a world in which educated, propertied Anglo-Saxon males dominate. Accordingly, its editors sought to quantify difference and regulate disruption in an attempt to maintain a hierarchical, and thus harmonious, society.

Numerous immigrant groups, often recklessly caricatured, were leading targets for classification and containment, generally depicted as naturally, and thus permanently, subordinate to well-established whites. Depictions of Germans, for example, regularly lampooned their features, speech, and behavior. This is especially true in the cartoons in the "Bric a Brac" sections which closed each monthly issue. In one sketch entitled "Candor" (12:768; Sept. 1876), the obtuseness of the Germans is emphasized in the depiction of a tailor assessing his work on a client whose jacket is obviously too large and his pants too short, suggesting sloppy work.

Oblivious to his lack of talent in his chosen field, the Bavarian tailor egregiously misadvises his client: "Ell, to dell you de troot, de goat fits you schplendid, but de pants is yust a drifle too long" [Figure 9]. Though this particular cartoon suggests that, with patience and understanding, German immigrants might earn a respectable place in the democratic experiment, the more explicit meaning is that in the march of progress (denoted by orderliness and high intelligence), the Anglo Saxons were far out in front.

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In the pages of *Scribner's*, the images of the Irish are even more derogatory and dehumanizing. In "A Good Sign" (13:431; Jan. 1877), for example, a young Irish boy, resembling a simian in rags, rejoices over a prize discovery: a cigar butt. The young boy trumpets: "Eh golly! Biznes mus be pickin' up when folks kin chuck away chunks of cigar like this. A real Henry Clay too!" Also regular staples are Irwin Russell's admittedly artful parodies mocking Irish foolery and political corruption. In "The Fools of Killogue" (18: 950-952; Oct. 1879), for example, a regent named Brian Rhua (red-haired Brian) wishes to provide roadways throughout his fictionalized Irish kingdom. When a community in Killogue hears that their beloved pasture will be made into a throughway for outsiders, their representative, Patsy Doolan, informs the King not to bother bringing a construction crew as a recent flood has left the area under water. After many years, the Irish King grows suspicious of this claim, but, when his agent seeks to find out the truth, the townspeople of Killogue play another effective trick. As the king's agent reports:

> Oi niver say wht loike sence Oi was borrn, as Oi saw there. Wan man was chaining up his cat to kaper he form jumping in the river, w'u'd you belave it? Ohters was blowin' their breath at the sun, to make the weather cooler.... And as for that felly we mit, Patsy Doolan, what geve us the false shtory ov the wathre roising, he was the biggest foool av all; for he was paling his praties afore he biled 'em! (951)

Believing they indeed are insane, the tale ends with the King insisting that such fools would be ideal members of Parliament—"and that was the first toime that fools was iver thought iligible for office" (951). An allegorical assault against Tammany Hall, illustrating Holland's and his editors' on-going concern with Irish-led "mob" rule, this parody is merely one of many. In another cartoon, "Patsy" returns, this time as a low-jawed tramp looking for work, who stands before a sign that reads "Pat Agency Upstairs." With a glint of optimism, the

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tramp mutters, "Pat Agency! That's a quare name onyhow—I wondher if he's a Tipperary man" [Figure 10].[46]

In *Scribner's* pages, attention was also paid to the Chinese, whose appearance in America was largely owing to their willingness to work in service and manual-labor jobs, unwanted by established Americans. In articles such as "A Plea for Chinese Labor" and "Our Labor-system and the Chinese," the advantages and disadvantages of allowing large numbers of Chinese into America were regularly debated in the magazine throughout the 1870s, the decade when immigration from that nation had reached its peak (and, not incidently, just prior to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882). In "Chinese Skilled Labor," the relative merits of the Chinese are compared to other immigrants:

> We are told that we were fortunate that many Germans came with money, unlike the Irish who have served to largely fill our prisons and reformatories and to introduce into the political system of our large cities the worst features of European mobocracy .... The Chinese ... are a totally different race altogether ... popular superstition defines them as a race filthy and rat-eating, the truth is that while they are excessively unclean in their private domestic arrangements, they are scrupulously neat in their personal appearance. (2:68; Sept. 1871)

Scribner's attempt to clear the air in regards to the "truth" about the Chinese by replacing "popular superstition" with further stereotyping turns increasingly malodorous when the author describes Chinese women as "the dirtiest people conceivable and the effect which a

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[46] Another xenophobic article, entitled "American Irish and American Germans," demonstrated the Victorian fear of "race suicide," the belief that the increase of foreign immigration was threatening the racial balance and domination of American Anglo-Saxons. This allegedly "scientific" article points to the "fact" that a real risk of Irish and German overpopulation exists, owing to the "comparative fecundity" of these two immigrant groups. Arguing that, for the first time, scientists have in their possession "solid" statistical information to make such a study legitimate, the essay notes that since 1831 "the Irish people have maintained a rate of increase unusual in the history of Europe." Germans, the article explains, are not far behind. Such fecundity, the article points out, is apparently the result of the "great physical vigor" of these races which causes the "lower classes both of Ireland and of Germany" to be regularly pressed for their means of subsistence. The paper concludes that "these facts are so notorious, and the rapid multiplication of the Irish and Germans has been so uniformly accepted by economists and writers on population as due to the lower standard of life and the want of self-restraint among these common people" (10:786-790; Oct. 1875).

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slatternly woman will produce on a house over which she has jurisdiction is too well known to need comment." The xenophobic article concludes with back-handed praise that justifies the Chinese presence in America for *Scribner's* readers, but does little to improve their treatment by white Americans. The author claims that, in consideration of other ethnic groups, the "new element should be welcomed and sustained ... they are accustomed to be governed and to have no word in the laws or their execution, they have only a desire to be allowed freedom to pursue their own avocation ... The advent of 'the Heathen Chinee' is the best solution to the labor problem" (68-70).[47] Willing to stay out of government—unlike the Irish—and accept low wages without organizing, an enlarged Chinese workforce, in the 1870s, was highly appealing, apparently, to American Victorians (a situation that would soon change).

Further demonstrating the magazine's investment in the racial "science" of the day is an illustrated feature entitled "Savage Man," which discusses the Anglo-Saxons' unparalleled contributions to civilization as well as their physical and mental superiority [Figures 11-12]. Upon analyzing and depicting a wide variety of ethnic types and "migratory" races (including "the Celts," the "Scythians and Finns," and the "Semitic races"), the article draws the following foregone conclusion:

> The white races may, without conceit, regard themselves as being the highest type of humanity as we see it to-day. Their pre-eminence is attested no less by their straight and regular features, and their superior muscular strength and endurance, than by their higher intelligence and refinement; and though beauty of form and lineaments, even according to our standard, is not wanting

[47] Throughout the 1870s, African-Americans, too, were also regularly denigrated, particularly in cartoons and Plantation myth fiction which lampooned their dialect, lack of education, and apparent lack of intelligence. In an editorial entitled "Christianity and Color," the magazine even chastises the manner in which blacks practiced Christianity claiming that "the religious life of the Negro is purely emotional" and lacking "morality." The editorial concludes with the suggestion: "much as the negro needs intellectual education, he needs moral education more."

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> amongst other races, still it attains its highest development as the expression of the 'supreme Caucasian mind.' (161)

Why a magazine of high culture expended so much energy in racial comparison is a complex issue. Certainly its impetus relates in part to a surge of immigration into the 1870s as well as the recent emancipation of former slaves that seemed to threaten elite white dominance. Furthermore, as George Stocking writes, though theories of polygeny and environmental determinism had long explained the alleged inferiority of mostly non-Caucasians, the massive rise in free citizens not fitting the raditional stereotype of the American apparently began to challenge the "myth that 'civilization' was associated with the triumph of liberal principles and the equal freedom of all human individuals" (230). In response, Victorian spokespersons looked for a rational accounting for cultural differences that would take them off the hook for continued racial discrimination and other forms of oppression. As "Savage Man" shows, this rationale often took the form of "science," used to document that the apparent backwardness of new arrivals and freedmen was innate and inequality the fair result of their faulty mental, physical, and/or moral development [Figures 11-12].

In addition to promulgating racist attitudes (which, as Stocking writes, were "metaphorically extendable" to gender and class), *Scribner's* also regularly promoted the view that educated, propertied white men were rightly anointed to control the world of politics, finance, and publishing. White, middle-class women, on the other hand—so the magazine purported—were responsible for keeping America pure and moral via influence from the home. Any attempts by women to strive for greater power outside of these set guidelines—which many feminists of the time were actually doing in their fight to achieve equality and suffrage—were vigorously decried by *Scribner's* editor-in-chief.

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In "Three Pieces of the Woman Question" (2: 316-17; July 1871) Holland notes that while the national legislature proposes laws based on the "highest and purest principles," these statutes are rarely executed in practice. It is women, Holland feels, who should play a large role in seeing that issues of public morals and civil policy are enacted via their influence in the home. But, in answer to the question "is it kind and courteous to men—for women to demand an equal or a determining voice in the establishment of a national policies?" the response is firmly negative:

> As the facts are, we confess our inability to find in it any comfort or support for those who seek for the revolution under consideration. On the contrary, we find that the ballot as it stands to-day, with its privileges, responsibilities, and limitations, secures to woman complete protection in the enjoyment of revenues which are proved to be immense, all drawn from land and sea by the hands of men whose largess testifies alike of their love and their munificence. (317)

In "Sex and Wages" (1: 107-108; Nov. 1870) Holland further clarifies what the rights and roles of women in America should be. In response to an article in *The Christian Union*, which argued "that when a woman does the same work as a man, she should have the same pay," Holland vehemently disagrees. "The words look fair, and sound well, and seem good; yet it somehow happens that intuitive feeling has very little to do in settling the knotty problems of the world, and nothing at all to do in settling this" (107). He advances his argument against equal wages for women by noting how "always ... in all countries ... the average wages of women have been lower than those of men." The reason for this, Holland argues, is not based on "intuition" but "fact." For him, a man gets paid more because "justice determines that man, as the most capable and valuable laborer, shall receive most for his time" (108).

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Holland's conservative view towards the rights of women paralleled his view of the rights of labor and the poor. Adhering to the Spenserian notion that the world as it is was based on natural justice, the editor generally viewed the poor as "deadbeats" and the demands of labor as "irrational" and "reckless," especially when their calls for higher wages and shorter workdays were accompanied by threats of violence.

Beginning with the panic of 1873, the 1870s were a decade of constant economic crisis that especially affected unskilled workers and the urban proletariat. Yet despite widespread unemployment and a rise in the number of street beggars, Holland was adamant in his opposition to public relief measures. In "The Dead-Beat Nuisance" (12: 593; Aug. 1876), the editor goes so far as to question the legitimacy of the claims of the indigent. "What we give," he informs his readers, "goes for rum, as a rule, and we not only foster idleness, but we nourish vice and crime." Two years later in "Once More the Tramp" (15: 883; April 1878), he asks why "vigorous measures" are not taken to rid the streets of this "offensive, dirty, disgraceful set" by setting them to "quarrying stone."

It is significant to note that Holland's hostility to the poor and rebellious members of the working class increased as the decade wore on. For example, in an early editorial called "Strike, but Hear" (4: 491: August 1872), the editor responds to a strike by insisting that the American people "sympathize with every effort of the laborer to better his condition." In civil terms, he argues that the problem with increasing wages "beyond which it is not safe ... to go" is that general prices for "the necessaries of life" would go up, especially real estate. In his view, these increased costs would hurt the laborer directly, while "The rich would really suffer very little by it." The best solution would be for "labor and capital" to be "mutually dependent friends." This latter idea also comes out in numerous essays

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commissioned by Holland over the next several years including Edward Crapsey's "The Anthracite Problem" (1:647-654; April 1871), Amasa Walker's "Labor and Capital in Manufactures (4:460-465; August 1872) and Charles Barnard's "Some Experiments in Cooperation" (12: 99-107; May 1876). However, as labor unrest continued and became increasingly prone to violence, Holland's gloves came off. In 1878, shortly after the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, the editor commissioned an article by William Sumner on the ill effects of socialism ("Socialism" 16:887-893; Oct. 1878), which, the author argues, can only breed increased "shiftlessness, laziness, extravagance, intemperance and imprudence" (888). Shortly before this piece, Holland had expressed his own hostility to socialism and labor agitators, especially those who organized protests and strikes. In "Our 'Commune,'" he laments the demise of the American work ethic, and tries to pinpoint those responsible:

> That we have a "proletariat" there can now be no question: a class that has lost its good ambitions, lost its pride of citizenship, lost its sense of political responsibility, lost its industry, lost its hope, and is ready to live on what it can get. The tramps and dead-beats of the country and the city form the lowest layer of the proletariat; but there is a still larger class, hanging about half-way between them and respectability that are far more dangerous than they. They are men with brains still active, but with hands tied by circumstances, and tied so tightly that they grow desperate and are ready to be led into desperate schemes by the ingenious demagogues who undertake to manage them. (16: 584; Aug. 1878)

Scoffing at the notion that "a large mass of men (have) come to believe that they are oppressed by the rich," Holland proposes that laborers simply endure their poverty peacefully.

Not wishing to alienate the working-class entirely, a small percentage of whom also read his magazine, Holland would at times speak out against the "moneyed classes." In "The Capitalist and the Laborer," for example, he acknowledges "the notorious facts" associated with the capitalist, specifically

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> those which relate to the betrayal of trusts, the watering of stocks, gambling in grain and other necessaries of life, the wrecking of insurance companies, the bursting of savings-banks through stealing and reckless management, the running of railroads in the interest of directors rather than in that of stockholders and the public, etc., etc. (16: 896; Oct. 1878)

To help correct the situation, Holland calls upon the rich to set a better example "in the management of their trusts and in the conduct of their business" (896). In attacking both labor and capital, *Scribner's* editor had little patience for any individual or group that wished to disrupt the free play of the marketplace. Holland, after all, was a liberal in the classical sense, who accepted the laws of laissez-faire economics in the spirit of Adam Smith, calling for external interference only as a last resort.

Holland's "liberal" philosophy extended to his view of the country as a whole. He believed America was destined to progress materially as long as individuals acted morally and respected the rights of those deserving regard. Looked at from a modern perspective, a central flaw in his philosophy was that his magazine's championing of citizens' rights extended primarily to middle and upper-middle-class Anglo-Saxon Protestant males. Such a view of society was delimiting, leaving out the voices and concerns of women, immigrants, the poor, and non-Caucasians. In addition, his optimistic faith in the certainty and universality of moral values, the inevitability of American progress, and the improving functions of high culture produced a magazine that sometimes overlooked the darker side of American life, such as the troubles of the less fortunate and the price of progress, environmental, psychological, or otherwise. The promising vision of America produced by *Scribner's*, though largely believed and trusted by its readers for several decades, was inevitably a biased social construction based on the genteel values of its creators and their desire to sell the magazine.

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As we look at subsequent issues of the magazine into the 1880s and 90s, it is important to note that the ideology of the editorial staff was not stagnant, but shifted with the times. For example, while Holland grew increasingly intolerant of labor unrest in the 70s, he continued to believe that both capital and labor shared part of the blame. However, by the mid-1880s, the magazine (then under the helm of Richard Watson Gilder) openly began to lay most of the blame for strikes such as the Haymarket Affair of 1886 at the feet of labor agitators. Similarly, while *Scribner's* caricatured various racial groups including the Chinese, the Irish, and Slavic throughout the 1870s (mostly in the back-page 'Bric-a-Brac' section), within a decade, the magazine came to regularly express the view that "new" immigrants were a serious threat to the national fabric.[48] Representations of the plight of African Americans also deteriorated in the pages of *Scribner's-Century*. Although African Americans throughout the 1870s were also carcicatured in cartoons by Irwin Russell, Thomas Dunn English, and others, as late as 1880 Holland, in his editorials, would still demand that the South treat the freedman with dignity and justice.[49] By 1890, however, the magazine had become the leading purveyor of Plantation Myth fiction, which, in essence, sought to establish a racially segregated society and to reinterpret the southern rebellion as heroic. Women, too, would lose standing in the magazine. As the next chapter will show, writings by proto-feminist women were to be found in abundance in the magazine during the 1870s (despite the editorial staff's decidedly traditional views regarding the roles of the sexes), but would all but disappear by the 1880s. Though talented writers such as Kate

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[48] In a *Century* article entitled "Immigration by Passport" (35: 791-799; March 1888) T. T. Munger argues for the need to severely regulate immigration. Immigrants, Mungers writes, are largely responsible for the "social and political condition which now so obtrudes itself upon public attention,—anarchism, lawlessness, hoodlumism, pauperism, boycottism, labor strikes, and general violation of personal rights such as the Anglo-Saxon race has not witnessed since the Magna Charta" (798).

[49] See "Shadow of the Negro" (20: 304-305; June 1880).

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Chopin, Grace King, Mary Wilkins Freeman would occasionally be published in the magazine up until the turn of the century, their work would often be edited and reworked (or flat out rejected) to fit the editorial staff's conservative agenda and former contributors such as Rebecca Harding Davis, Frances Hodgeson Burnett, and Constance Fenimore would have to find other outlets to get their views across.

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CHAPTER II – THE LADIES WHO LAUNCH: *SCRIBNER'S* 'SCRIBBLING' WOMEN AND THE MAKING OF A BEST-SELLING MAGAZINE

"It is unconventional, but there is no other way"[50]

In chapter one I have concentrated on how a magazine sought to forge a vision of America that reflected the views and values of its editors. Although not a conscious attempt to forcibly impose notions of hierarchy, order, and domination by educated white men of status, the product of *Scribner's* editors clearly promulgated these positions nonetheless. However, to simply disparage genteel editors for their conservative views (which is what most literary critics and historians beginning with George Santayana have done), however, only renders an incomplete understanding of the complex field of cultural production known as Victorian-era publishing. As regards *Scribner's Monthly*, several important facts are too often overlooked. On one hand, by discussing the merits of fiction and showcasing the work of American writers, the magazine played a crucial role in shaping the tastes and interests of its large and growing readership. By offering American literature for nationwide distribution on a regular basis, it also helped forge a reliable marketplace and income base for contributors. In essence, by requiring written material of merit, by demanding specifically American contributions, and by paying fair market prices for such work, *Scribner's Monthly* helped define a quantifiable commodity for literary producers and consumers. A crucial component in the professionalization of fiction writing, such product standardization

[50] Anice Barholm on the need to curry favor with a member of Parliament on behalf of Sammy Craddock, a retired collier who lost his life's savings in a bank failing (Burnett's *That Lass O' Lowries*, 305)

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enormously advanced the cause of American literature (while also instituting certain restrictions).[51]

As this chapter will show, *Scribner's Monthly*'s success in fostering American writers and helping to establish literary genres (such as Regionalism and High Realism) as well as generating an audience for these writings was intricately linked to, and dependent on, the early and sustained contributions of American women writers.[52] By looking at the work of six female contributors of the 1870s—Frances Hodgson Burnett, Rebecca Harding Davis, Mary Mapes Dodge, Gail Hamilton (Mary Abigail Dodge), Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and Constance Fenimore Woolson—I emphasize the fact that the fiction in *Scribner's* during the 1870s was largely written by women. Further, it was their writing which, by and large,

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[51] While *Scribners-Century* clearly played an important role promoting a national literature, my research shows that the magazine came to devalue "woman's fiction" (generally understood as sentimental romances, but also including topical works with a feminist edge), preferring relatively non-controversial, Realist works largely by men. Recalling the case of Harriet Spofford, a once prolific romance author during the 60s and 1870s who, in succeeding decades, was unable to find outlets for her work, Frances Hodgson Burnett, after a brilliant debut with *Scribners-Century*, essentially turned to the writing of children's fiction to espouse her feminist and social views after *Through One Administration* caused enormous editorial controversy. Kate Chopin, a *Century* discovery, also came to find that her more feminist pieces were unwanted by this magazine. Being the primary gateways to the reading public, genteel magazines also inhibited the production of experimental and naturalistic fiction. Both politically conservative and adhering to the *virginibus* maxim (print nothing to offend a virgin), these magazines discouraged the publication and consequent mass distribution of any material that presumably would offend WASP sensibilities (Tomisch 121). *Scribners-Century* itself notoriously turned down works such as Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and George Washington Cable's legend of the violent African slave Bras Coupe' (which the author later included in *The Grandissimes*).

[52] Despite the fact that Dr. Josiah G. Holland, sustained a long and vehement crusade opposing netw roles and rights for women such as the right to vote, the right to take part in political affairs, and the right to earn wages equable to men, the fact—one might say the irony—remains that his magazine would most likely not have thrived (never mind survived) were it not for this pool of gifted (and some admittedly less than gifted) writers. For, at the time of the magazine's founding in 1870, the literary field suffered from a dearth of household name native fiction writers who could draw and captivate an audience (Holland, like Harriet Beecher Stowe, was an exception to this much discussed public fact; Bret Harte and Mark Twain were just beginning their respective literary ascents). Adding to this editorial dilemma was the creative meltdown of New England's aging literati including Emerson, Lowell, Whittier, Longfellow, and Holmes. Although highly revered, the post-war production of these writers had come to a virtual standstill. Limiting the field yet further were the exclusive gentleman agreements other genteel editors (especially the Harper brothers) had for the exclusive publishing rights of popular English writers such as Dickens, Trollope, and George Eliot. Locked out of signing English luminaries, Holland made a tour of England in a desperate search for mid-range caliber contributors for his new magazine. His trip could only net him the highly didactic writer of religious sentiments, the Reverend George MacDonald, and the flowery romancer Miss Oliphant, writers who, by themselves, could hardly sustain an American magazine seeking a nationwide audience (John 61)

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helped insure the success of the magazine in a nation increasingly populated by consummate fiction readers, both men and women.[53] In addition, contrary to persisting views of American literature, which (despite much brilliant revisionary work on the 1850s and 60s) continue to characterize the 1870s literary scene as either overrun by "the strong current of the older type of romanticism, the lady's book type of sentimentalized fiction" (Pattee 249) or, reductively, as the formative period of Howells, James, and Twain, whose powers would not come to full fruition until the following decade, I wish to replace such shopworn assessments with a more accurate critical view. Specifically, I demonstrate in microcosm that the contributions of a high percentage of *Scribner's* 'scribbling' women are worthy of renewed attention largely owing to that most debated of academic topics: literary excellence. Marked at times by sentimentalism (which, somewhat along the lines of Jane Tompkins, I show is neither intrinsically "good" nor "bad"), this writing generally exhibited exceptional technical polish, enormous versatility in a variety of genres, impressive depth and breadth of characterization, and bold stylistic innovations. Further warranting recovery and re-appraisal is the way in which these women handle material, contradicting the assumptions of the day, namely that political and socially-conscious themes and the "virtues" of Realism such as "admirable vigour and heartiness, a direct manly tone"[54] were solely the province of men.[55]

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[53] Thirty-five of fifty-eight serials and short stories appearing in *Scribner's* first two years (1870-1872) were written by women.

[54] Thomas Wentworth Higginson's description of the nineteenth-century English prose he most admired (qtd. in Nettles 6).

[55] The debate over "woman's fiction" is by now so familiar to Americanists that its history—unlike the new issues this history raises—needs but cursory review. Ignoring works such as Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home: Who'll Follow* (1839), Fanny Fern's *Ruth Hall* (1855), and Elizabeth Stoddard's *The Morgesons* (1862), the first modern school of critical thought closely aligned woman's fiction of the Victorian era to the cult of "True Womanhood." According to Barbara Welter, who defined the term, Victorian prescription demanded that women be morally and sexually pure, submissive to authority, and oblivious to public affairs. It further insisted that women safeguard, nurture, and educate the family, and by extension, the nation, from the domestic sphere, which was their natural province. In keeping with their prescribed roles, women writers, Welter argued, tended to write in popular forms such as the sketch, the familiar essay, tales, novels, and poetry, leaving supposedly more intellectually rigorous writing (such as sermons, orations, treatises, histories, and epics) to men. Drawing

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Sharing the same last name, though unrelated, Mary Mapes Dodge (1831-1905) and Gail Hamilton (born Mary Abigail Dodge, 1833-1896) epitomize the type of vigorous, variegated, and amusing writer needed to help found a nationally-distributed magazine. Their high energy, extreme intelligence, and general writing excellence earned both of these women enormous critical and popular esteem years before their affiliation with *Scribner's*, which the magazine both benefited from and enhanced. While Gail Hamilton was still in her twenties, for example, her essays and poetry captured the attention of Gamaliel Bailey, editor of the *National Era*. Moving to Washington, D.C. at his bequest, the young author became a regular contributor to the *Era* and other important journals including the *Congregationist* and

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on Welter's work, Ann Douglas in "The Literature of Impoverishment" and *The Feminization of American Culture* claimed that for women writers of the nineteenth century it was a "perpetual Mother's Day." Unable to take positions as public figures, unable to talk about politics, economics, and sex, and having only sentimentality to exploit, the first and second generation of women writers in America, Douglas argued, were a "sickly crew who wrote effusive prose and worse verse of dying babes and motherhood" ("The Literature" 4). Contra Welter and Douglas, the next wave of feminist historians argued persuasively against accepting the True Woman ideal as strict fact, emphasizing instead the creative literary forms domestic ideology engendered as well as the "power" of sentimentality. As Nina Baym explains, the domestic ideology "does not require that home be the only subject of representation, or that home be unreservedly exalted as earthly paradise. Many works of fiction by women were exciting adventure stories or exotic melodramas and many were sharply critical of homelife. The critique, however, rose from the conviction that the values presumably fostered by the home—affiliation, intimacy, and altruism—were at risk in American society because the home had neither support nor influence in the public sphere" ("The Rise of the Woman Author" 291). With Baym, Jane Tompkins argued that antebellum women writers successfully engaged readers on many levels (emotional, political, historical, and aesthetic), achieving "power and status" (123) within unique circumstances. According to her, it was by the important cultural work their writing *did* perform, that Victorian women should be judged. Revisionist approaches by critics such as Baym and Tompkins allowed for further important reappraisals of female writing. However, by centering attention on the "cultural work" of this literature, the question of genuine aesthetic merit and innovation was often omitted from the critical equation leaving it continuously susceptible to Douglas's charge of "impoverishment." As more recent critics such as Sharon Harris, Warren Joyce, and David S. Reynolds show, "woman's fiction" did in fact make significant literary advances, creatively borrowing, for example, from a range of genre conventions (which themselves, we must continually remind ourselves, are *post hoc* critical constructions) and disrupting modern notions of periodization by advancing Realist practices long before anyone had heard of Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and other so-called "fathers" of the genre. Still, as Reynolds in *Beneath the American Renaissance* writes, "much remains to be done to recover the social and linguistic dimensions of nineteenth-century women's literature" (337). Though Reynolds primarily cites women who wrote before the Civil War, his assessment holds true for female scribes of the 1870s as well. Long hidden in the pages of postbellum magazines, themselves not read because of the disfavor of very term genteel, are strong "Amazons" whose published works are stunning examples of vital literature in and above the fascinating cultural work they also perform.

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the *Atlantic*.[56] Her writings during this time marked the beginning of a ceaseless torrent of often highly controversial, feminist (though not suffragist) material that would ultimately fill over twenty-five volumes of work, including three book-length commentaries on women's issues, a novel, travel writing, children's stories, poetry, and articles on politics.

Working as an assistant editor on her father's magazines *The Working Farmer* and *The United States Journal* and later Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Hearth and Home,* Mary Mapes Dodge also learned the necessary skills of a professional wordsmith early in life. While involved in editing, her fictional submissions for children to *Riverside Magazine* and *Cornhill* were also well-received leading to a book contract for *The Irvington Stories* and the internationally famous (and still in print) *Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates: A Story of Life in Holland* (1865), a work which itself deserves renewed critical scrutiny for its reconstituting of gender roles, self-conscious Realist practices, and attention to nationalistic concerns. Between 1873-1905, Dodge also edited *St. Nicholas Magazine: Scribner's Illustrated Magazine for Boys and Girls* (later *St. Nicholas: An Illustrated Magazine for Young Folks,* 1881-1905). During her reign at what Anne Eaton calls "the most famous of all magazines for children" (278), Dodge touched the lives of millions of children and helped

[56] It was while living in the nation's capital that Mary Abigail Dodge, largely owing to the political content of her writing, began using the pen name Gail Hamilton. As Mary Kelley writes in *Private Lives, Public Stage*, using pseudonyms was common for women writers of the nineteenth century in order to protect their private lives, while allowing them the freedom to openly express their opinions in public. In the nineteenth century writing opinionated pieces on social and political issues was generally viewed as improper for ladies of the middle classes, thus a pseudonym was often necessary to retain a woman's feminine reputation amongst her friends, family and relatives. Gail Hamilton had more to worry about in regards to the personal repercussions of her public statements, however, than most women writers of her day. This is so owing to the extreme satire and wit of many of her pieces and due to the fact that she frequently criticized the ways of men and called attention to particular men or groups of men by name.

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determine the content and style of an enormous array of children's classics, making her one of the most significant literary figures (male or female) in world history.[57]

One of Mapes' most famous adult works was a humorous sketch entitled "Miss Malony on the Chinese Question," which first appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* in 1871 and was later anthologized by Mark Twain in his *Library of American Humor*. In this piece, Twain clearly recognized traits that marked his own writing including lively humor, vivid description, acute attention to detail, and expert handling of dialect. The latter quality is of particular interest when one considers that Twain is often given full credit for introducing the vernacular into American literature via Huckleberry Finn. As is evident from Dodge's piece, capturing spoken vernacular was a particular talent of women long before Twain's

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[57] It is helpful to note several other biographical parallels that bear on Hamilton's and Dodge's their work. Both authors were born to middle-class parents, who doted on their daughters and offered a good education. Dodge was taught at home by a governess; she learned several languages, music, and drawing. Her father James Jay Mapes also played a large and important role in her education. A Renaissance man in the style of Bronson Alcott, who achieved some renown (but little remuneration) as a "professor, painter, inventor, scientist, writer, editor, farmer, and agricultural reformer" (unpublished essay by Michael Joseph), Mr. Mapes encouraged Mary to read widely, to sketch, to sculpt, and even to set type and operate a hand press (skills traditionally reserved for male printing apprentices). Part of her schooling included being in the company of her father's frequent guests. These included the artists John and Emily Sartain, Samuel F. B. Morse, and Asher Durand, and authors such as Horace Greeley and Washington Irving (whose fiction had a strong influence on hers). Gail Hamilton's father, James Brown Dodge, was a successful farmer and her mother Hannah Stanwood was a teacher with a deep fondness for reading. Self-conscious about the loss of her sight in one eye due to an accident at age two and believing herself to be "surpassingly ugly, ugly in form—ugly in feature," Gail was nonetheless exceedingly bright, which her parents recognized by sending her to Ipswich Female Seminary. The best education available to young women at the time, the seminary offered a thorough immersion in liberal subjects including French, Latin, history and chemistry. Nonetheless, typical of other such seminaries, Ipswich was preeminently designed to prepare young ladies for domestic life. Hamilton, however, had other ideas. For an entirely different reason, but one that produced a similar streak of independence, Dodge would also learn the necessity of supporting herself. In 1851, at the age of twenty, Mary married a business associate of her father, the young lawyer and speculator William Dodge. The first years of marriage were happy ones for the Mapes—Mary gave birth to two boys and William's business thrived. In 1857, however, a collapse in the securities market occurred, leaving the family on the brink of bankruptcy. A few days later, William drowned himself in the Hudson River. Suddenly faced with supporting herself and two children, Dodge moved from New York City to an old farmhouse in Mapleridge. As her early biographer Lucia Gilbert Runkle writes, it was here that Mary decided to "take up her life again ... to rear and educate her boys as their father would have done; to gain a man's pay, yet to leave herself freedom and freshness to enter in to all her children's interests and pursuits" (280). As Runkle attests, Dodge had come to Maplebridge determined to become a successful writer without sacrificing her commitment to her family. That Dodge achieved her literary objective is evident to anyone even slightly familiar with children's literary history. What is far less known, however, is that this remarkable woman was also the author of a good deal of writing in a variety of adult genres. See also Susan R. Gannon's and Ruth Anne Thompson's *Mary Mapes Dodge*.

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masterpiece, a fact demonstrated in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Regionalist masterpiece *Oldtown Folks* (1869) as well.

Submitted to then assistant editor Richard Watson Gilder at the last second as "filler" when another contributor had failed to produce a promised piece, "Miss Malony" shows how a woman could be depended on not just to write expertly and artistically, but also on extremely short notice (a mark of professionalism that contrasts with the impression of "amateurism" frequently accorded women writers in the nineteenth century). Looking back on the origins of her extremely popular piece, Dodge wrote:

> With not an idea in my head, I sat for a while gazing vacantly into space, and then, perhaps because there was no possible connection between the task in hand and a quick-witted Irish cook we had, she flashed before my mental vision and persistently filled it, obscuring everything except the blank sheet and a miserable consciousness of Mr. Gilder waiting confidingly downstairs. What key of association brought to in the name of a Chinese servant of my sister, in San Francisco, is equally inexplicable —but in the imaginary by-play between these two characters the article took shape. The only difficulty was to write fast enough. When, an hour or so later, I carried it down to Mr. Gilder he tried to look pleased, but I have always felt that in time he must have shared my surprise at the public appreciation which it received. (Tutweiler 262)

Essentially, "Miss Malony On the Chinese Question" (1:350-352; Jan. 1871) is a dramatic monologue, entirely in dialect, from the point of view of an Irish servant. An irate cook, Miss Malony, recounts to a friend her experience working for her former mistress, who had the "audacity" to expect her to work with a newly hired Chinese servant named Fing Wing. As Miss Malony relates, in his new role, Fing Wing learned his duties by copying the actions of those around him, in particular, Miss Malony herself. When she took off her shoes while peeling potatoes, for example, Fing Wing would do the same. He also apparently noticed that whenever Miss Malony accepted groceries for her mistress, she helped herself first, ladling a scoop or two of "sugar, or flour, or tay" and "wrap(ping) it in paper and

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put(ting) it in me bit of a box tucked under the ironin' blankit the how it cuddent be boderin' anybody" (35). One day *in the presence of the mistress*, Fing Wing received a delivery of groceries and, lo and behold, he too

> takes out a sup o' sugar, an' a handful o' tay, an' a bit o' paper, an' I spaceless wid shurpirze, an' he the next minute up wid the ironin' blankit and pullin' out me box wid a show o' being sly to put them in. (351)

Realizing that Miss Malony had taught Fing Wing all her kitchen habits (including how to steal), the mistress glares at her and suggests she should be arrested, a proposition the Irish servant rejects:

> "You won't," says I. "I will," says she—and so it went till she give me such sass as I cuddent take from no lady—an' I give her warnin' an' left that instant, an' she a-pointin' to the doore." (352)

Though problematical in terms of racist stereotyping, this humorous sketch is impressive aesthetically. On one hand, Dodge uses a deft touch to propel her narration forward, without sacrificing a vividly rendered domestic scene. Also noteworthy is her use of the first person and accurate rendering of Irish dialect. Like the effect achieved by Twain in using the voice of Huck to convey a boy's view of the world, the power of Dodge's piece also derives from the narrator's "innocence." As with Huck, we hear only Miss Malony's side of the story and enter into it as her listener presumably does, though we are not fully "sold" on the reporting. In the case of Miss Malony, we cannot help but side with her Mistress, from whom this "innocent" has admittedly stolen [Figures 13 and 14].

Also striking about Dodge's sketch is her handling of a topic of national concern being debated in the political arena at the time as well as in the pages of *Scribner's Monthly* itself. During the decade leading up to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the magazine published over a dozen essays and editorials on this issue. As discussed in the previous

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chapter, essays such as "A Plea for Chinese Labor" and "Chinese Skilled Labor" generally viewed Chinese immigration as the best solution to a somewhat unfortunate situation. According to the typical *Scribner's* argument, America needed its immigrants to fill servile and hard labor positions. Yet, rather than rely too heavily on the ever-growing numbers of Irish wage-seekers, hiring Chinese help seemed an ideal solution for the scrubbing and building of America and counteracting Irish power. Believed to be socially malleable and apolitical (a position that would dramatically change as the decade progressed), the Chinese were thus to be welcomed, even as their personal habits and manners were considered inassimilable.

Demonstrating Dodge's support of this position, "Miss Malony" and its accompanying illustrations literally and visually enact WASP desires to supplant Irish power with a seemingly more benign labor force. By relying on racist stereotypes of the Irish and Chinese prevalent at the time, Dodge includes the usual justifications supporting such a development. Though reflecting the xenophobia that occasionally mars *St. Nicholas Magazine for Children* as well, her sketch nonetheless demonstrates the author's formidable literary skill in arguing a political position with wit and imagination. It also illustrates the important fact that during this decade some women were able to enter national debates on vital domestic issues and, presumably, influence public opinion.[58]

Another sketch exhibiting sharp wit and force of mind, a willingness to address topics typically reserved for men, and expert use of realistic detail and dialogue—though politically incorrect by today's standards—is Gail Hamilton's "Conference Wrong Side Out" ((1:423-

[58] Recognizing Dodge's political voice, of course, in no way excuses her willingness as a writer and editor to traffic in racial and ethnic stereotypes. Simultaneously, excluding certain women from a revised American literary canon for promulgating widely-held biases of the times would be to negate the powerful intellectual voices that were being heard in Victorian America, which, I believe, deserve our due attention as literary historians.

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428; Feb.1871). Indeed, given its somewhat conservative stance towards women, the essay would appear to have been written by a talented male satirist. Despite the masculine pen name attached to the piece, its force and style clearly suggests the author Van Wyck Brooks aptly called "a sort of Margaret Fuller watered down, and also peppered up."

Unlike most ardent feminists of her day, while arguing for women to hone their intelligence, to be courageous, and, most importantly, to be self-reliant, Hamilton took the conservative view that women should not be given suffrage. Instead, she argued that women should develop traditionally feminine virtues such as "moral superiority" as well as the "forceful intellect" associated with men, so as to enforce public change from the home. Simultaneously, Hamilton believed that men should allow women to develop their faculties and be willing to listen to the "weaker sex" on a wide variety of issues.

In "Conference Wrong Side Out" Hamilton wittily pursues her iconoclastic feminist position. The sketch depicts a woman's rights conference to be held in a local church, a novel event that has made the men leave town and the women exceedingly anxious: "The minister had gone to New York to marry his sister, the lawyer was off on circuit, the deacon was laid up at home with a sprained ankle, and the Conference was coming. What should we do?" Though on pins and needles, the women organizing the event are cheered with the prospect of fighting for suffrage. As Hamilton describes the matter, they are "fired with ambition, filled with plans and enthusiasm" until, that is, it is time "to proceed to business" (423).

After lengthy and "confused" discussion, the conference women unanimously decide that they will demand the right to vote in church. The narrator, however, satirically points out that this right is a foolish proposition considering that women generally always

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> sit in prayer-meeting as silent and meek as any subject race, to the annoyance of the free white males, who would like to have us take the burden off their shoulders by offering a few remarks at the Teachers' Meeting or the Sunday school Concert. But we won't. We prefer to sit still, and criticize their remarks after we go home. (423)

The narrator's point is that voting privileges are useless for those who lack the courage and training "to speak up."[59]

In mocking the proceedings of a local "woman's rights conference," Hamilton questions the advances made simply by achieving suffrage. Her point is that it is far more important for women to be sensible, strong-minded, and expressive first. This being said, she also adheres to the conservative position that politics be left to men, who have long been trained in such matters and are able to remain "calm and sensible in the face of chaos" (424). If these positions sound contradictory and self-defeating, it must be kept in mind that Hamilton herself was a potent voice in many political debates and served as a model of intellectual self-assurance and self-reliance for countless Victorian women, suffragists and anti-suffragists alike.[60]

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[59] In several ways "Conference Wrong Side Out" seems to intentionally recall the first Women's Convention of 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York. Organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott and others, this event was handicapped by the modesty and inaction of the woman attendees, that is, by the very products of injustice the conference was designed to protest. As Ellen Carol Dubois writes: "When faced with the task of composing a manifesto for the convention, the organizers, in Stanton's words, felt 'as helpless and hopeless as if they had been suddenly asked to construct a steam engine. Nor was any woman willing to chair the meeting, and the office fell to Lucretia Mott's husband.'" Apparently, "Conference Wrong Side Outside," in addition to expressing Hamilton's views in regards to women's suffrage, also demonstrates a strong historical awareness on the part of its author as well as an admirable consciousness as to her own role in the march of feminism. See Ellen Carol Dubois' *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1978).

[60] Gail Hamilton's "A Neighborly Call" (12:553-560; Aug. 1876) is a travel sketch that also demonstrates the stylistic flair of a professional writer and the philosophical insight of a woman of strong and well thought-out opinions. The piece opens with a call to arms, or rather to travel, that recalls the famous opening of Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, albeit from a feminist angle. Somewhat like Ishmael, who has had it with life in New York City and feels as though he is about to tip the hat of the next man he meets if he does not attain passage on the open sea, Hamilton's female narrator needs to escape her chaotic life via travel:

> When we were all young and lived at home in the country ... sometimes the hens would fly out of their coops untimely into the flower-beds or the kitchen-garden, because a careless hand had left the slide-door open; or the pigs would crowd out of a too fragile pen and root in among the beets, and strawberries, and sweet corn. And when the "hired man" had rushed to the rescue, armed with hoe,

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According to Nancy Walker in "Wit, Sentimentality, and the Image of Women in the Nineteenth Century," most Victorian Americans would have viewed the political satire of Mapes and Hamilton in "Miss Malony" and "Conference Wrong Side Out" as unusual for a female writer and even "unwomanly." Citing Twain's portrait of Emmeline Grangerford in *Huckleberry Finn*, Walker argues that the prevailing view of women in the nineteenth century was that they were "obsessed with morbidity" and given to "frailty, emotionalism, and consummate uselessness" (62). But, Walker adds, female humorists such as Fanny Fern, Caroline Kirkland, Frances Whicher, and Marietta Holley "waged a little-recognized but persistent war against that figure" (63). To this list must be added Dodge and Hamilton. Like their humorous colleagues, Dodge and Hamilton potently rebelled against traditional notions of powerlessness and sentimentality commonly associated with women. If, as Walker argues, "wit may be seen as the opposite of sentimentality: an expression of confidence and power," the sharp comic spirit of these two authors must be viewed as manly in the Victorian sense of the term, making them unconventional, yet powerful role models for their many female readers.

More than simply making their voices heard on contemporary political and social issues, *Scribner's* brilliant horde of scribbling women sought to effect change in society. One of the most widely-read journals in America at the time, *Scribner's Monthly* not only

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> rake, pitchfork, or any improvised instrument of war whatever, and had scattered the scared hens, fluttering frantic with divided minds, squawking wild terror, in every direction but the right one: and the pigs, slowly startled, had first grunted remonstrance, and then, hard pressed, had torn across the careful borders with unexpected, ungraceful and destructive agility, beyond reach of hoe or pitchfork—then it was that Achilles, with the dew of battle on his martial brow and grip of fate in his tense, muscular fingers, gave one vain, final lunge with his domestic broadside, and muttered, under breath: "Go—to—Halifax!" (553)

Like a farmer's wife driven to near madness by overwhelming responsibilities, Hamilton seeks escape. Fortunately, she is an independent-minded, high-spirited journalist—part of a growing number of female magazinists Rebecca Harding Davis discusses in *Earthen Pitchers*—who has been commissioned to write a travel sketch on Nova Scotia for a family monthly. Significantly, Hamilton, along the way, addresses numerous political questions of the day in her characteristically witty, feminist style.

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provided an extraordinary platform for achieving this aim, but it also presented some difficulties. As previously discussed, the editors of the magazine were, by and large, socially and politically conservative. Expressing their views in numerous editorials, articles, and political cartoons, the editors and the majority of their male contributors were particularly unsympathetic toward the needs and grievances of the poor and disgruntled representatives of the laboring classes (viewing union organizers with special disdain). In Irwin Russell's illustrated parody "The Beggars" (4:646-48; Sept. 1872), for example, the poor and under-employed are introduced by barking dogs, expressing extreme canine disdain and reflecting, presumably, the views of their owners:

> Every dog of every kind,
> Of every temper and every mind,
> All engaged in the general row—
> Snap, yelp, growl, ki-yi, bow-wow!
> *"The beggars have come to town"*— (647) [Fig. 15]

The poem continues its callous onslaught against the unfortunate by questioning the sincerity of their needs and the authenticity of their afflictions:

> Some are low and some are high;
> Some are blind in either eye;
> Some are lame and some are sore;
> Some just crawl from door to door;
> Some on crutches and some with canes;
> Some from alleys and some from lanes;
> Some approach you with a whine;
> Some with a testimonial line. (647)

After relating street beggars to those "in velvet gowns" (brokers, speculators, "seedy" writers, corrupt politicians, and crooked lawyers), the parody ends on a note of especial maliciousness:

> Worse than the locusts that came to harrow
> The souls of the serfs of the mighty Pharaoh;
> And so persistent in striking your purse

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And begging the cost of their plans to disburse,
That you wish, losing feeling and temper and ruth,
That the fate of Aktaion to-day was a truth,
And the dogs that barked when they came to town,
Would tear them to pieces and gobble them down. (648)

Portraying "the beggars" with suspicion and undisguised disdain and fabulously paralleling their conduct to that of the many white-collar criminals making headlines throughout the 1870s, Russell's verses merely buttressed *Scribner's* callous stance toward those unable to help themselves [Figure 16]. In "Once More the Tramp," for example, written when the nation was in the depths of a severe recession, Holland asks why "vigorous measures" are not taken to abate the "tramp nuisance?" Calling the poor of the streets "an offensive, dirty, disgraceful set to have around," he estimates that "ninety-nine tramps in a hundred, —an overwhelming proportion at any rate, —would not work at any wages if they could." To solve the problem, Holland insists that the government should "throw away all sentimentality ... and gather the whole disgusting multitude, wash them, put new clothes upon them, and under military surveillance and direction set them to quarrying stone" (15:882-883; April 1878).

An exception to *Scribner's* general disinterest in the plight of the weak and vulnerable was its attraction to reform movements associated with children. Seeing in America's youth the future of the nation, Holland, for example, commissioned articles—predominantly by women—on the proper raising of children, child abuse (such as Julia H. Holmes' "Children Who Work"), and reports on Juvenile Reformatories (such as Dodge's marvelously rendered "A Day With Dr. Brooks").[61] As these essays show, *Scribner's*

[61] Dodge's meticulously researched "A Day With Dr. Brooks" is a lucid, informative, often highly amusing examination of the lives and treatment of children at New York City's largest juvenile asylum located in Washington Heights. In this illustrated essay, the reader learns of a liberal institution that was created in 1851 in order to "receive all destitute or vagrant children between the ages of 5 and 14, legally committed to its

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women were uniquely suited to continuing the tradition of reform brought to the fore by Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, an interest which extended well beyond that of their editors.

Seeking, as Josephine Donovan writes, a culture "away from one characterized by dominance, violence, competition, and exploitation toward one governed by a sense of humility, humanity, and compassion" (8), several of *Scribner's* female contributors—often in quiet subversion of editorial positions—frequently utilized a unique blend of Realism and sentimentality in their fiction that sought to affirm and, hopefully, improve the lives of people on society's margins (including women from all classes). Two such writers were Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and Frances Hodgson Burnett. Whereas Phelps has slowly begun to receive due recognition as a major writer of nineteenth-century America, whose works were dedicated to reconstituting society along fairer notions of justice and humanity, Burnett, equally deserving and perhaps the better artist, has yet to receive the credit and attention that is her due.

In stark contrast to Russell's "The Beggars" and Holland's "Once More the Tramp," Phelps' "Not a Pleasant Story: Being Passages from the Private History of a Public Nuisance" (3:98-105; Nov. 1871) is an extraordinary attempt to fashion the story of a "public nuisance" from the perspective of "the other." Accordingly, like Dodge's "Miss Malony,"

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charge by the courts, or by parents or guardians, to rescue them from the consequences of their evil surroundings and train them to ways of goodness and usefulness" (38). Dodge's feature illustrates the extent by which an educated, middle-class woman could play in the genteel project to improve society. It also shows that the author was not simply a mouthpiece for the male editors who hired her in that it offers a podium for her own assessment regarding a prominent social concern. For example, rather than blaming the children themselves for their predicament, Mapes explains where she believes the true fault lies: "These are the partially unpolluted children of lazy, drunken, degraded mothers or of dissolute, neglectful fathers; or it may be, of honest parents forced by destitution to live among the vicious and depraved. When we think of the over-crowded tenement houses of the city, from seventy to one hundred and forty, and even as many as a hundred and eighty human beings have been found living under the same roof, on a surface area of 25 by 50 feet, with only 4 or 5 stories above the cellar, we may well shudder at the chances of the little ones who live there." Recalling the later work of Jacob Riis, Dodge's feature emphasizes the good work being done by New York's Juvenile Asylum to combat social ills and its "general success" in its efforts to reform and improve the lives of its young wards.

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Phelps' story is written in the first person and entirely in the vernacular. However, rather than use her central character as a source of humor (as Russell does) or "throw away all sentimentality" (as Holland prefers), Phelps' seeks to elicit the reader's empathy for her narrator through an understanding of the details of his life, i.e. the authentic self beneath the public stereotype.

The sketch opens *in media res* with an organ grinder addressing a Boston gentleman, who has asked about the loss of his arm:

> How did I lose the arm? One question to once, *if* you please, sir. I'm an aging man, and easy put awry in my mind in conversation. You'll remember that you settled for a mornin's job,--very generous, sir,--and brought me here in the character of a Public Nuisance. Begging your pardon, maybe you didn't use them language exact: "How no?" says you; "shut up that instrument and come to the Common with me, and tell me, in Heaven's name, what you grind it for." That's all you says; but I see it in your eyes you'd take no grudge to see me shut up in it, and gourd out of the way myself. No offense, sir. I'm used to't. Hear it off and on every day: "public nuisance!" sometimes quite loud and meant for me to hear, and again soft-like and dainty, from gals in white fur wraps, and leaving little puffs of sweet smells along behind 'em. Sometimes from folks that pay me someat too, dropping in occasional a piece of currency, which isn't frequent, with their eyes looking straight ahead, as they didn't mean to see themselves caught in the act, with twitches about the mouth. (98)

This candid conversation begins a hybrid tale of stark Realism and lurid sentimentality, filled with humanity and woe. We learn, for example, that the narrator was formerly an oyster fisherman, who one day "catched" a woman floating in the water. Like the many neuralgic and emotionally disturbed women filling Phelps' *oeuvre* of misery, this particular woman had been attempting to take her life for the third time: "'Twice it was police, and once it was a ferry-boat, and now it's you,' says she. 'I'm most discouraged'" (100). Giving the tale a somewhat haunted quality, the history of this woman remains cloaked in mystery; she seems to serve as the tragic embodiment of the many nameless wrongs committed against

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America's True Women that have left many of them anything but pious, pure, and exceptionally moral. In an act of Christian benevolence, the oysterman disregards her past and attempts to rescue the woman from further sorrow and disgrace by taking her hand in marriage.

Though marred by its forced claim on the readers' emotions and its often implausible plot, the tale sharply veers from formulaic convention in that domesticity fails as an all-purpose panacea and misery refuses to subside. For example, though the couple have a beautiful child named Blithe, the marriage is nightmarish owing to the wife's addiction to pain killers. Out of desperation, the husband joins the Union army only to have his arm "clipped off by a shell" (103). Returning home, he learns (to his satisfaction) that his wife one night simply "fell over" (104), but that his "little gal" has been forced to curl feathers for hats to survive.[62] It is in a desperate struggle to provide for his daughter that the disabled organ grinder thus wields his instrument. In contrast to *Scribner's* republican faith in self-reliance and hard work to supply an individual's wants, the organ grinder and Civil War veteran concludes his story with a philosophical query laced in pessimism that fundamentally questions America's social and economic system. "Meaning no offense," he asks his genteel listener, "why it is that, do my best, I can get my little gal just her dinners and her suppers, and just her bonnets and her aprons; and why it is that if *you* was to want the kingdom of heaven come on earth for *your* little gal, you've just to raise your finger for her, and it'll come to time, express" (104).

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[62] According to Holmes' "Children Who Work" (1:607-615; April 1871) feather-curling was a common occupation amongst impoverished young girls, one among many. "You will be astonished by the vast number of occupations in which boys and girls under the age of fifteen years are made to earn from fifty cents to five dollars per week.... They manufacture ink, tassels, tin boxes, whale-bones, whips, tobacco, toys, soap, shirts, ropes, picture-frames, paper collars and boxes, mineral waters, fans, feathers, corks, chignons, brushes, brier-wood pipes, bonnet-frames, bottles, bags, beads, artificial flowers, and birdcages" (5).

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Phelps' deep interest in broadcasting the voices and concerns of the unfortunate and her advocacy of social collectivism parallels the early adult fiction of Frances Hodgson Burnett, whom *Scribner's* brought to stardom and later, as I argue in chapter five, exiled from its pages.[63] The first tale Burnett sent to the magazine, "The Woman Who Saved Me," prompted a stunned Gilder to write back personally. Addressing his letter to "F. Hodgson or Dr. Burnett" (apparently unsure about the gender or educational background of the author), the editor excitedly asked: "Who are you? You write with a practised hand and we shall always be glad to hear from you" (3 Oct. 1871). True to his word, Gilder soon accepted "Surly Tim's Trouble: A Lancashire Story" (4:220-227; June 1872).

Like Dodge's "Miss Maloney" as well as Phelps' "An Unpleasant Story," this tale begins in the voice of a working-class narrator. Speaking to the new manager of the spinning-factory which employs him, Tim Hibblethwaite starts on an explanation of his reputation for being "surly":

> Sorry to hear my fellow-workmen speak so disparagin' o' me? Well, Mester, that's as it may be, yo know. Happen my fellow-workmen ha made a bit o' a mistake—happen what seems loike crustiness to them beant so much crustiness as summut else—happen I mought do my bit o' complainin' too. Yo munnot trust aw yo hear, Mester; that's aw I can say. (220)

As his opening words reveal, the narrator speaks only because he has been spoken to.

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[63] Often thought to be English owing to her birth in Manchester (which partially explains her omission in most histories of American literature), Burnett in fact emigrated to America at the age of sixteen. Head of an upper-middle-class household, her father Edwin Hodgson died when Frances was four, leaving the family's household furnishings business to be run by her mother, Eliza. A plummeting economy in the English mill town (largely due to the American Civil War, which had severely stunted the cotton trade and related industries) caused the family business to fail and the Hodgsons moved to the rural town of New Market, Tennessee, where relatives had settled earlier. Owing to continued financial strife, Frances helped support the family by raising geese and running a seminary and, to her own surprise, publishing stories. Remarkably, in 1868 *Godey's Lady's Book* accepted the first two tales the teenager had ever written—an auspicious beginning for any writer. However, it would be several years before she gained enough confidence to finally submit to *Scribner's*, "the world of actual literature," as she wrote in her diary.

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As will become clear, it is the giving and getting of attention that stamps this tale from beginning to end, demonstrating the author's career-long concern with human bonding and social belonging.

The narrator's interviewer, Doncaster, is the factory owner's son and representative of a new breed of manager—at least the kind envisioned by Burnett and like-minded social reformers—who seeks to understand the needs of his workers for their own sake as well as that of his company. As Doncaster relates,

> ... being anxious to do my best toward the hands, I often talked to one and another in a friendly way, so that I could the better understand their grievances and remedy them with justice to all parties concerned. So, in conversing with men, women, and children, I gradually found out that Tim Hibblethwaite was in bad odor, and that he held himself doggedly aloof from all; and this was how, in the course of time, I came to speak to him about the matter, and the opening words of my story are the words of his answer. But they did not satisfy me by any means. I wanted to do the man justice myself, and see that justice was done to him by others. (222)

Understanding that being considered different is a difficult burden to bear and potentially disruptive to the cooperative nature of factory work, Doncaster is determined to help "Surly Tim" if he can. Respecting the man's sense of privacy and needs as an individual, however, he does not push the matter. For the time being, he decides to simply keep a kindly eye on his employee.

While observing his charge, Doncaster comes to learn more about Tim's alleged irascibility. Though he does note in him a general aloofness from others, Tim wins the manager's affection by the attention he shows his more vulnerable colleagues. Once, for example, Doncaster, "caught him throwing half his dinner to a wretched little lad who had just come to the factory, and worked near him" (219). On another day, the manager "came upon him ... bending down with an almost pathetic clumsiness to pin the woolen shawl of a

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poor little mite who, like so many others, worked with her shiftless father and mother to add to their weekly earnings" (220). Tim, as the manager comes to learn, is a man who thinks of others first and himself only if he must.

One night walking home from work, Doncaster hears "something like a faint moan" emanating from the direction of the local graveyard, a sound that turns out to be from Tim himself. After identifying himself, the manager, in a symbolic act of boundary-crossing, "sprang over the low stone wall" (221) to commiserate with him. Appreciating his concern and recognizing its authenticity, Tim proceeds to reveal the facts behind his tormented state of mind relating to the two gravestones that lie before him.

As Tim in Lancashire dialect lets on, when he first arrived at the factory, he fell in love with a pretty, though clearly troubled "factory lass" named Rosanna Brent. The couple soon wed and bore a son. Unlike the domestic situation of Phelps' oysterman, Rosanna's and Tim's first year together was one of bliss when, one day, their child suffered from a fever and died. Shortly thereafter, Rosanna's first husband, who she presumed had been killed fighting in the Prussian War, appeared to reclaim his bride. Though this man, in Rosanna's words, "ill-treated me," she feels duty-bound to return to him. As Tim laments, "she slipped out o' my arms an' wur gone in a moment awmost before I could cry out" (223). Just one year later, however, he hears of this woman "lyin' i' one o' th' wards dyin' o' some long-named heart-disease" (227). Apparently, the "sojer" who had once abandoned Rosanna, had repeated the act. Deeply affected by Tim's tale, Doncaster is hardly able to sleep that night and arrives to work late the following morning only to learn that Tim has died just hours before, crushed by a weaver's loom.

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Despite its sentimental moorings and highly implausible ending, the tale serves as an effective sermon teaching the importance of empathy for those who may not, on the surface, seem to warrant it. Written during a time of increasingly disgruntled workers in factories across America, the story is particularly notable in that it implores businessmen to consider their industries from the perspectives and needs of labor. Only in crossing class boundaries and finding true affinity with "the other," Burnett suggests, can the genteel classes insure the prosperity of American industry and more importantly to the author, a just society.

The lessons Burnett tries to imbue in her readers in her first short tale reappear in her next work of adult fiction, this time woven into a fabric of far greater artistry and psychological complexity. Though entirely forgotten today, *That Lass O' Lowrie's* was recognized as a minor masterpiece by a number of her contemporaries in major journals. Richard White of the *North American Review*, for example, ranked the novel ahead of James' *The Europeans* and *Daisy Miller*, calling it the "flower and crown" of recent fiction and unsurpassed "in vividness and strength of imagination" (128:97-110; Jan. 1879). An anonymous critic for the *Atlantic* predicted that "we shall not be surprised to find Mrs. Burnett, in the future, taking a place—not on just the same grounds, but by virtue of merits of her own—with Charlotte Bronte and Mrs. Gaskell among the few eminent women novelists whom we distinguish from good masculine novelists only that we may pay them an added reverence" (40: 630-1; Nov. 1877). In a review of all her books from the 1870s, R. H. Stoddard in the *Critic* (17:346-7; Dec. 1881) even equated Burnett with Dickens, particularly in her "profound sympathy" and portrayal of working-class characters.

The power of *That Lass O' Lowrie's* emanates from many fronts. On one hand, it is an elegantly written work filled with realistic description, exquisite rendering of Lancashire

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dialect (which Burnett would use again in *The Secret Garden*), and a profound understanding of the private sphere of human relations and the public sphere of economics and politics. Equally impressive is how the novel presents a forceful feminist position that argues on behalf of androgynous qualities for both men and women. Both her male and female characters, for example, are asked to be both forceful and considerate in ways that valorize individualism in the service of social collectivism. Relating to this theme is Burnett's deft characterization of both minor and major characters of different classes and the manner in which these characters learn to interact with and depend on one another. And, as Stoddard remarked, the novel's sensitive and sophisticated attention to issues of class recalls the best of Victorian reform literature.

Stoddard's point is especially apparent in the novel's stirring and eloquent opening:

> They did not look like women, or at least a stranger new to the district might easily have been misled by their appearance, as they stood together in a group, by the pit's mouth. There were about a dozen of them there—all "pit girls," as they were called; women who wore a dress more than half masculine, and who talked loudly and laughed discordantly, and some of whom, God knows, had faces as hard and brutal as the hardest of their collier brothers and husbands and sweethearts. They had lived their lives among the coal-pits, and had worked early and late at the "mouth," ever since they had been old enough to take part in the heavy labor. It was not to be wondered at that they had lost all bloom of womanly modesty and gentleness. Their mothers had been "pit girls" in their time, their grandmothers in theirs; they had been born in coarse homes; they had fared hardly, and worked hard; they had breathed in the dust and grime of coal, and, somehow or other, it seemed to stick to them and reveal itself in their natures as it did in their bold unwashed faces. At first one shrank from them, but one's shrinking could not fail to change to pity. There was not an element of softness to rule or even influence them in their half savage existence. (544)

After this cheerless description realistically documenting the effects of harsh toil and deprivation on female colliers, the author focuses her attention on her heroine, Joan Lowrie, surrounded by her co-workers. Like "Surly Tim," this particular 'pit girl' "stands apart from

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her fellows" (544) defying those who would degrade her further. Derided for allegedly having caught the new civil engineer's eye, Joan stands up to her detractors denying their charge: "Leave th' engineer alone an' leave me alone too. It'll be th' best fur yo'" (544). This early view of Joan shows a strong-willed woman capable of complete independence, a quality Burnett empathizes with but ultimately questions.

Indeed, the problem of human disconnection is the novel's central motif. As the opening chapter shows, the female colliers are a "discordant" crew, regularly squabbling amongst themselves and mistreating one another. The male laborers too are disgruntled, but their anger is mainly directed at the aloof airs and indifference of the upper classes, for whom they work. For their part, the principal owners disregard the needs of their employees and the ministering class is practically ineffectual.

Highlighting this last theme is a discussion by Reverend Paul Grace, the local curate, and Fergus Derrick, the new civil engineer, who pass Joan shortly after her outburst. Inquiring about the girl, Grace explains that

> She has borne, they tell me, such treatment as would have killed most women. She has been beaten, bruised, felled to earth by this father of hers, who is said to be a perfect fiend, in his cups. And yet she holds to her place in their wretched hovel, and makes herself a slave to the fellow with a dogged, stubborn determination. (545)

When asked why he hasn't tried to intervene in the matter, Grace admits that "There is not a man, woman or child in the parish ... with whom I have not conscientiously tried to make friends, and there is scarcely one, I think, with whom I have succeeded. Why can I not succeed? Why do I always fail?" (545)

Overcoming artificial social and psychological boundaries is a process that all of Burnett's protagonists must undergo to achieve meaningful lives within the predominantly

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working-class community. The first episode illustrating this point is when Derrick, on his way home from the mine, spies "a figure seated upon the road side near a collier's cottage—evidently a pit girl in some trouble, for her head was bowed upon her hands, and there was a dogged sort of misery expressed in her very posture" (547). It is Joan, "disfigured by a bruise" and with blood that "trickled down her cheek" (547). The victim of one of her father's fits of "drunken passion," Joan at first denies that she is unwell, but a knowing Derrick insists on treating her wounds. More in shock than gratitude, Joan replies "'I dunnot see as yo' need care ... Other folk dunnot. I'm left to mysen most o' toimes" (547).

Shortly after this incident, Joan performs a similar act of benevolence when a young girl named Liz returns to the town of Riggan with a child.[64] Treating her as if she had committed a sin, the other female colliers immediately surround Liz, tantalizing her and hurling insults. Maliciously they shout: "Wheer ha' yo' been, Liz ... What did yo' coom back for? This is what thy handsome face has browt thee to, is it?" Bursting through the group, however, is that "Lass o' Lowries" who confronts the tormenters "in a flame of wrath." Gently lifting Liz's baby, Joan cries out: "Lasses ... do yo' see this? A bit o' a helpless thing as canna answer back yo're jeers! ... But I've gotten this to tell yo'—them as has owt to say o' Liz, mun say it to Joan Lowrie!" (552) Joan's bold act serves to silence the crowd, and she extends her generosity by offering to take Liz and child into her own home.

In addition to emphasizing the need for greater empathy in the world, Burnett's portrayal of Joan as both tough and sensitive reflects the author's feminine ideal of the "manly" woman (and, as we have seen in Derrick Fergus, the "womanly" man). Like Margaret Fuller and Gail Hamilton after her, Burnett believed that the two sexes were

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[64] A *woman victim* like Joan (the drunken father's daughter), Liz represents the seduced and abandoned woman, a frequent figure in "woman's fiction," as David S. Reynolds has noted.

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inherently equal. Although she believed in the essence of womanhood (constituting gentleness, guilelessness, and compassion) and the essence of manhood (constituting courage, firmness, fiber, and rational intellect), she maintained that both sexes benefited from adopting each other's traits in a healthy balance.

To bring her point home, the author juxtaposes the androgyny of Joan and others to ineffectual "single essence" characters. One such individual is the Reverend Harold Bartholm, head of the local parish, whose cool tactlessness and self-righteousness are decidedly and detrimentally "masculine." Upon learning of Joan's own plight and new ward, for example, the rector determines to see the girl immediately. As Burnett satirically reports, "He had caught fire at once, in his usual inconsequent, self-secure style. Ecclesiastical patronage would certainly set this young woman right at once. There was no doubt of that. And who was so well qualified to bestow it as himself?" Only his daughter, Anice, is bold enough to offer protestation:

> "Do you think," she said quickly, "that they like us to go and see them in that sort of way, papa? Do you think it is wise to remind them that we know more than they do, and that if they want to learn they must learn from us, just because we have been more fortunate? It really seems to me that the rebellious ones would ask themselves what right we had to be more fortunate." (625)

Bartholm, however, lightly brushes his daughter off. Confident in his "lofty" intellect to rationalize and persuade others in the matters of "the truth," he arrives at Joan's door the following morning.

The meeting is an unmitigated disaster. Though he at first misses Joan, who is already working in the pit, Bartholm finds Liz and her baby. Despite Liz's insistence that she "dunnot want to be talked to," the minister explains how if the young girl had only "clung to the Cross (she) would have been spared all this sin and shame," causing his listener to burst

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into tears. Suddenly, in the "midst of his most eloquent reproof," Joan appears and questions the Reverend as to his aims. To his claim that he was merely doing his duty to bring the girl "to a proper sense of her position," Joan irreverently, albeit wisely, responds, "you'd been wiser than yo' are, yo'd ha' let her alone" (628). As Burnett seeks to show, Bartholm's lack of respect amongst his parishioners stems from his pompous style and manufactured Christian slogans, as opposed to genuine respect and empathy.

Far more effective in enacting missionary work is Bartholm's untrained daughter. Born in London into relative affluence, Anice's recent arrival to Riggan inaugurates surprising consequences. Paul Grace, for example, had expected that such a refined spirit would find the adjustment of living in a small coal-mining town unbearable. Instead, Anice's genuine concern for others and bold willingness to help others without patronizing them cements the community in ways the clergy cannot.

In a number of "desultory pilgrimages" in which she "saw all that (Mr. Barholm) missed and was deaf to" (629), Anice essentially takes on the role of her father, sometimes at great risk to herself. Her first "adventure," for example, entails breaking apart two boys involved in a "violent scuffle" (629). Daring to intervene where few would, Anice stuns the combatants who "fell back, panting heavily, breathing vengeance in true boy fashion, and evidently resenting the unexpected intrusion." As Burnett writes, "It was in this manner that Miss Barholm introduced herself to the village of Riggan, and her father's parishioners." Before long Anice, whose unrestricted movements and engagements mark her as an "adventure feminist,"[65] is a frequent visitor in the homes of many Rigganites, who see in the

[65] In making a "new home" in Riggan, Anice resembles the "adventure feminists" Reynolds discusses in a chapter entitled "Types of American Womanhood." As Reynolds writes, the female *moral exemplar* who often "confronts severe physical perils" and assumes "male roles" was a relatively frequent fixture in American antebellum novels by women, especially ones concerning the frontier. Though the setting of *That Lass* is

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girl only a desire to do good. As one collier's wife puts matters: "She might no be so bad after all, if she did have 'Lunnon ways,' and was smiled upon by Fortune. At any rate, she differed from the parson himself, which was in her favor" (631) [Figure 17].

Among the many friends in the community that Anice wins over with her selfless charm and manly fiber are Joan and the town skeptic, Sam Craddock. The latter, described as a "Riggan institution" (550), is a retired collier of extreme wit, intelligence, and mischief, whose favorite pastime is in fact ridiculing the Pastor. In the words of Paul Grace, Bartholm's assistant whose own effectiveness suffers from his boss's jarring incompetence, Craddock

> studies [Barholm]—he knows his favorite phrases and gestures by heart, and has used them until there is not a Riggan collier who does not recognize them when they are presented to him, and applaud the staple joke of a popular actor.[66]

While clearly defending Craddock when he mocks the high-minded abstractions and patronizing tones and attitudes of the elite classes, Burnett also wishes to show that such irreverence, though warranted, sustains the divisions between the colliers and their families and the rest of the community. Only in mutual respect, the author strives to demonstrate, can a variate community flourish. Illustrating this point is Craddock's transformation when Anice secures a position for him as lodgekeeper to a member of Parliament after his life's savings had been lost in a bank failure. Accepting the job after learning that his employer

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English, it is useful to keep in mind that the author wrote the work while living in what was essentially a rural, Tennesseen frontier-town. Like New Market was to Burnett, Riggan is a frontier of sorts to the genteel Anice.

[66] Helping to contextualize the aim of Burnett's satire is an obituary by Josiah Holland entitled "A Word for the Departed" that appears below the conclusion for chapter five in which Craddock compares the pastor to cheese. In it the editor laments the passing of the Rev. George B. Bacon, D.D., one of *Scribner's* most valued contributors. Admiring the fact that Bacon "had no taste for literature that diverted him from his pulpit duties, or weaned him from a love of his pastoral work" (such as the fiction of Burnett one imagines), Holland proceeds to draw praise for the Reverend's "broad views," "high moral purpose" and "candid judgement." Assuredly, Bacon and the windy Holland himself would have been ripe candidates for Craddock's roguish wit (267, 13; Dec. 1876).

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respected his right to hold divergent political views ("even a Member of Parliament has a right to an opinion" the politician quips, 310), Craddock comes to ease his class critique. As he later tells his barroom colleagues:

> I'll tell yo' what, lads, I'm comin' to th' opinion as happen theer's more sense i'some o' th' gentry than we gi' 'em credit fur: they ha' not mich but book larnin i' their heads, it's true, but they're noan so bad—some on 'em—if yo're charytable wi' 'em. (312)

Though Craddock never entirely stops ridiculing the elder Bartholm, he does begin to defend the thoughtful curate Paul Grace, who comes to find the townsfolk increasingly accepting of his ministerial role.

The steamrolling effect of comradery and benevolent reform that Burnett seeks to project is made apparent in the evolving relations of the other characters as well. Derrick's concern for Joan, for example, is reciprocated when she protects him from the vengeance of her own father. An unyielding advocate for measures that would make the mine safer for the workers, Derrick had fired Dan Lowrie for illicitly lighting his pipe while working in the mines. In retaliation, Dan, who had previously assaulted the civil engineer, seeks to ambush and murder him, an attempt thwarted by Joan's warnings. Joan also assists Anice in bringing students to her night school; from Anice, Joan garners a love of learning and learns to trust in others. And when the mine actually does blow up owing to the fact that the fans which Derrick fought for were never installed by management, it is Joan, the "manly" woman, who leads the rescue operation to save the civil engineer and other colliers buried in rubble. As Burnett relates,

> It was a dreadful work indeed that the rescuers had to do in those black galleries. And Joan was the bravest, quickest, most persistent of all. Paul Grace, following in her wake, found himself obeying her slightest word or gestures. He worked constantly at her side. (845) [Figure 18]

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In addition to demonstrating the ability of women to not just work in tasks generally associated with men, but to be a *leader* of men in such roles, Joan's collaboration with Paul Grace to save workers and management alike is another illustration demonstrating the chain of humanity needed to successfully function as a society.

While sentimentality's "ethic of social love" (Baym 49) has recently been read in imperialistic terms as "a tool for the control of others, not merely as aid in the conquest of the self" (Wexler 9-19), *That Lass O' Lowrie's*, referred to in her time as a Realist novel, should be admired *on account of* its "sentimental power" as well as its aesthetic excellence. Especially when compared to other so-called "Realistic" texts depicting working-class life during this period (most notably John Hay's fiercely anti-labor *The Bread-Winners* appearing in *Scribner's-Century* in 1883), Burnett offers a powerful alternative to the competitive worldview seemingly sanctioned by Victorian society. Though Burnett fails to question the socio-economic system that produces class divisions in the first place, she does eloquently stress the human sensitivity needed to alleviate capitalism's harsh affects. Though perhaps not a progressive solution to a complex situation, her well-wrought vision was deeply humanist, boldly challenging the views of the magazine's exclusively male editorship.

Appearing in the June issue of 1873 was a slight tale entitled "Dolly" signed by R.H.D. Though contemporary students of American literature may not readily recognize the name for whom these initial stand as a consummate Victorian-era reader of periodical fiction would, the story's themes, its naturalistic quality, its dispassionate tone of voice, and its direct writing style belong unmistakably to one of the founders of American Realism: Rebecca Harding Davis.

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Renowned today mostly as the mother of Richard Harding Davis and for her groundbreaking tale of Realism "Life in the Iron Mills" that appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1861 and, increasingly, for her book-length fictionalized analysis of working-class life in *Margret Howth: The Story of To-Day* (1864), Davis continues to occupy a nebulous place in traditional accounts of "the rise of Realism." Her status in critical accounts of American women writers is equally unclear. Because her work stretches across four decades and her views and writing style do not conform to easily categorizable patterns, literary historians, by and large, have not been able to label her work with a consistency necessary for academic canonization. In contrast to today's scholarly confusion (which points to the continued inadequacy of academic classificatory schemes), Davis, in her day, was a highly recognizable literary figure, whose stories, essays, and sketches, as Sharon M. Harris reminds us, were read, admired, and carefully studied by such notable literati as William Dean Howells, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and Sarah Orne Jewett (10-11).

The appearance of "Dolly" (9:89-92; Nov. 1874) in *Scribner's*, a magazine which paradoxically belittled feminists' claims regarding women's wrongs and demands for equal rights, yet throughout the 1870s welcomed their literary productions in its pages, is one of a long line of literary attempts in which Davis seriously reflects on the working-woman's predicament in nineteenth-century America. The tale traces the life of Dorothea Baum, who as young girl working as a governess to her cousin, catches the eye of a genteel artist named George Fanning. As Fanning's words to the tale's narrator who is examining his sketch of Dolly reveal, the artist only sees in this girl a projection of his genteel imagination, rather than a complete human being:

> Yes. The niece of old Sister Baum. She is nothing but a child—has lived her sixteen years in that old house, just as pure as a flower that never felt the

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> outside air. Did you ever see innocence or unselfishness shine so transparent in any face? Dolly—that is her name—Dorothea. That is a poor picture enough; the real Dolly, with the shimmer of yellow hair about her face, is fairer than one of Correggio's Madonnas. (90)

As Fanning confesses, his plan is to eventually marry this "doll."

Several years later, long after "Dolly had died out of her remembrance," the narrator tours the Alleghenies with a party that includes Fanning. The group stops at a country inn where Dolly, still young and beautiful, now works as a chambermaid. Upon seeing his former love, Fanning is aghast. His image of her as a pure princess maiden now clashes with the real Dolly, a working-class girl, whom someone of Fanning's social standing could never concede to marrying. His virgin ideal corrupted, the artist pretends not to know the girl and abruptly heads "into the mountains ... through a pelting storm, 'after trout,' he said" (91).

Dolly enters Fanning's consciousness one last time years later. In Philadelphia to view a P. T. Barnum circus with the narrator and her two boys, the artist cries out: "Good God! She has fallen to that?" As the narrator looks up, she sees Dolly "in flowing robes of spangled blue, standing in a gilt chariot, driving three horses abreast at a frightful speed. Her eyes were flashing, her soft cheeks burning; her yellow hair floated behind her" (91). Left to her own devices, Dolly has followed a path not entirely surprising to the narrator (even as the course of her life torments the idealistic George). Significantly, the narrator warns the reader not to view Dolly in sentimental or moralistic terms like some "poor lost creature or unrepentant Magdalene." An actor in a modern world largely ruled by naturalistic forces, Dolly anticipates Theodore Drieser's Sister Carrie. Neither someone to admire nor pity, Davis' heroine is just another individual whose biography shows how conditions dictate circumstances, particularly, the author seems to emphasize, when one is a woman.

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Davis' interest in the fate of women who must fend for themselves is again demonstrated in "The Poetess of Clap City" (9:612-15; March 1875), this time with a specific emphasis on the female artist. This tale recounts the life of Maria Heald, a woman who in her youth, had been anticipated by her townspeople to "take rank as the first poetess in America" (612). Despite her remarkable intellect, the girl lived under a painful "social ban" owing to the fact that she was "the daughter of—*a tailor.*" After spending "three or four years ... in ... isolation, unnatural and unwholesome for any young creature," Maria was finally discovered by a renown lecturer from New England, who had "lived across the street from Emerson and Channing." With this man's support, Maria began to successfully place numerous poems and essays in the leading magazines. Her output, however, stopped as quickly as it began for "just about this time an accident happened to Maria which will occur to women with vocations—she married" (613).

Giving up writing for matrimony was a conscious act of altruism, for Maria's husband had a severe drinking problem. However, rather than turn out a "gaunt, haggard creature, the very ideal of the drunkard's wife" (the conventional ending of most works in the *literature of misery* genre), Maria became "a picturesquely dressed beautiful woman ... with healthy color, dark eyes ... and a curious tender, magnetic voice" (614). Apparently, the former poetess of Clap City had successfully entered into a "series of money-making schemes" while raising a household full of children before returning to writing once again. As she confesses to the narrator: "I have begun a poem; a book in which I shall utter myself; all that has been given to me to say" (615).

Fifteen years after this interview, the narrator reports receiving a letter from the editor of the *Clap City Gazette*, who had just received a manuscript from Maria. The editor

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explains that he wrote the author a letter of rejection on the grounds that the submission was not the right length and that the season was unfavorable for poetry, but that the real reason was that "it was trash" (615). The story ends with the narrator asking: "Can it be that this gifted woman has waited too long and so missed her vocation? Is she to die nameless, her work undone? Is her message to the world never to be delivered?" (615) The answer is left ambiguous. On one hand, owing to the trying circumstances of her life, Maria Heald was never able to achieve in writing the promise for which she had seemed destined. On the other hand, Davis proposes that Heald's achievements as a mother, wife, and entrepreneur are not to be undervalued, and perhaps deserve to be viewed as admirable compensation for thwarted ideals.

The difficulties of being an artist *and* a woman reemerge as the central theme in Davis' novella *Earthen Pitchers,* which appeared in five installments from November 1873-April 1874. This work, never published in book form, is an astonishing creation that deserves wide critical attention for a variety of reasons. In addition to attending the trials of being an artist *and* female (a topic otherwise ignored by *Scribner's* editors), the novella portrays the publishing world in the early 1870s with great depth and realism and even serves as a meta-critique of the magazine in which it appears. Astutely addressing such issues as the male "star system," the commercialization of literary forms and materials, and the lack of adequate financial support for female artists wishing to do serious work, Davis' work calls attention to *Scribner's-Century*'s own role in the publishing field and even presages the cultural forces—namely the increasing commercialization of literary forms—which ultimately would contribute to the magazine's decline during the 1890s.

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Earthen Pitchers begins with a portrayal of a literary "tea and toast" party at the flat of Jane Derby in the bohemian section of Philadelphia. This Saturday evening regular event is in fact a business affair designed to bring writers and visual artists into contact with publishers and editors and, particularly, to advance the writing career of Ms. Derby herself. Like the paintings on the wall and the rugs on the floor, the artists are all in essence "up for sale" hoping to attract a bid from the men that rule the money and decision-making end of Victorian publishing.

The thorough commercialization of the literary field is first suggested by Mr. Burgess, a successful English magazinist, who is in quest of original American material. As his conversation with a young admirer reveals, people and places only have importance to the extent they can be commodified as exotic literary types or regions. For example, while speaking to an admirer who hopes the Englishman may provide him key contacts in Europe, Burgess thinks how his listener's "heavy features, complexion like a girl's, fair Dundreary whiskers, foppish clothes, the rose in his buttonhole, (and) skittish walk" would make "good points for a comic picture of a Philadelphian for his book" (74). His words, too, expose a man for whom a subject matter's "value" lies solely in its salability. Speaking of his interest in the American West (an obsession shared by *Scribner's*), Burgess explains how "We, Dickens, Kingsley and the rest of us, have used up all the back-grounds: Europe, the Nile, Australia. I think I've had a very lucky 'find' here. I mean to produce some very pretty effects in my papers with your Rocky Mountains, Yosemite and those, eh?" (74)

Mr. Burgess also has decided opinions on the growing number of women writers who have entered the professional field of writing. In his view,

> American ladies are all oppressively clever, you know. 'Have you read my last tragedy?' says one. Another thinks it more a woman's work to dissect

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> babies than to suckle them. The very school-girls attack you with their views of John Stuart Mill; and this Miss Derby, still in her teens you say, lives alone, and has her 'Saturday evenings.' (75)

Clearly threatened by educated, opinionated young women in the literary field, Burgess seeks to belittle their accomplishments in an effort to sustain his imperial status as a tastemaker. Indirectly critiquing the very magazine in which her work appears,[67] Davis through Burgess voices the masculine attitudes dominating Victorian publishing at the time she herself was writing and which so enormously impacted her own work and career.

Another character reflecting the tastes and manners of the professional magazine world is the publisher, Mr. John Shively, unexcelled in crassness, self-aggrandizement, and insensitivity. A "new man" who "advertised himself into a fortune" and now "is trying advertise himself into society," Shively is given to boisterous talk and name-dropping. As the reader learns from his every sentence, he is a former errand boy, who now knows princes and literary luminaries on a first name basis. At the same time, the publisher boasts of a heart-felt class-consciousness. As he explains without intended irony, "My employees have a bank of their own, and a private graveyard on my grounds where they can be buried as comfortably as though they were millionaires." At the moment, he is in search of a "series of articles written, half scientific, half popular" for which he hopes to get an author on "as easy terms as possible" (76).

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[67] Appearing during the run of *Earthen Pitchers*, for example, is an in-depth article entitled "The Higher Education of Women" (7:456-62; Feb. 1874) which discussed the co-education of women at the university level. Willing in the name of "fair play" to allow such an experiment, the author, William S. Tyler, expects "the experiment to fail." This is so, Tyler explains, because the "peculiar" nature of woman, her "compartitively slender, delicate and feeble bodily constitution," renders her incapable "of enduring the same severe and protracted study with the other sex." The author adds that "sooner or later" the experiment will "either break down the health and constitution of woman, or change the curriculum and lower the standard of college education." Because she "has more taste, more feeling, more fancy, perhaps more imagination, but less reason and judgement," the author concludes that "All will agree that home is emphatically the woman's sphere. The family is her kingdom."

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In addition to utilizing Shively's attitudes to highlight the notorious parsimony of genteel-era publishers,[68] Davis also wishes to point out another growing tendency in publishing: the favoritism extended to writers who are male. As Shively himself admits, not just anybody is good enough to pen this series. He has come to the party in search of Neil Goddard, who he describes as "a most brilliant young scamp, moody and unreliable, like all your men of genius" (76). Ironically, it is not just his gender, but Goddard's very unreliability that certifies his status as a major talent. Though he has yet to write much of anything, his fame, like that of the Poetess of Clap City, lies in his promise. To Mr. Shively's dismay, however, Mr. Goddard is not at Jane Derby's party. As Davis satirically notes, this future scribe of great tomes, who has "sat at the foot of Emerson," is at present "down on the coast, somewhere, studying the effect of sunset on the neap tide, for a marine, he is going to paint" (76).

Juxtaposed to this much-heralded non-producer is the party's host, Jane Derby. Jane is realistically described as a somewhat plain woman with "flat chest" and "stubby fingers" (79) who is perpetually busy either writing to earn her living or marketing her and her friend's stories. At present she has material "in two or three papers," writes "book notices, and a woman's column" (79), and specializes in European sketches based on her Italian travels as a young girl. Though aware of the fact that in order to survive, she must write the filler that magazines covet, she has long harbored other dreams. As she quietly explains to one of her guests at the party:

> I have covered up my real character in a reputation for wit and fancy just as I hide the bare walls with those pictures, which don't belong to me. It is shop-

[68] In support of Davis' claim, Susan Coultrap-McQuin in *Doing Literary Business: American Women Writers in the Nineteenth Century* documents how the parsimony of publishers was a problem affecting professional female scribes most acutely.

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> work with me. I read this book and that to find a style. I scour the country for ideas and facts as capital. Yet I wish to only write successful poetry. (79)

As Jane admits, instead of pursuing her ideals, she is entirely reduced to hack-writing.

Like so many female "magazinists" at the time (including Davis herself), the struggle to purchase time for writing literature of artistic value was painful and rarely successful. As Jane's situation shows, the financial, emotional, and physical costs of being a professional female literary artist in the nineteenth century greatly outweigh the rewards. Living in a rented room, suffering from neuralgia, unable to attract a mate, and reduced to writing commercial material, Derby seems destined to a life of drudgery.[69]

Earthen Pitchers, of course, is more than simply an indictment of the publishing industry, but a large scale indictment of society and the men and women it produces. For example, despite her rugged independence in supporting herself, Jane Derby is emotionally and psychologically conditioned to succumb to the same traps of those around her. For, she too falls in love with Goddard, who agrees to marry her only after realizing the practical services Jane can render him. Though, by the novella's end, Jane achieves the domestic life she so craved while a lonely, struggling writer, the experience is an unhappy one. Goddard,

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[69] Interestingly, Davis' stark portrayal of her heroine and the harsh market conditions that contribute to her predicament seemed to have summoned Holland to respond to some of her accusations. In "Literary Hinderances" (7: 624-5; March 1874), the editor admits that "three-quarters of the literary men and women of the present time are loaded down with cares that seem to forbid the free development of their genius, and deny to them the power to do their best possible work. The painter, with the greatest ambition and the noblest genus, is obliged to come down to what he calls his 'potboilers:' and most literary men and women do the same. They do work in which they take no pleasure, simply because it is necessary to win them bread and clothing." However, rather than sympathize with these men and women, as Davis so obviously does, the editor calls such want necessary and even beneficial. Strife, he romantically assesses, puts writers in sympathy with his surroundings providing his material and helping to build his character (and characters). In further defense of his claim, Holland writes, "Were not Dickens' wide-mouthed wants, natural and artificial ...productive motives? ... We should have lost our Burns, if he had been born in a palace and reared in luxury ... God made Whittier poor, that every son of want, and every victim of wrong should have a sympathizing and ministering brother." Rather than admit that magazines like his to a certain extent exploited his contributors for the privilege of appearing in a magazine of status, the editor creatively assesses that if "beauty is its own excuse for being ... we should find literary conditions adjusted to it."

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it turns out, never writes the tome which is to make him famous and wealthy; in fact he remains a poor provider with expensive tastes. It is Jane who ends up managing the family farm and providing for their three boys. Devoted to her husband, she keeps herself in ragged gowns and her sons in coarse cloth in order to keep her husband "in the finest of linen, and to prepare little surprises for him of gifts of choice jewelry or rare old editions" (720). As Davis satirically writes, this "God" still needs to be pampered, for he has "in preparation the great treatise on Modern Art which he is going to write." Needless to say, Jane, it is clear, will never write the book of poetry she always intended (720).

Earthen Pitchers also traces the life of another woman artist named Audrey Swenson. Audrey is a woman who is convinced by Goddard that she was intended to be a musician and singer. In order to achieve her goal, Audrey is determined not to marry so that she may pursue her art incessantly. For many years Audrey is successful in her bid to hone her talents until her cousin Kit, who has long pursued Audrey, is blinded in a rail accident. Taught that self-sacrifice is the duty of women, Audrey agrees to marry her cousin and to look after his peach farm. Like Jane, Audrey also abandons her dream of being an artist in exchange for living with and, ultimately, supporting a man. To earn money to sustain her family, Audrey turns to giving music lessons to the children in her town, a decision which ruins her once lovely voice. The novel ends with Audrey sitting by the seashore observing the rolling waves as she reflects on her life:

> It seemed to her that she must answer them. And she began to sing, she knew not what. But the tones were discordant, the voice was cracked. Then she knew that whatever power she might have had was quite wasted and gone. She would never hear again the voice that once had called her. (713)

Rather than comment directly on the choices that her characters make and the situations they find themselves in, Davis lets the reader decide whether the sacrifices each

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woman makes have their compensations. In a method that is the mark of a good Realist, Davis presents the facts of her characters lives and lets events proceed freely. Clearly, this novella deserves to be more widely recognized for Davis' expert handling of Realism, its feminist theme, and the many cultural/historical questions it poses—especially the way it foretells the virtual "disappearance" of female fiction writers from the pages of *Scribner's-Century* during the early 1880s.[70]

Along with Davis, another self-conscious artist heavily invested in questions of art and gender to appear in *Scribner's-Century* was Constance Fenimore Woolson. Her first two *Scribner's* submissions, "Peter, the Parson" (8:600-610; Sept. 1875) and "Jeannette" (9:232-244; Dec. 1874), are particularly interesting to the literary scholar in that they are some of the earliest local color stories Woolson ever wrote, and yet already exhibit an extraordinary level of artistic maturity. Also interesting to this particular study is the fact that neither story was particularly well-received by the magazine's editors, who required some cajoling to publish them. This section seeks to understand why.

In a letter dated 13 April 1874 to *Scribner's* poetry editor E.C. Stedman (whom Woolson knew as a personal friend), the author writes: "I shall be ever so glad if you can stir up Mr. Gilder to publish 'Jeannette.' Not that it is a good story; but it is weary waiting for a first appearance." In this same letter, she adds that the editors "don't like 'Peter the

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[70] In her own examination of *Scribner's-Century* for her biography of Rebecca Harding Davis, Sharon Harris supports my contention that women writers, including Davis, were essentially pushed out of the magazine by the end of the 1870s. As Harris writes, "A survey of *Scribner's Monthly* and its continuation as *Century Magazine* for the 1880s reveals patterns not unlike those recorded during the editorial transition at the *Atlantic* in the previous decade, although the patterns are of an even greater extreme in this case.... in the categories of fiction and essays (that is, works other than poetry), men's contributions constituted 83 percent of the published works. Although an impressive array of nineteenth century American women authors appeared in the periodical during the eighties ... they were almost entirely relegated to the poetry columns. Yet, male authors now retained 60 percent of this category as well, with women's contributions limited to 17 percent of the fiction and essays and 40 percent of the poetry published" (207).

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Parson'... though in my opinion it is the most powerful thing I have ever written."[71] Woolson was only half right in her assertions, for *both* works wield enormous power and are deserving of wide readership and critical attention.[72]

Like Davis, Woolson's decision to become a professional writer in a field dominated by men was fraught with struggle and pain, which, as several of her biographers suggest, ultimately contributed to her suicide in 1894. As if presaging her own future as a conflicted artist, "Peter, the Parson" seems to have as its central theme, the difficulty, the insanity even, of pursing ideals in a hostile world. This stark tale takes place in the winter of 1850 in a mining settlement on the shore of Lake Superior. Rather than romanticize the setting as Bret Harte had already done in tales such as "The Luck of the Roaring Camp," Woolson depicts life on the frontier as brutal and sterile as it typically was. Indeed, the tone of the opening scene is so bleak that the reader cannot help but sense tragedy lurking on the horizon:

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[71] Yale University Library.

[72] Constance Fenimore Woolson (1840-1894) was born in Claremont, New Hampshire, the sixth child of Charles Jarvis, a former journalist turned stove manufacturer, and Hannah Cooper Pomeroy Woolson, daughter of Ann Cooper Pomeroy, one of James Fenimore Cooper's older sisters. Soon after the birth of Constance, three of her sisters died, causing the bereaved family to move to Cleveland, Ohio. It was this growing frontier town and the surrounding area that would serve Constance well in her quest for materials for beginning a literary career. From her autobiographical writings it is known that Constance often accompanied her father on trips in the summer to Wisconsin and throughout Ohio. Though not much else is known about her girlhood, records indicate that she attended Miss Hayden's School and then the Cleveland Female Seminary and completed her education at the age of eighteen at Madame Chegaray's "fashionable New York School," graduating at the top of her class. Woolson began writing in earnest in 1870-71, following her father's death. Her desire to write seemed to stem partially from a desire to know herself. This assumption can be made based on how Constance, early in her life, began reflecting on how she was somehow different from other women and already assumed she would be relegated to spinsterdom when she was in her mid-20s. In an 1875 letter to the poet Paul Hamilton Hayne, she wrote, for example: "I have the idea that women run too much into mere beauty at the expense of power; and the result is, I fear, that I have gone too far the other way; too rude; too abrupt." In place of marriage, much of her life was devoted to honing her craft and to travel, which served to provide new material for her works. Despite suffering chronic bouts of depression, Woolson achieved great literary acclaim in her lifetime (a position she quickly fell from in the twentieth century, though her work has recently undergone a revival of serious critical attention) and was even included in Henry James *Partial Portraits*, which put her on equal ground with the likes of George Eliot, Turgenev, Emerson, Stevenson, and Maupassant. In 1894, ill with typhoid fever, Contance leapt or fell to her death from her balcony in Venice. It was a death believed by Henry James to be a suicide, which he was in some way responsible. See Sharon Dean's *Constance Fenimore Woolson: Homeward Bound.*

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> ... a little mining settlement stood forlornly on the shore of Lake Superior. A log-dock ran out into the dark water; a roughly built furnace threw a glare against the dark sky; several stamping-mills kept up their monotonous tramping day and night; and evil-minded saloons beset the steps on all sides ... The pine forest had been burned away to make room for the village; blackened stumps rose everywhere in the weedy streets, and, on the outskirts of the clearing, grew into tall skeletons, bleached white without, but black and charred within—a desolate framing for a desolate picture. (600)

It is to this woebegone mining camp that the Reverend Herman Peters, a High-Church Anglican priest, has come as a missionary of his faith. His errand into the wilderness, however, is a failure, and he himself, a figure ripe for ridicule and gall.

Not only do few parishioners attend his services, but the priest's walk through town to get to his chapel is the equivalent of marching through a gauntlet. Woolson, in the meticulous detail that mark her as a masterful proto-Realist,[73] paints for us the ordeal:

> Lights shone comfortably from the Pine-Cone Saloon as he passed.
>
> "Hallo! Here's Peter the Parson," sang out a miner, standing at the door; and forth streamed all the loungers to look at him.
>
> "Say, Peter, come in and have a drop to warm yer,' said one.
>
> "Look at his poor little ribs, will yer?" said another, as his cloak blew out like a sail.
>
> "Let him alone! He's going to have his preaching all to himself, as usual," said a third. "Them books is all the congregation *he* can get, poor little chap.
>
> The parson's sensitive ears heard every word He quickened his steps, and, with his usual nervous awkwardness, stumbled and fell, dropping all the books, amid the jeering applause of the bystanders. Silently he rose and began collecting his load, the wind every now and then blowing his cloak over his head as he stooped, and his difficulties increased by the occasional gift of a potato full in the breast, and a flood of witty commentaries from the laughing group at the saloon door. As he picked up the last volume and turned away, a missile, deftly aimed, took off his hat, and sent it over a fence into a neighboring field. The parson hesitated; but as a small boy had already given chase, not to bring it back, but to send it further away, he abandoned the hat, —his only one, —and walked on among the stumps bareheaded, his thin hair blown about by the raw wind, and his blue eyes reddened with cold and grief. (601)

[73] Woolson's proto-realism is also apparent in her consuming interest in character (over plot) as exhibited by the very titles of her stories, that of individual's names.

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Needless to say, Peter's attempt to subdue a wilderness with the word of God and a will of iron is futile.

Though only a young woman named Rosie Ray consistently attends his weekly sermons, the Parson obstinately continues his lonely, self-denying, ritualistic existence, taking pleasure only in the preparation of his "carefully written" themes. In an episode that recalls Woolson's own decision to remain a spinster, he even rejects a marriage proposal from his sole parishioner. As he explains, "... I shall never marry. I have consecrated my life to my holy calling" (607).

The stark and depressive world of the Parson, who is blindly devoted to his ideals, can be read allegorically as Woolson's own haunted pursuit of her art in a largely indifferent world. Recalling not simply Peter's but the fictional Jane Derby's forlorn existence, the author often wrote letters and diary notations lamenting her fate in her chosen profession. The world may permit women to write, Woolson often privately reflected, but never seemed to allow female writers the possibility of marriage or even happiness while pursuing such an "unwomanly" course.

When one considers that Gilder did not like this tale "at all," "Peter the Parson" can also be read as an assault on masculine attitudes that permeate Victorian society. Like Burnett's critique of the clergy in *That Lass* and Davis' assault of the men of publishing in *Earthen Pitchers*, Woolson's tale subtly yet surely assails the severe and isolating characteristics of men generally, particularly those in status positions, who pretend to be helping their "flock" (including both clergy and genteel editors).

Obliquely framed in "Peter, the Parson," the inefficacy of men versus the compassionate understanding of women is a theme made explicit in "Jeannette." This story,

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on an artistic level with Sarah Orne Jewett's famed "A White Heron," is, like Jewett's piece, a telling example of Regionalist fiction as demonstratively "feminist." If, as Judith Fetterley and Marjorie Pryse argue, women's Regionalist writing is largely concerned with resistance to masculinist incursions (in the form of industry, religion, and nation, i.e. "progress") and exhibits as its defining characteristic "empathy" (as opposed to imperialism/colonialism), "Jeannette" is a model of this genre as well as an intricate work of art.

Like much local color fiction, "Jeannette" is set in the past ("before the war for the Union") in a locale, far away from the centers of high civilization. It tells the tale of a middle-aged, unmarried woman who has come to visit her nephew, the young lieutenant Archie, for the summer at an army fort on the island of Mackinac in Lake Michigan. Though the fort is located in the midst of a wilderness, the narrator has brought "civilization" with her. She resides, for example, in a parlor, which she has decorated with "Turkey-red curtains, a lounge and armchair covered with chintz, several prints on the cracked walls and a number of books" (232). Somewhat like Peter the Parson, she, too, seeks to tame the wild via the accoutrements and achievements of Victorian culture.

When not attending social functions or entertaining guests in her humble quarters, the narrator spends her time befriending a native young woman named Jeannette LeBlanc, the daughter of a local fisherman, who exudes the "mixed beauty of three nationalities" (235)—English, Indian, and French. In addition to her beauty, Jeannette is proud, willful, and independent. Rather than visit the fort by going through the village of Mackinac, for example, Jeannette prefers to take a wilder route. As the narrator describes:

> the girl seldom went round the point into the village; its one street and a half seemed distasteful to her. She climbed the stone-wall on the ridge behind her cabin, took an Indian trail though the grass in summer, or struck across on the snow-crust in winter, ran up the steep side of the fort-hill like a wild chamois,

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> and came into the garrison enclosure with a careless nod to the admiring sentinel, as she passed under the rear entrance. (235)

At first the narrator learns bead-work from Jeannette, but later she decides to teach her to read English and also gives her oral lessons in poetry, which Jeannette is always willing to do "for a few shillings" (236). Though more liberal in her views towards Jeannette than her Anglo peers, the narrator ultimately devalues the girl's way of life. This is particularly seen in the patronizing manner in which she views her own efforts as educator to "this poor, unfriended girl living in this remote place" (236). The fallacy of her elitist position comes to light when Rodney Prescott, an eminent surgeon from Boston, who has been visiting the narrator while Jeannette is under her care, falls in love with the native girl. Though he has long had reservations against fraternizing with such a "half-wild creature" (237) of mixed blood, Jeannette's natural charms, beauty, and unrestrained way of life ensnares him. To the incredulity of the narrator, the doctor decides to propose to the young girl even as he knows "she would shame me" (240).

With translation assistance from the narrator, the surgeon gives Jeannette an offer she cannot possibly refuse:

> "Jeannette," he said, going toward her, "I have come to take you away with me. You need not go to school; I have given up that idea,—I accept you as you are. You shall have silk dresses and ribbons, like the ladies at the Mission-House this summer. You shall see all the great cities, you shall hear beautiful music. You shall have everything you want, —money, bright shillings, as many as you wish. (241)

To the shock of all, Jeannette scorns the offer exclaiming that she loves an French fisherman named Baptiste, who in turn, loves her "more than boat and silver dollar—more than all the world!"

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Jeannette's denial of a man who supposedly "will take (her) away from this hard life" and "will make (her) rich" (241) can be read as her refusal to accept the encroachment of any outside power be it in the form of a lover, a culture, or a nation. Hers is a feminist claim for the right of self-determination and a dismantling of hierarchical thinking in which "civilization" is valorized over "the natural," and males are viewed as all-knowing and strong, the antithesis of females.

Also poignant about this story is its progressive position that not only the domain of the individual (or state) must be respected, but that, ideally, the interchange between two parties should lead to a mutually beneficial learning process in which nothing is lost and much is gained. For example, although most of the white inhabitants of Mackinac frown upon Jeannette's marriage to "Baptiste, a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow" that at best can only keep them happy "after their fashion," the narrator has learned better. The lesson she thus imparts to *Scribner's* readers is a respect for cultures not one's own and a warning against imposing one's beliefs and values onto others, who do not seek them.

As with the fiction of Burnett, Phelps, and Davis, "Jeannette" is another stunning example of feminist writing that counters *Scribner's* larger cultural project to impose a strict definition of the term "American" that valorized dominant Victorian values and assumptions.[74] Woolson's "unAmerican" tale,[75] like the work of so many of her female

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[74] As Roger M. Smith writes in *Civic Ideas: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History*, "The Peace Policy effectively made repudiation of native religions and ways of life, and acceptance of middle-class American Christianity with its attendant customs, official prerequisites for admission to U.S. citizenship" (319).

[75] In her article "'Not in the Least American': Nineteenth-Century Literary Regionalism," Judith Fetterly notes that much American Regionalist literature by women challenges, rather then accepts, values associated with the term "American" in nineteenth-century culture and literature. Fetterly explains that this body of literature is "unAmerican" in that it tends to oppose WASP hegemony in favor of empathy, that it eschews sexism and ageism, that it concerns a wide range of subjectivities and themes beyond what Nina Baym has labeled white male author's "melodramas of beset manhood," and that it seeks to restore into public memory increasingly marginalized modes of life.

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colleagues, shows how different the positions of men and women often were. As will be further examined in later chapters, the "oppositional" writing of Woolson and her cohorts also helps to explain why the male editorship of *Scribner's* tried to mute feminist and other "radical" views as the decade progressed.

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CHAPTER III: DISCOVERING (SOUTHERN) REGIONALISM: *SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY* AND THE MAKING OF MODERN NATIONHOOD

"Ah, Mossy, you are right, to be sure; to make a complete world we must have swords *and* pens."[76]

"Madame Délicieuse" (10: 503; August 1875)

Like the Americas before the landing of Columbus which were composed of approximately seventy-five million people speaking nearly two hundred different languages (Brinkley 18), the United States of America from its declaration of independent nationhood has always had its distinctive geographic regions and varied population groups. Henry Adams in his *History of the United States During the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison* (1884), for example, located three distinct regions in the nation prior to 1800: New England, the Middle States, and the South (Cox 762). Up until this time, America itself had largely been a "region" of England, unique in its own way, but more in degree than in fact. Though the Revolutionary War had given official sanction to political separateness, it was not until America began to develop an intellectual or literary culture that it could call its own that "a fully imagined political community," Benedict Anderson's phrase for nationhood, was well-nigh achieved. Instrumental in establishing this claim to cultural independence was the rise of writers such as Washington Irving, Catharine Sedgwick, and James Fenimore Cooper and the many luminaries of Transcendental New England, all of whom made notable attempts to repudiate Englishman Sydney Smith's infamous quip of 1820: "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?" Assisted by the efforts of "Young

[76] General Hercule Mossy de Villivicencio to his son on the need to fight the political battle for Southern "home" rule in the press.

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Americans" such as John O'Sullivan, editor of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* (1837-1852), and Evert Duyckinck, editor of the *Cyclopedia of American Literature* (1855-56), both of whom helped orchestrate and market native cultural cohesiveness with exceptional verve and tenacity, literature and art that was "American" came to mean in the words of O'Sullivan: "fresh," "bold," and "vigorous ... like a land pressing onward to a future state of glorious enlargement. The holy instincts of democracy guide every expression and prompt and animate every strand" (qtd. in Widmer 67).

Like Melville's *Pequod*, Young America's expansive cultural mission during the first half of the nineteenth century to guide and accurately depict the world's largest democracy was on a course for destruction; though portrayed as cohesive and graced by Manifest Destiny, America was in fact marked by vicious sectionalism that could only culminate in the shedding of blood for final settlement. Whereas the beginning of the Civil War marked the end of Young America's campaign to separate fully from England and unify the cultural and political markers of "Americanness," the war's aftermath witnessed a rejuvenation of this same project. For example, in a speech entitled "Our Obligation to the Dead" given at Yale in 1865, the prominent Protestant minister Horace Bushnell proposed that a leading responsibility of American writers was "henceforth ... not ... to write English, but American. We have gotten our position, we are now to have our own civilization, think our own thoughts, rhyme our own measures." In *Democratic Vistas* (1870) Walt Whitman would echo Bushnell's plea. Though far from optimistic as he had once been, the poet beckoned for an original, masculine strand of literature and art that, in contrast to the prevailing mediocrity, could guide the republic and reflect its true glory:

> What is the reason our time, our lands, that we see no fresh local courage, sanity, of our own—the Mississippi, stalwart Western men, real mental and

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> physical facts, Southerners, &c., in the body of our literature? Especially the poetic part of it. But always, instead, a parcel of dandies and ennuyees, dapper little gentlemen from abroad, who flood us with their thin sentiment of parlors, parasols, piano-songs, tinkling rhymes, the five-hundredth importation—or whimpering and crying about something, chasing one aborted conceit after another, and forever occupied in dyspeptic amours with dyspeptic women. ("Democratic Vistas" xroads.virginia.edu)

In answer to such calls was *Scribner's Monthly,* America's first literary magazine of distinction to achieve a large, truly national audience. Though *Scribner's* did initially publish its share of "dandies from abroad" as well as the occasional "dyspeptic amours of women" (and men it should be added), beginning in the early 1870s, the magazine's editors made a conscious effort to seek out and publish the work of talented men and women, who in fact-filled narratives teeming in dialect and "local color" documented with seeming authenticity America's various regions suddenly more numerous, so it felt, than ever before. Indeed, by 1875, *Scribner's* had even established a policy of "publishing exclusively American serial stories" having concluded that "only a few American novelists were being developed, simply because the works of British writers were brought into a depressing and even a suppressing competition with them" (21:151; Nov. 1880).

In accordance with its "American policy," *Scribner's* in the 1870s published the New England tales of Helen Hunt Jackson under the pseudonym "Saxe Holm," the proto-Realist tales of Rebecca Harding Davis (usually set along the mid-Atlantic seaboard), the local color tales of Constance Fenimore Woolson (set in the Great Lakes region of Wisconsin and, when she moved there, the South), and the nature writings of John Burroughs, a native woodsman of upstate New York, a region Josiah Holland himself drew upon for his popular novel *Sevenoaks* (Jan. 1875-Dec. 1875). In the tales of Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen such as "Story of an Outcast" (Nov. 1874), "Turls, the Nameless" (April 1875), and "A Good-for-Nothing"

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(July 1875), *Scribner's* readers also learned of hearty Nordic immigrants in the mid-West engaged in the alchemy of Americanization, a theme dealt with at length in his novel *Falconberg* (Aug. 1878-April 1879).[77] Prior to his publication of *The Hoosier School-Master*, Edward Eggleston had also appeared in *Scribner's* evoking his Indiana childhood in apprentice fiction such as "Huldah the Help" (Dec. 1870), "Ben: A Story for May-Day" (May 1871), and "Priscilla" (Nov. 1871). The Far West was also represented in *Scribner's*. Most famously, having paid top dollar to publish several of his short stories and poems concerning life in the frontier towns of California, the magazine's editors in 1875 offered the unprecedented sum of $6000 to Bret Harte for *Gabriel Conroy* (Nov. 1875-Aug. 1876), recognized today as the prototype of the Western novel and a major influence on James Joyce's "The Dead."[78] Also noteworthy were the accounts of California and Mexico by the journalist Mary Halleck Foote, who had begun her connection with the magazine as an illustrator.[79]

While all of these regional sketches, tales, and accounts present in their own ways a "story" of America, it is nonetheless possible to theorize generally about the advent of Regionalism in the pages of *Scribner's Monthly*. On one hand, the promotion of typically

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[77] On the book publication of *Falconberg*, a *Scribner's* reviewer wrote that "Mr. Boyeson has opened an entirely new field of romance among the settlements of Norwegians in the North-west. The contact of slow, conservative farmers from Scandinavia with the bustle and stir of Anglo-Saxondom in its American phase cannot fail to offer picturesque situations, and these Mr. Boyesen has liberally used" ("Culture and Progress" 18:472; July 1879). The idea of the frontier as an ideal space for exchanging old-world skins for new-world habits and attitudes is famously elaborated in Frederick Jackson Turner's *The Frontier in American History*: "In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics" (23).

[78] As Clarence Gohdes has written, the novel introduced now familiar motifs such as travelers lost in the snows of the Sierra, a cattle stampede, a frontier murder trial, the discovery of a silver mine, as well as an assortment of Western "types" including the California stage-coach driver and the gallant gambler and ladies man in Jack Hamlin. James Joyce, the self-proclaimed "swordswallower" in *Finnegans Wake*, essentially lifted Harte's beautiful description of falling snow as well the name of his eponymous hero for his well-known *Dubliners* tale. See Arthur Hobson Quinn's *The Literature of the American People*. (NY: Appleton-Centry-Crofts, 1951).

[79] For more on how the West became mythologized via literary accounts see Goetzmann, William H. and Goetzmann, William N. in *The West of the Imagination* (NY: Norton, 1986).

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American works was seen as a way of putting America on equal footing with Europe, long renowned for its bold and awe-inspiring cultural productions. In hailing the unique and often majestic landscape of America and its varied people, *Scribner's* editors sought to promote native sources as material for great art and writing. The appearance of Regionalist works in *Scribner's* was also a response to widespread native interest in America's variegated regions. This interest, which *Scribner's* both capitalized on and helped sustain, was, in part, propelled by the extension of railroads across the country which opened up worlds hitherto unknown to most citizens as well as the increase in leisure time for the middle and upper classes, which permitted tourism, both actual and imaginative (Gohdes 639; Brodhead 124-25).

The awareness of sections was further enhanced by the continued growth of populations beyond the Mississippi River and the internecine war that had just been fought. As Clarence Gohdes points out, the emergence of western townships gave rise to feelings of local patriotism "based upon economic and political conflict with the East" while the North and the South continued to view each other with suspicion and disdain (640). The editors of *Scribner's* had a strong interest in pacifying these sectional antagonisms which it sought to achieve by exhibiting all of America's varied regions, the South in particular, in a favorable light. Not only would such depictions lead to a nationwide audience, but projecting the image of a disparate, yet unified nation fulfilled the genteel aspirations of *Scribner's* editors who sought to present to their readers a vision of a land marked by harmony, civility, and progress.

As cultural historians such as Warner Berthoff, T. J. Jackson Lears, and Eric Sundquist suggest, the popularity of Regionalist writing of the kind appearing in *Scribner's* also derived from its strong romance element, which captured the attention of large numbers

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of middle-class readers, not incidentally, during a time of rapid corporate-capitalist development, industrialization, and urbanization. According to these historians, living in the cities and working clock-regulated jobs had left many Americans overwhelmed with new anxieties and thus nostalgic for visions of life in the provinces. As Lears writes, the vitality and simplicity of pastoral living projected in this material provided "educated bourgeoise" readers an "alternative to modern unreality" (5) and the alienation it wrought.

In *Culture of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America*, Richard Brodhead persuasively builds on the claims of Berthoff, Lears, and Sundquist. According to him, the extensive public demand for regionalism owed, in large part, to the role of cultural elegy that it performed. As he explains:

> It is the work of memorializing a cultural order passing from life at the moment and of fabricating, in the literary realm, a mentally possessable version of a love thing lost in reality. Nineteenth-century regionalism can be said to have manufactured, in its monthly-renewed public imaging of old-fashioned social worlds, a cultural version of D. W. Winnicott's transitional object: a symbol of union with the premodern chosen at the moment of separation from it. (120)

For Brodhead, regionalism served to mourn lost cultures that were supposedly disappearing, necessarily superceded by a modern order that had taken national dominance. In essence, regionalism worked through the "emotional difficulties" caused by seemingly inevitable national change, a soothing palliative that, in fact, played a crucial role to insure that the wheels of capitalism turned unmolested.

It is largely with the aforementioned views in mind that I would like approach the Regionalist writings of two more writers who appeared in *Scribner's* in the 1870s: Edward King and George Washington Cable. Both of these writers wrote about the region below the Mason/Dixon line—King by literally "covering" the South in his 400+ page depiction of the

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area entitled "The Great South" (Nov. 1873-April 1875) and Cable, literally discovered by King in his travels, who in his fiction focused on the lives of New Orleans Creoles usually in the antebellum era, whose encounters with *les Américains* were thinly veiled metaphors of northern incursion into the South following the Civil War. Though sharing some points, King's and Cable's guidelines for the South's readmission into the Union were far from identical varying most crucially on the requirements and duties of citizenship and dueling concepts of political economy. Recognizable as the "New South Creed" adopted by the North in its abandonment of Reconstruction,[80] King's highly influential account favored an immediate return to elite white home rule and economic regeneration through northern investment and industrial expansion that privileged capital over labor and encouraged the subordination of the "lower orders."[81] Cable's fiction, on the other hand, insisted on a thorough reformation of southern society including the just treatment of former slaves, non-ascriptive egalitarianism generally,[82] a firm commitment to the ideology of "free labor,"[83]

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[80] See Paul M. Gaston, *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York, Knopf: 1970).

[81] In the first few years following the Civil War, a spate of books and articles by Northern authors decrying the political abuses of unrepentant former confederates appeared, ultimately leading to a more radical reconstruction policy. By the 1870s, however, books about the South such as James Shepherd Pike's *The Prostrate State: South Carolina Under Negro Government* now told of new abuses this time at the hands of "Carpetbaggers," "Scalawags," and the ignorant blacks they allegedly coerced. Though somewhat more objective than the work of Pike and sensationalists like him, King's series clearly demonstrates how the antagonisms of the War had largely cooled and Northern readers were beginning to sympathize with the "suffering" of ex-Confederates "under the oppression of Negro misrule."

[82] In *Civic Ideals*, Richard Dagger discusses the "inegalitarian ascriptive traditions of Americanism" (3) to mean social and political arrangements that assign political identities "on the basis of such ascribed characteristics as race, gender, and the usually unaltered nationality and religion into which people were born" (3).

[83] Adherents of free labor ideology believed that every man had the right to support and improve his economic condition by using his labor and the raw materials around him to produce value. By hard work and perseverance workers such as farmers and mechanics could accumulate wealth and eventually become land and/or business owner themselves. Free labor enthusiasts believed in the sanctity of private property, that increased production in a free labor system benefited everyone (consumer and producers, employees and employers), and that government should rarely interfere with the natural operation of the economy (Cox 6-7). As Eric Foner in *Free Labor, Free Soil, Free Men* asserts, Northerners fought the Civil War largely to defend free labor ideology against the slave-holding South: "Republicans had brought into the war an ideology grounded in a conviction of the superiority of free to slave labor, which saw the distinctive quality of Northern society as the opportunity it offered the wage laborer to rise to the status of independent farmer or craftsman" (12).

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and the promotion of communitarian, participatory civic ideals over the liberal-capitalist ethos of atomized individualism.[84]

As Robert Underwood, one of *Scribner's* assistant editors, would later write in his memoir *Remembered Yesterdays*, "The Great South" was "the first high note of nationalism struck by the magazine, ... conceived in magnanimity and sympathy ... and catering to a southern audience" (96). In comparison, though recognizing the literary merit of his work, *Scribner's* editors approached the reformist political views espoused in Cable's Creole tales and his serialized novel *The Grandissimes* with apprehension and, at times, openly expressed misgivings.[85] In yet another example of Victorian Americans' general preference for "evasive banality" during a time of enormous social turbulence, which Lears discusses, *Scribner's* editors (and the majority of their readers it can be presumed) clearly preferred Cable "the Romancer" to Cable "the Realist," and in King manufactured a South to their liking, which would, unfortunately, become *the* reality until the Civil Rights movement almost one century later.

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> Louisiana to-day is Paradise Lost. In twenty years it may be Paradise Regained. It has unlimited, faery, enchanting possibilities. Now, upon its bayou-penetrated soil, on its rich uplands and its vast prairies, a gigantic struggle is in progress. It is the battle of race with race, of the picturesque and unjust civilization of the past with the prosaic and leveling civilization of the present. (7:1; Nov. 1873)

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[84] Cable's plan, in essence, asked for a continuance of the schema once envisioned by Northern Republicans—to allow equal opportunity for all to work and prosper—a schema, as King's report demonstrates, that fell from favor as African Americans came to be viewed as less than ideal laborers, who preferred government handouts to hard work, and abused their use of the ballot. See Heather Cox Richardson's *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1902* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002).

[85] In a well-known passage from *Patriotic Gore*, Edmund Wilson went so far as to claim that "the slow strangulation of Cable as an artist and a serious writer [by *Scribner's-Century's* editors] is surely one of the most gruesome episodes in American literary history" (579).

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So begins King's report on Louisiana, the first state to be covered in *Scribner's* most costly and widely advertised series up to that point. In these opening lines is exposed the cultural elegy of which Brodhead has spoken: the desire on the part of the author to memorialize an earlier cultural order "as a love thing lost" precisely and necessarily at its moment of disappearance. The South, formerly an Edenic paradise destroyed by its very refusal to change, will regain its former glory with nary any misgivings if only it joins with the progressive "race" of northerners.[86] This is the tale of modern nationhood fabricated by King and J. Wells Champney, the acclaimed artist accompanying him, in the descriptions and illustrations of the South that follow, not incidentally, in a magazine devoted to Protestant uplift and moral regeneration.

The contrast of old and new, the South as it was, as it is, and as it will now hopefully become, produce the central exhibits in the opening section tellingly entitled "Louisiana: Past and Present." Evidencing the evolutionary science of the day as well as the desire to transcend history in the inauguration of a more "usable" past, these exhibits serve to show that what is to be lost is ultimately for the best and that the transition into modernity will be both seamless and "natural." To accomplish these symbolic tasks, King first lulls his readers into a rendition of seemingly ancient history "bathed in the atmosphere of conspiracy." Neatly bypassing early Native American presence in the region (except to mention that the "savage element" had been quickly "vanquished"), King recounts how the "Frenchman and

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[86] As this passage shows, the use of the term "race" before the 20th century was not simply based on differences of physiognomy, but on complex cultural considerations that made the term fluid depending on its usage. This evidence lends credence to Matthew Jacobson's important contention that "American scholarship on immigration has generally conflated race and color, and so has transported a late-twentieth-century understanding of 'difference' into a period whose inhabitants recognized biologically based 'races' rather than culturally based 'ethnicities.' But in the interests of a n accurate historical rendering of race in the structure of U.S. culture and in the experiences of those immigrant groups now called 'Caucasians,' we must listen more carefully to the historical sources than to the conventions of our own era; we must admit of a system of 'difference': by which one might be both white and racially distinct from other whites" (6).

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Spaniard, Canadian and Yankee, intrigued and planned on Louisiana soil with an energy and fierceness displayed nowhere else in our early history" (2). Upon investigating life in Louisiana under Spanish rule, then French, and finally American, the author implies that after a past "so richly varied, so charming, so unique" (2), the march of progress is well underway.

Building upon his historical romance, King proceeds to depict the "good old city of New Orleans" in similarly picturesque terms:

> From the tower of the Cathedral St. Louis the tremulous harmony of bells drifts lightly on the cool spring breeze, and hovers like a benediction over the antique buildings, the blossoms and hedges in the square, and the broad and swiftly-flowing river.... (3)

Reminiscent of the Plantation Myth fiction beginning to appear at the same time as King's series that would be used to enormous ideological affect by southern writers, this passage concocts a soothing, otherworldly experience for the reader, a revisiting/revising of the past in nostalgic terms. The longing induced by this passage, however, is tactically short-lived. Abruptly, the reader is reminded that "this is not an American scene, and one almost persuades himself that he is in Europe, although ten minutes of rapid walking will bring him to streets and squares as generically American as any in Boston, Chicago, or St. Louis" (3).

In contrast to his description of decadent, slow-moving Europeanized New Orleans where "every foreign type moves in a special current of its own" (3), King next describes a regenerate force emerging in the region: "the overworked American in his business establishment and in his elegant home" (3). To emphasize "the rush and hurry of American traffic of to-day along the levee," the author is careful to note "the sharp-featured 'river-hand,'" "the huge piles of cotton bales," and "the monotonous whistle of the gigantic white steamers arriving and departing" (3). In his juxtaposition of the "New England Puritan mode

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of life" now budding in New Orleans against that of the Franco-Spanish, King's intention to valorize American industry and economic prowess is made clear: "the one stands erect, vibrating with life and activity, austere and ambitious, upon its rocky shores: the other lies prone, its rich vitality dormant and passive, luxurious and unambitious, on the glorious shores of the tropic Gulf" (4).

In his descriptions of the two sides to Louisiana, King clearly establishes a hierarchy of groups and values. On one side are the "Anglo-Saxons" who are striving to make New Orleans a bustling, orderly town of commerce, industry, and wealth. On the other side are the less ambitious people—the French/Spanish Creoles and other southerners, who, though charming, seem to value sloth, merriment, and procrastination over the greater virtues of vitality, discipline, and progress. As the author hopes to show, the battle of "race versus race" is being won by those most fit for modern civilization: the entrepreneurs who worship at the shrine of industrial capitalism.

In this same section images of African Americans also abound, none of which, however, depict fully conceived individuals possessing positive virtues. Instead, blacks are typically depicted as beleaguered representatives of their race, ciphers, as Henry Louis Gates has written, lacking humanity, complexity, and history.[87] Neither "citizens nor aliens,"[88] they are simply viewed as quaint backdrops to a nation in re-formation. One image, for example, with the byline "Waiting for a Job," is literally described as a "touch of Americanism: a lazy negro, recumbent in a cart, with his eyes languidly closed, and one dirty foot sprawled on the sidewalk" (10) [Figure 19]. His credentials as a candidate for citizenry

[87] Henry Louis Gates, "The Face and Voice of Blackness," in Guy C. McElroy et. al. *Facing History: The Black Image in American Art, 1710-1940* (San Francisco: Bedford Arts, 1990): xxix.
[88] Priscilla Wald's cogent phrase for native inhabitants who do not "constitute" Americanness.

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are further parodied by the language that he speaks, or rather misspeaks. We are told that this particular black "responds to your question in French, which he speaks poorly though fluently" and come to learn that in New Orleans "there are multitudes of negroes who speak French and English both, in the quaintest, most outlandish fashion, eliding whole syllables which seem necessary to sense, and breaking into most extravagant exclamations on the smallest of pretexts" (14). Throughout King's series (and *Scribner's Magazine* generally), poor language skills indicate more than simply foreignness, but unredeemable otherness.

Another image advancing the stereotype of Louisiana blacks as unsuited for participating in a modern, industrialized nation without close supervision shows a group of six ragged, yet apparently self-satisfied blacks passing the time engaged in sleep and/or talk. The passage to which this illustration refers specifies the message the author intends:

> the negroes, taken as a whole, seem somewhat shuffling and disorganized; ... They gather in groups at the street corners just at nightfall, and while they chatter like monkeys, even about politics, they gesticulate violently. They live without much work, for their wants are few; ... as a rule, the negro of the French quarter is thick-headed, light-hearted, improvident, and not too conscientious. (7:15; Nov. 1873) [Figure 20]

Though referring specifically to blacks of the French Quarter, the above paragraph and accompanying image demonstrate for the reader how the author of "The Great South" views nationhood and citizenship. Modern America, King implies, is to be marked by orderliness, sobriety, industry, property ownership, rational calculation, properly spoken English, and, of course, whiteness of skin. Unruliness, improvidence, passivity, disregard for property rights, and/or "ethnically deformed" speech (Brodhead's intriguing term for broken English or dialect) will mark those who are not quite deserving of the appellation American.

It is such weighted dichotomies, at times literally in black and white, which prepare the reader for King's inevitable analysis of the political situation in Louisiana, a state that

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was then on the minds of many northerners.[89] In King's account, one gathers that the North was already tiring of the great Radical Republican experiment in racial equality and was beginning to side with former southern plantation owners and politicians who used to hold sovereignty, and were soon to reclaim it. As King writes:

> The testimony of most of the planters in Lousiana, as elsewhere throughout the South, is that the negro works well, and earns his wages, save when he is distracted by politics. Indeed, there are none who are willing to assert that free labor has not been a success; and the majority would prefer it to the most arbitrary days of ownership, if the State were otherwise in a settled condition.
>
> It is, nevertheless, evident that political excitements, gotten up by adventurers with the hope of obtaining power, take the negro's attention altogether too much from his work, and constitute a species of mild intellectual dissipation, which he thinks it vastly fine to indulge in, but which only unfits him for serious efforts at progress, and factitiously elevates him to a position directly opposed to the interests of his fellow-citizens.
>
> Judging from conversations with great numbers of persons, there is not much hope that the equality of races will be at present recognized by the white man in Louisiana. He will not admit that the negro is at all competent to legislate for him, or to vote with him on matters of common importance to white and black.
>
> (7:148; Dec. 1873)

Although King at times concedes that slavery was largely responsible for the perceived failings and moral delinquency of blacks and given opportunity and education, they could, and rightfully should, rise to a respectable level, the overall impression of blacks that he gives in his accounts is generally low and, often times, virulently racist. As the above

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[89] Because Louisiana had been one of the first states in the South to reenter the Union under Reconstruction and had, as Eric Foner writes, "the nation's most articulate and politicized black community" (30), throughout the 1870s, it served as a litmus test upon which arguments concerning black equality and political rights were often based. Indeed, the events of this time there were revealing on several fronts. For example, as Foner writes, though black Louisianians had initially made great strides in securing full suffrage, desegregating Louisiana schools and New Orleans's streetcars, and dividing up plantations amongst themselves, white prejudice against blacks in this region led to innumerable acts of terrorism including the horrendous "Colfax Massacre" and a frightful wave of violence during the 1876 Presidential elections. Ultimately, white Democrats would reclaim power and keep blacks from the polls leading to the great black "hegira" (exodus) of 1879-1880.

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passage shows reflecting the general tenor of increasingly disaffected northern Republicans, he was much more likely to praise the dignity that the abolishment of slavery returned to labor,[90] than to commend blacks who have gained economic and/or political power.

If blacks are typically viewed as unindustrious, overly-excitable and, thus, politically incapable "Sambos," King's account of Louisiana portrays ex-Confederates as victims of unkind and unwise fate. The white man, King writes, feels helpless before

> the tyranny of those who use the new political element for base purposes which is constantly increasing in boldness and violence.... The citizens are willing and anxious to work, but all their energy, all the intense commercial ambition of New Orleans is neutralized by the incubus of a legislature which in no wise properly represents the people. (7:149; Dec. 1873)

Apparently, for King blacks do not constitute "the people," but instead take political powers away from those who are more truly representative, though, deservedly (so he suggests) resentful. The rightful politicians of a truly reconstructed South, King makes clear, are those "Louisiana men of brilliant and imposing eloquence; men of *entrain* and magnetism, who seemed fashioned for leadership; and yet, strange as it may appear, who take but little interest."[91]

What King conveniently fails to mention, however, is just how unreconstructed these white men remain. For example, though King notes the theme for that year's Mardi Gras had been "the 'Darwinian Development of the Species' from earliest beginnings to the gorilla,

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[90] King's reluctant praise of black workers, and his more common depictions of them as lacking industry, tended to encourage the notion, increasingly held by Northerner Republicans, that the ideology of free labor had essentially failed amongst Southern black laborers.

[91] Later in this section, in another attempt to elicit the reader's sympathy for white Southerners on racial grounds (an art form later perfected by D.W. Griffith in *Birth of a Nation*, which King's series clearly presages), the author writes: "Ah! These faces—these faces, expressing deeper pain, profounder discontent than that caused by the iron fate of the past few years! One sees them everywhere; on the street, at the theater, in the *salon*, in the cars: and pauses for a moment, struck with the expression of entire despair—of complete helplessness, which has possessed their features" (14).

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and thence to man" (7:24; Nov. 1873), as Cable's biographer Louis Rubin points out, "he did not mention that each of the figures in the parade had been a satire on the Federal administration —General 'Beast' Butler a hyena, President Grant a tobacco grub, and so on—nor did he say that the parade had ended in chaos and had to be disbanded before reaching its final destination" (16).

Ignoring the very evidence that would feed Cable's political activism to the detriment of his literary career, King concludes his assessment of the political situation of Louisiana by implying that without the leadership of men truly destined for political power, the South will be insufficiently reconstructed:

> The negro afield, with his sturdy family around him, cultivating the little plot which has at last become his, and the white man, with his own hand to the plough, showing that he no longer thinks labor degrading, are, to be sure, gratifying sights, which present themselves from time to time; but they are by no means so common as they would be if the State were not constantly anguish-stricken, overwhelmed with taxation and myriad debts, and hindered from making the improvements necessary to the securing of new trade and consequent prosperity. (7:149; Dec. 1873)

In this closing assessment of Louisiana's political and economic turmoil is an implied vision of how the state should be run if it is to reach its proper destiny. According to King, blacks ought to be given the opportunity to work and own "a little" property, but should keep their hands away from matters of legislation. Southern whites, in turn, must develop a respect for labor and industry and should take the helm in achieving prosperity for their region through participation in politics and commercial leadership. The vision of nationhood that King promotes is one in which all citizens share in the world's work, but only the "best" citizens—by which he intends educated, property-owning white males—handle positions of management and power.

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The northern prescription for redemption, as outlined by King, apparently holds true for all of the southern states. In a discussion of Texas, for example, he lets his readers know that, like Louisiana, it is not a land without charm, and more importantly, without natural resources that should lead to economic prosperity. In a trope recalling the "industrial reverie" Mary Louise Pratt identifies with the capitalist vanguard of colonialist explorers throughout the Americas (152), King notes approvingly how

> the lands at the head of Galveston Bay, and on the adjoining San Jacinto Bay, as well as all the lands in immediate proximity to the Gulf, are well adapted to the culture of sea-island cotton—equal in quality to the best grown upon the islands along the South Carolina and Georgia coasts. It would be difficult to imagine a better paying culture than that of this excellent staple, the yield being from $200 to $300 in gold per acre. The alluvial lands along the Gulf demand the presence of the Chinaman; great fortunes lie hidden in their flats. (7:404-5; Feb. 1874)

In a tactic consistent with the mapping out of a land for conquest (which literary Regionalism, in a sense, sets out to do), the author appends statistical tables projecting year-by-year figures for cotton production and revenues. The numbers are formidable and King's prose exalts in the triumphant language he will return to again and again upon discussing the productive possibilities of southern lands, mines, and waterways. After much talk about returning dignity to labor, King's account, however, reeks of hypocrisy to the modern reader. By advertising the fact that it will be the "Chinaman" who will perform the intensive back-breaking labor necessary to transform "alluvial lands" into gold, King simply replaces the former system of slavery, with a new form: the cheap hiring of an immigrant workforce, that like black slaves of old, will also be without political rights.[92]

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[92] It is not simply the exploitation of immigrant labor that King cites with alluring eyes. Also insuring low costs for developers and investors is the extensive availability of cheap labor provided by convicts. As modern history books now tells us, convicts were extremely numerous in the South largely because of the 'Black Codes' enacted by Southern whites immediately following the end of the Civil War. For the smallest of infractions,

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That King aims to essentially reproduce the caste system of the antebellum South becomes evident in his almost obsessive ordering of the southern body politic according to representative types. Recalling the censuses, maps, and museums that modern nations in their infancy often call for, page after page of the series asks the reader to join the author in cataloging and examining a vast array of human specimens. In part, the depiction of southern "types" (a term the author himself uses) is part of King's strategy to show that a genuine community existed amongst a large variety of Americans, a crucial concern following the war "between brothers" and an expanding nation with an increasing number of "strangers in the land."[93] As Eric Hobsbawm reminds us, imaginatively producing a common "folk" (largely with premodern characteristics) is also a familiar feature of nationalist ideology "which claims to defend folk culture even while it invents high culture" (Hobsbawn 124). Effectively representing *difference* (specifically difference from *Scribner's* mostly northern elite readership—and identification as we will also see), these many figures and faces clearly encouraged readers to invest in hierarchies of class, race, and even gender.[94] As we look at and read about the ragged attire of the country bumpkin, the shadowy faces of the Creek Indian and the Mexican beggar, the "Terminus" rough, the endless array of black stereotypes (including the former slave nostalgic for the past, the upstart spoiled by freedom, the happy-go-lucky "Sambo," and the Carpetbagger's pawn [Figure 21]) and, one should

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blacks could and were sentenced to work as prison laborers leased by the state, at a great profit, to expanding companies in the South, most notably, to railroad concerns. Whereas Cable in the pages of *Scribner's-Century* in 1884 lashes out at the brutality and immorality of the convict lease system in the South, King, a decade earlier, can only see this labor force as a boon "particularly in the building of railways and the clearing of forests."

[93] This phrase is taken from the title of John Higham's classic text on American nativism.

[94] For more on the history and meaning of typing in American art and media see Elizabeth Johns, *American Genre Painting: The Politics of Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1991), 8-9. Albert Biome, *The Art of Exclusion: Representing Blacks in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990) and Joshua Brown, "Reconstructing Representation: Social Types, Readers, and the Pictorial Press, 1865-1877" (*Radical History Review* 66, 1996: 5-38).

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add, the absence of virtually any women, it is apparent that these images (and absences) are in diametric opposition to the many portraits and biographies of southern white gentry (almost exclusively male). For example, in contrast to the many unflattering or patronizingly droll images of local exotics, we learn of Sam Houston, described as a southerner of "extraordinary merit, sternness, strength of will, and possessed of foresight beyond the ordinary range" (7:117; Feb. 1874). The reader is also allowed to rest his admiring gaze on Colonel Vick, of Vicksburg Mississippi, described as "a specimen of the noble-looking men grown in the Mississippi valley—six feet four in stature, erect and stately, with the charming courtesy of the old school" (117) [Figure 22]. Particularly striking is that in less than ten years since the end of the Civil War, handsome portraits of General Robert E. Lee and General "Stonewall" Jackson now flood the pages of a northern magazine. In *Scribner's*, the rehabilitation of white southern masculinity and the reconstituting of Americanness generally—which will continue throughout the 1880s especially in the magazine's famed Civil War series—have clearly begun.

Following in the wake of Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1871), Charles L. Brace's *The Races of the Old World: A Manual of Ethnology* (1863 with numerous reprints throughout the 1870s), and Arnold Genry Guyon's *Physical Geography* (1866), King's series is, in many ways, part of white America's obsession at that time with the causes and significance of alleged racial and regional differences, an interest demonstrated by *Scribner's* own contribution to the "science" of Ethnology entitled "Savage Man" (which immediately follows King's discussion of Louisiana).[95] Tellingly, King's showcasing of southern regional and racial types, and racial studies generally, came at a time when a growing flood

[95] See R. C. Bannister's *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1979) and Stephen Jay Gould's *Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1981).

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of immigrants (mostly into northern cities),[96] as well as the emancipation of southern blacks, began threatening the Victorian contours of what Josiah Strong famously called "Our Country."[97]

What King's series helps to show is that by the mid-1870s, the interests of northern elites and southern planter-aristocrats had already become closely aligned. For their part, the northern gentry and industrialists came to increasingly fear a loss of dominance and control brought about by immigration and "foreign"-led labor agitation (and the female suffragist movement it should be added). This perceived crisis in the social order, in turn, caused them to see parallels in the "excesses" and "abuses" of the newly freed blacks reported on by journalists like King, Charles Nordhoff, John S. Pike, and Robert Somers.[98] Encouraging such notions were white southerners, who also felt a diminution of status, not simply because they had lost the war, but owing to the humiliation (so perceived) attending the constitutional backing of black male suffrage. Thus, both northerners and southerners, for slightly different (albeit intertwined) reasons sought, in the mid-1870s, to reestablish the so-called Anglo-Saxon race (specifically white *men*) as dominant through myth-making.

It is significant to note, however, that in the "The Great South" whiteness alone is not the sole criteria for "natural" eminence. Apparently, as King's description of "a pair of Georgia 'crackers'" reveals, the failure to live by principles other than the maximizing,

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[96] In *America in the Gilded Age: From the Death of Lincoln to the Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (NY: New York UP, 1983) Sean Cashman writes that "During the Gilded Age 80 percent of immigrants settled in the Northeastern quadrilateral between Canada; the Atlantic; Washington, D.C.; and St. Louis, Missouri."

[97] As the many panic-ridden editorials in *Scribner's* discussing the conflict between labor and capital show, the 1870s were also a time when the Northern gentry began to view the working classes with suspicion. The elite-dominated media, as Joshua Brown explains, thus sought to further "map" out the "other" along class lines as a means of surveillance and social control. "Depicting social types whose features and figures were imbued by the rules of physiognomy," Brown writes, "illustrations in the pictorial press constructed an orderly, detectable, and moral map for what seemed so hidden and chaotic in the industrialization and urbanization of mid-nineteenth-century America" (11).

[98] See Charles Nordhoff 's *The Cotton States in the Spring and Summer of 1875* (1876), John S. Pike's *The Prostrate State* (1874), and Robert Somers' *The Southern States Since the War* (1876).

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rationalizing mechanism of industrial production and a lack of education (in theVictorian sense) also implies inferiority [Figure 23]. As King reports, they are

> a people who have plenty of cattle, and might raise the finest beef and mutton, but who rarely see milk or butter, and wear out their systems with indigestible pork and poor whiskey. The indolence, ignorance, and remoteness from any well-ordered farming regions are the excuses. These as the sallow and lean people who always feel "tollable," but who never feel well. (8:5; May 1874)

King concludes his deprecating analysis in the tone of a dispirited scientific manager, then coming to prominence, by explaining that "The Georgia '*cracker*' is eminently shiftless; he seems to fancy that he was born with his hands in his pockets, his back curved, and his slouch hat crowded over his eyes, and does his best to maintain this attitude forever" (6).

While we have seen King deride "shiftlessness" and ignorance before, his imputing of these traits, along with malignant physical characteristics, onto other white Americans show that the imperatives of capitalism and "herrenfolk" democracy in the postbellum South also called for a shift in the construction of "whiteness," as Matthew Frye Jacobson explains, "from the unquestioned hegemony of a unified race of 'white persons' to a contest over political 'fitness' among a now fragmented, hierarchically arranged series of distinct 'white races'" (43).[99] Once depicted by antebellum writers such as Augustus B. Longstreet as representing "the seat of a pure American folk—homely in wit, neighborly in customs, and yet rustically independent in conduct" (Buck 201), the denizens of middle Georgia, and poor whites generally, suddenly found themselves exhibiting "whiteness of a different color," under the neologism "white trash." According to King's series, mimicking the logic northerners applied to a broad array of alleged social deviants, the inability to be industrious

[99] Though Jacobson argues that the fabrication of distinct white races was first introduced by Northern industrialists and the media which supported their interests, "The Great South" shows that this classificatory system seemed to follow the market revolution where it gained prominence.

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and calculating leads any southerner to be marginalized and degraded no matter his or her skin color.

In section after section, King and Champney portray the South as an area of great promise ready to be penetrated and overrun by Yankee industry, ingenuity, and racial intolerance in the guise of forbearance. Yet, despite King's euphoric claims in regards to the commercial potential of the South generally, he cannot help but return to lingering political and social problems that must be addressed if the region is to be truly reformed, namely those brought about by the alleged failures of Radical Reconstruction. For example, following a defense of the Ku Klux Klan, King writes, he "finds a strange fascination in the use of political machinery of purposes of oppression and spoliation ... and thinks too, grimly, in the words of Carolinian black's savage song: 'De bottom rail's on de top, An' we's gwine to keep it dar'" (8:151; June 1874). Below these lines, appears an illustration of four black youths staring out at the reader from behind a wooden lattice. The heading reads: "peeping through" [Figure 24].

The appearance of this purposefully menacing image in a section defending the "Tax-payer's Protest" (in which white South Carolinians argued before Congress that high taxes by black politicians were ruining the state)[100] suggests that the South, in order to fully enter into nationhood, must contain the "lower orders" and the baleful values that they carry. Quite literally, the South, according to the message implied by King, must keep its racial other fenced in and kept in its place. Simultaneously, white southerners must take to industry,

[100] The Tax-payers' protest in South Carolina was an organized convention held in January 1874 in which white property holders agreed to ask Congress that their state "be remanded to a territorial condition or be placed again under military rule" (qtd. in Cox 111). In support of the convention's claims, King, in "The South Carolina Problem: The Epoch of Transition" (June 1874), decries black suffrage with exceptional fervor writing, for example that "It is not taxation nor even an increase of taxation, that the people of South Carolina object to, but it is *taxation without representation*, and *unjust, tyrannical, arbitrary, overwhelming taxation*, producing revenues which never get any further than the already bursting pockets of knaves and dupes."

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rational calculation, self-reliance, and exploitation of their region's natural resources, for only being like the "New" North, can the South be a certifiable part of the Union. Significantly, southern prospects for achieving these goals, as King sees matters, are promising. By portraying the region in a romantic coating, by exclaiming its beauty and bounty, and by making the argument that rule by "the people" requires the exclusion of blacks from office and the subordination of the "lower orders" generally, King offers his white, middle-class southern readers cause for enormous pride and optimism. For his northern readers, King, by confirming their suspicions about "lazy" and "incompetent" blacks, paints a land that has suffered much and is ready and deserving of a bright, prosperous future. Accordingly, the series attempts to portray the South as ripe for northern investment and commercialization under the guidance of a natural class of white male leaders. Indeed, King's series stresses that for a region with so much potential prosperity, leadership *must* come from deserving and knowledgeable whites who have long held standing and status in their community. More than simply prescient, several historians attribute King's series as a leading agent of propaganda propelling northern sentiment in the direction of Redemption.[101]

Old Creole Tales

While the Regionalist work of Edward King helped to demystify the South for northern readers clearing the way for commercial investment and development, his series also successfully showed how the South could be utilized as superb source material for literary use. As Arlin Turner writes, within the next ten years following the appearance of

[101] On the enormous popularity of "The Great South" and its influence on Northern readers see Paul Gaston's *The New South Creed: A Study in Southern Mythmaking* (New York, Knopf, 1970) and Louis D. Rubin's *George W. Cable: The Life and Times of a Southern Heretic* (New York, 1969: 14-17).

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"The Great South" in *Scribner's*, "every important magazine made some effort to encourage writing in and about the South" (53). The first attempt to "exploit" this region for use in a nationally distributed periodical actually came about as the result of a discovery King made during his sojourn in New Orleans: that of Cable himself. Known locally for his journalistic work for newspapers such as the *Picayune* as well as his interest in local history, Cable met King and Champney while covering events during Carnival in 1873. The three took a strong liking to each other, and for several weeks thereafter, the reporter and his illustrator came to be frequent visitors in the Cable household. From their visitations, they learned that Cable, in addition to playing reporter, had been writing short stories based on Creole life—though he was uncertain where they were to appear. Offered to read one of these tales titled "Bibi," King immediately sensed that it was Cable's destiny to appear in *Scribner's.* With Cable's permission, King mailed the story to then assistant editor Richard Watson Gilder while informing his author friend: "to fear not ... for your fame is assured if you continue to make Bibis" (Turner 67-68).

This tale, which after minor changes would eventually form the "Bras Coupé" section of *The Grandissimes, w*as initially rejected by Gilder, and, upon being revised, rejected again. Gilder, however, was not the only editor to pass on the story. George Parsons Lathrop, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* also found "Bibi" unacceptable "on account of the unmitigatedly distressful effect of the story" (Butcher 53). Apparently, Gilder and Lathrop, who generally preferred to publish fiction that produced uplift and generated "good feeling," considered Cable's tale in its original form too strong a tonic, that is to say too realistic, for their genteel audiences.

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By far, "Bibi," which concerns the unjust enslavement of an African prince named Bras Coupé (whose name means "one arm cut off"), was Cable's most unremitting protest tale.[102] The other tales King continued to send Gilder also offered political comment and social critique in varying degrees, but were so enmeshed in the veil of romance that, beginning with "'Sieur George" (1873), the magazine editors readily published six out of the eight that Cable submitted and were eager as well to serialize his truly grand *The Grandissimes*. The appeal of these works for *Scribner's* editors were many. They especially valued how the author was able to capture the "once upon a time" flavor of old New Orleans, his adroit characterization of southern types, his deftness at handling Creole and black dialect, as well as his "bright and witty" narrative style (Turner 84-87). But beneath Cable's seemingly innocuous subject matter and style, a political component calling for racial and class equality, the universal protection of civil liberties, and active, virtuous citizenship was always bubbling, which would reach a boil as the failures of the post-Reconstruction era became increasingly evident to him.[103]

One of the earliest of Cable's tales to appear in *Scribner's* was "Belles Demoiselles Plantation" (7:739-747; April, 1874). Often compared to Edgar Allan Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher" (with which it shares the theme of familial disintegration), this story centers on an attempted real estate transaction between two "extremely distant" cousins Colonel Jean

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[102] Cable eventually inserted the tale into *The Grandissimes* (capitalizing on the star power he had by then attained to have published what otherwise would have found no place in a genteel magazine). Cable claims that little in the tale was changed, outside of eliminating a few historical names and places. See

[103] Though the academic work on classical republicanism (especially in its relation to liberalism) is voluminous, Cable appears to adhere, at least in part, to a definition of the term as spelled out by early leaders of the Republic. As Ronald Takaki writes, men such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush stressed the importance of a virtuous, educated, self-regulating citizenry. In particular, these political leaders stressed the need for "honest industry, sober frugality, and simplicity of manners" (6) as opposed to "luxury" and "dissipation." In *Political Liberalism*, John Rawls stresses another key component of classical republicanism highly valued by Cable: the "widespread participation in democratic politics by a vigorous and informed citizen body" as opposed to "a general retreat into private life" (186).

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Albert Henri Joseph De Charleu Marot (known as De Charleu) and Don Carlos, known locally as Injin Charlie. Both De Charleu and Charlie are descendents, several generations removed, of a French count, but who share separate matrilineal lines. The Count's first wife was a Choctaw Indian, whose legacy, now a lot of dilapidated buildings in the center of New Orleans, Charlie retains. De Charleu, whose bloodline has remained "pure" Gallic over the years, resides on a sprawling ancestral plantation on the banks of the Mississippi with his seven beautiful daughters.

Hoping to consolidate the landholdings of his family and to build a fine townhouse for his daughters in the now bustling port city, De Charleu proposes to buy his distant kin's properties, an offer Charlie counters with the proposal of an even exchange of real estate. De Charleu accepts the offer only upon learning that the Mississippi River is about to overtake his plantation. Quickly overcome by guilt, he insists that Charlie first inspect the premises. Returning to the plantation, the cousins watch in horror as:

> Belles Demoiselles, the realm of maiden beauty, the home of merriment, the house of dancing, all in the tremor and glow of pleasure, suddenly sunk, with one short, wild wail of terror—sunk, sunk, down, down, into the merciless, unfathomable flood of the Mississippi (746).

What is striking about this tale particularly in light of King's series (an installment of which appears in the same issue) is the manner in which Cable critiques Creole claims to superiority based on skin color and supposedly pure bloodlines. Whereas the author of "The Great South" promotes the idea that a "natural" class of landed gentry ought to rule over racial and ethnic others, Cable, in his short allegory of the New South, suggests that race, in

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fact, does not dictate character and preeminence.[104] Pure-blooded De Charleu, for example, is not only portrayed as a cheat willing to deceive his own relation, but as a profligate southerner given to a host of vices including dueling, drinking, gambling, and dancing at the St. Philippe Street quadroon balls. In terms of classical republicanism, to which the author clearly alludes, the Creole aristocrat is guilty of "corruption," i.e. the inability to control his baser desires.[105] Perhaps most problematic for civic-minded Cable is De Charleu's solipsism, or more precisely, his secessionist tendencies; "bitter-proud and penurious," he "loved nothing but himself, his name, and his motherless children" (740).

Injin Charlie, though of mixed blood and even described as a "dark white man" (740) is viewed somewhat more favorably. Though given to drink and "sunk into the bliss of deep ignorance," he is nonetheless characterized as being morally superior to his relation. He exhibits his virtue, for example, even after it becomes clear that De Charleu has intended to defraud him. Rather than force De Charleu to suffer for his duplicity, Charlie shows an unusual capacity for love and forgiveness by taking his homeless, depressed relation into his own household and caring for him until his death. The racial reconciliation that concludes the tale is particularly compelling in that it goes beyond advocating mere *civic* equality, but implies that to recognize "the other" as an equal ultimately must result in *social* equality—to regard anyone as a brother is to potentially include them in family activities. While, as Kenneth Warren writes, this realization would eventually become the basis behind white southerner's compulsion for "separate, but equal" legislation enacted in the 1890s (47), this tale argues against the very necessity of such measures. In order for the South to even be

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[104] It is important to point out that while King also views the Creoles as racialized, Cable, in setting his tale before the war, allegorizes the past for the present, causing his Creole characters to stand in for unredeemed Southern planter-aristocrats generally.

[105] For more on classical republicanism which dictated early American ethics and liberal policy see Ronald Takaki's *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America.*

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viable as a Democracy, Cable, in stark contrast to King, makes what we now can see was a radical claim for equality *and* fraternity amongst *all* citizens.[106]

In the October issue of 1874 appeared Cable's third story to be accepted by *Scribner's* entitled "'Tite Poulette" (8:674-684; Oct. 1874). Like "Belles Dames Plantation," this tale is another critique of the southern system, which treats racial injustice as par for the course, only in this tale, Cable directs his attention to prejudice against mulattos. The tale begins with a description of its hero:

> a rosy-faced, beardless young Dutchman ... one of that army of gentlemen who, after the purchase of Louisiana, swarmed from all parts of the commercial world, over the mountains of Franco-Spanish exclusiveness, like the Goths over the Pyrenees, and settled down in New Orleans to pick up their fortunes, with the diligence of hungry pigeons. (674)

Described, in essence, as a Carpetbagger, Koppig has come to New Orleans to try his luck at business, but when his firm lays him off, he essentially becomes a full-time voyeur. His one room apartment is particularly suited for his new trade owing to the fact that his shutters "had odd little latticed peep-holes in their batten shutters" (674). Like so many Americans reading the new monthlies such as *Scribner's* in the hopes of finding out the intimate facts of their

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[106] Whereas Cable's early fiction clearly exhibits a fervent interest in realizing enlightenment principles of classical republicanism that still eluded the nation, it is also apparent that the author was initially far less sanguine about the merits of industrial expansion so vigorously championed by Northerner progressives like King. Though it is clear, as a number of critics have pointed out, that the Mississippi River in "Belles Demoiselles Plantation" represents the coming tide of Yankee industrial might, which the author views as inevitable and even necessary, it is equally clear that Cable often exhibits, as Louis Rubin writes, "a kind of admiration for and even envy of the lazy, sensual way in which the Creoles accommodate themselves to their circumstances" (52). Unlike writers of the reactionary Plantation Myth school, who would cite the affective attributes of the Old South to defend white paternalism and superiority, Cable's discomfort with unbridled commercialism was the erosion of communal ties that he believed followed in its wake, a narcissism that would also ultimately infringe on the very autonomy that the liberal-capitalist ethos values so highly. The idea that fraternity and autonomy are in fact complimentary is intricately developed in his masterpiece "Jean-Ah Poquelin" (and cogently theorized in Richard Dagger's *Republican Liberalism*).

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country, Koppig represents the arrival of new type in American culture, the citizen of leisure absorbed by a society increasingly known for its spectacles.[107]

In addition to its aesthetic aspects, surveillance of the postbellum South, as the author hopes to show, has its social benefits. One day, for example, Koppig spies from his dormer window the "snakelike" manager of the *Salle de Conde* paying a visit to his neighbors, the mulatto Madame John, former mistress of a wealthy white landowner, who must now dance to make ends meet, and her exceedingly beautiful daughter. Seeing that the mother and daughter are inside their house, but refuse to answer the door, Koppig decides to take action. Running out onto the street, the good Samaritan questions the manager as to his intentions, a confrontation that results in Koppig slapping, then chasing the manager away. His heroism, however, is short-lived. In a bleak demonstration intended to recall southern lawlessness during the 1870s (specifically violence against blacks as well as whites who intercede on their behalf, which King in "The Great South" trivializes), the manager and his cronies later revenge themselves on the northern interloper, by beating and stabbing him.

Koppig's injury, however, is non-life-threatening and he is nursed to health by Madame John's daughter, with whom he has previously fallen in love. No longer concerned about the social ramifications of marrying outside his race as he had been earlier in the tale, the hero asks Tite 'Poulette to be his wife, but she refuses on the grounds that she is unworthy. In the tale's weakest moment, a solution *deus ex machina* is found: Madame John confesses that her daughter is not really her own, but the pure-blooded offspring of Spanish parentage, no longer living, and the marriage takes place.

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[107] The change in postbellum America to a surveillance culture has been marked by several cultural historians. Cite.

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Despite its unrealistic ending, "'Tite Poulette" exhibits several progressive ideas concerning very real issues in the minds of southerners and northerners at the time. Once again, the most startling, which would eventually lead to accusations of Cable himself being a "negrophile,"[108] is the hero's own relative unconcern about racial mixing. Though the tale ends up on a politically correct note for the time, it is significant that when Koppig writes to his mother about his infatuation with 'Tite at the start of the tale, his views already verge on the heretical. In describing the woman of his affection, for example, he writes,

> In this wicked city, I see none so fair as the poor girl who lives opposite me, and who, alas, though so fair, one of those whom the taint of caste has cursed ... I know there is a natural, and *I think* proper horror of mixed blood (excuse the mention, sweet mother), and I feel it, too; and yet if she were in Holland today, not one of a hundred suitors would detect the hidden blemish. (677)

With the words "I think" (which I have italicized), it is clear that Koppig is already wavering about the perceived evils of miscegenation, a prejudice he overcomes when he finally asks 'Tite's hand in marriage.

Far more direct is the author's appeal for racial equality and black autonomy, particularly as these issues affect the tragic mulatto. On one hand, because Madame John is a woman of mixed blood, she is caught in a precarious position of being unable to adequately support her family. Neither is she able to marry a white man for support. As she herself explains: "There is no place in this world for us poor women. I wish that we were either white or black" (676). Her mixed blood also makes her a potential victim to the unscrupulous desires of others. Without the right of full autonomy granted to whites, the

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[108] As Lawrence J. Friedman writes, "In February, 1885 [following the publication of the "The Freedman's Case in Equity" in *The Century*], the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* published an assault by nine Southern newspaper editors upon Cable's 'miscegenationist tendencies'" (116). Though Friedman, like the majority of literary historians, argues that these editors were actually wrong in their reading of Cable's work, that in fact Cable was a more or less a supremist like them, this chapter argues strongly to the contrary.

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women are essentially non-persons unable to "govern," never mind protect, themselves in a satisfactory manner.

To a large extent, Koppig's interest in the Johns as fellow citizens and his proactive behavior on their behalf can be read as a mix of republican and liberal principles called for by Cable before allowing the South back into the Union. As we have seen in "Belles Demoiselles Plantation" and further outlined in the literary masterpiece "Jean-Ah Poquelin"[109] (the next Creole tale to appear in *Scribner's*), Cable's ideal republic offers equal protection to all persons, regardless of race, class, or beliefs, and insists that all citizens agree to neither dominate one another, nor stand idly stand by if a fellow citizen's civil rights are in jeopardy. Whereas King and the editors of *Scribner's* preferred a liberal approach to the South based on non-interference after a mildly reconstructed political and social system had been put into place, Cable, it is clear, sought far more active measures to insure a nation-state marked by equality, opportunity, and protection for all.

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[109] "Jean-ah Poquelin" (10:91-100; May 1875) concerns a "once ... opulent indigo planter" and slave-trader, who, since the apparent disappearance of his brother many years before, seems to live alone on his now overgrown, swamp-filled grounds. Though the local townspeople assume that Jean is guilty of fratricide, for the most part, they leave him alone. His privacy is threatened, however, when "the alien races" pour "into old New Orleans" and insist on making his large landholdings commercially viable. One night a "swarm of *Americains*" settle upon his house to scare the aged plantation owner into conformity with their wishes, but like his namesake Jonah, Jean-ah is adamant to the end. When the crowd arrives at his house, his dead body is seen being carried from the house into the swamp by his black slave and his younger half-brother, Jacques, who, as its turns out, was not murdered at all. He had been living on Jean's property as a leper, and cared for by his elder brother, ever since the two returned from the Guinea coast many years before. In this tale, Cable effectively warns against a society that places commercial interests ahead of human ones. Much in the vein of the dissent of Justice Stevens in the *Slaughter House Case*, Cable insists that a democracy's first task is to insure the autonomy of all its citizens, but without losing sight of each citizen's public obligation to not only avoid infringing on the rights of others, but to assist those in need of help in achieving autonomy for themselves (such as Jean's sickly brother, or former slaves for that matter). Also relevant to the society that Cable envisions is Jean's right to have his grievances heard, something the municipal authorities deny him. Indeed, utilizing broken English (the elected officials refuse to speak to him in French) [Cable here is critiquing the use of the English language as marker of cultural superiority as opposed to King, who, throughout "The Great South" equates "ethnically deformed" speech with alterity], Jean fails to make an impression of any kind. Essentially ignoring their constituent's complaint "that street can't pass dar," these public officers promise only to "indemnify" him and within months a road and a draining canal are completed on his property.

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"Alteration is Imperatively Required": *The Grandissimes*

Written at the time of the Hayes-Tilden Compromise, which brought about the return of white southerners to political power and inaugurated the era of Redemption, *The Grandissimes* is another appeal to northern and southern readers not to close their eyes to the abuses still rampant in the South (Bikle 55). As Cable was to later write in an essay entitled *My Politics*:

> It was impossible that a novel written by me then should escape being a study of the fierce struggle going on around me, regarded in the light of past history—those beginnings—which had so differentiated Louisiana from the American scheme of public society. I meant to make *The Grandissimes* as truly a political work as it has ever been called.... I wrote as near to truth and justice as I knew how, upon questions I saw must be settled by calm debate and cannot be settled by force or silence.

In his fiction thus far, Cable had referenced atrocities brought about by racial intolerance only obliquely and had even depicted former slaveholders with a degree of sympathy. However, the ongoing injustice of whites towards blacks in the late 1870s particularly in his native state of Louisiana led the now famous author to address "the Southern Question" as directly and forcefully as his editors would allow.

To present his views, Cable chose a second-generation German immigrant named Joseph Frowenfeld as the novel's hero, around whom the features of a reconstructed South get debated. Like Kristian Koppig, Frowenfeld is an outsider from the North whose unwavering principles of social justice and ability to argue his positions rationally and out of concern for the public good, make him, according to the author, a model citizen in a time of massive cultural transformation and uncertainty. What is striking about his favored status, however, is his foreign parentage and the important fact that he owns no property. Belonging

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to an ethnic group that in the 1870s had not yet become "white"[110] and was especially disliked by ex-Confederates (who had seethed over the "foreign" element in the Union army),[111] Frowenfeld would certainly have presented a threat, and thus viewed as an outsider, to the "pure" southern communities King heralds in his series. Equally compelling is the fact that Frowenfeld, following the death of his entire family from malaria, has so little money he can barely afford to rent a chemist shop. As will become clear, Cable's point is to suggest that in a democracy the right to participate as a full-fledged citizen should not be dependent on ethnic or biological descent, or one's status in society as a property-holder. Instead, citizenship should be based merely on consent, i.e. the willingness to be a contributing, law-abiding member of society interested in the "fair pursuit of happiness (Sollors 4).[112]

The force of Frowenfeld's views, despite disadvantages which according to King should delegitimize his claims, is exhibited early on in the novel. At the burial site of his wife and children, for example, he engages in a conversation with an unnamed, white Creole gentleman on horseback (who Frowenfeld will eventually come to learn is Honoré Grandissime). After hearing a tale of immense trial and tribulation, Honoré, deeply moved, asks what the recent émigré will do next. Frowenfeld replies: "I will do the first thing that

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[110] As Matthew Jacobsen points out German migration was just about to peak while Cable's novel was appearing (250,630 arriving in 1882 alone). "It was said," that the arrival of these "new" immigrants (including Russians, Italians, and others) "posed a new threat to democratic institutions" (43). In support of Jacobsen's claim, several xenophobic articles appeared in *Scribner's* including "American Irish and American Germans," which argued that both groups were threatening the racial balance and domination of American Anglo-Saxons.

[111] As Richard Slotkin writes, during the Civil War the Southern press would often "dwell on the 'foreign' character of the Northern armies, particularly on the presence of large numbers of Irish and Germans; and the latter were objects of special hostility, described as Huns and barbarians—Southern legislators actually debated whether or not to grant surrendering Germans prisoner-of-war status, with hanging being the alternative" (303).

[112] In his influential book *Beyond Ethnicity*, Werner Sollors sees "consent" and "descent" to be the two poles of argument guiding the debates on the constituting of American citizenship since our nation's founding. As he writes, the "tension between the rejection of hereditary old-world hierarchies (embodied by the European nobility) and the vision of a new people of diverse nativities united in the fair pursuit of happiness marks the course that American ideology has steered between descent and consent ... Descent language emphasizes our positions as heirs, our hereditary qualities, liabilities, and entitlements; consent language stresses our abilities as mature free agents and 'architects of our fates' to choose our spouses, our destinies, and our political systems" (5-6).

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offers; I can dig" (19:252; Dec. 1879). The upper-class Creole is mortified by this answer which suggests that the northerner is willing to toil like a "burnt-back." He thus proceeds to warn Frowenfeld that

> ... you cannot afford to be *entirely* different to the community in which you live.... You must get acclimated ... not in body only ... but in mind—taste—in conversation—and in convictions too, yes, ha, ha! They all do it—all who come. They import cargoes of Africans, they bribe the officials, they smuggle goods, they have colored housekeepers. My-de'-se, the water must expect to take the shape of the bucket; eh? (252)

Honoré's comments are intended to represent the typical views of his fellow Creoles and those of assimilated outsiders, who, as Cable will depict, share a universal disdain for manual labor, colored blood-lines, governmental edicts, and civic obligations. Frowenfeld's outlook, it is quickly apparent, differs widely from the inhabitants of his new home. Unlike the people about whom Honoré speaks, the German adheres strongly to the ideology of free labor and the importance of being a "virtuous producer" [the belief that "an individual's efforts expended on natural resources produced value" (Richardson xii)]. Particularly significant is his claim that he will assimilate into his new homeland only to the extent that such a process doesn't entail a surrendering of his value system. As he puts the matter to his entreator: "One need not be water" (252).

In a proto-Habermasian display of how "best answers" in a democracy should be arrived at, Honoré, following a series of "calm debates" throughout the novel, comes to embrace an enlightened viewpoint similar to that of the virtuous émigré. In his first conversation with Frowenfeld, however, he is clearly a man of caution in regards to unjust social policies. Having a black half-brother who shares his name, the eminent Creole has seen the harm that racism can do. He laments the fact that though Honoré (black) was educated in Paris and is rich in land-holdings, he is barred from socializing with the "pure"

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Grandissime line and must perforce circulate public spaces warily. The "shadow of the Ethiopian," literally in the manifestation of his outcast brother, wears heavily around his neck, but he feels impotent to change matters. Citing the legend of Bras-Coupé, the enslaved African prince who upon claiming his rights as a free man was hamstrung and later murdered, Honoré remarks to Frowenfeld: "Ah! Mr. Frhownenfeld, *there* was a bold man's chance to denounce wrhong and opprhession! Why, that neghro's death changed the whole channel of my convictions" (253). The product of this lesson, as the title of the succeeding chapter reveals, is "paralysis."

Paralysis also prevents Honoré from insisting on a return of property to the widow Madame Nanancou de Grapion and her daughter Clotilde won by his cousin Agricola Fusilier in a card game with Monsieur Grapion (later shot in a duel with Agricola after claiming he had cheated him).[113] Like the remorse stemming from the segregation of his sibling, the guilt he feels for the now impoverished ladies is great, but purposeless until his on-going conversations with Frowenfeld. With the encouragement of his sagacious friend to act in the name of justice rather than in the selfish interests of his clan, the Creole ultimately comes to two momentous decisions: to return the plantation to its rightful owners and to enter into a partnership with his mulatto half-brother, a mercantile firm named *Freres Grandissimés* (Brothers Grandissimes).

Honoré's growth in understanding and the moral actions which ensue reflect Cable's own position on the successful reconstruction of the South. For Cable, southern white elites

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[113] Cable's emphasis here on land distribution based on justice, recalls the Radical Republican platform for returning plantation lands back to former slaves, who once worked them. If we think of the mulatto background of Madame John and 'Tite Poulette in "'Tite Poulette," characters upon whom Aurora and Clotilde are clearly based as well as the overworked insistence of Aurora's and Clotilde's "pure" lineage (in a novel where such claims are always dubious), it is not entirely unfeasible to read the return of their lands, i.e. as a symbolic endorsement of black land redistribution.

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had to admit the error of their former ways and be willing to reform and adapt to a new social, political, and economic system based on enlightened principles and morality. Importantly, as the on-going discussion between Frowenfeld and Honoré indicate, conclusions were to be drawn as a result of open debates, in which the validity of a viewpoint was based not on the social status nor ethnicity of the debater, but solely on the strength of an individual's argument.[114]

That Cable imagines an ideal public sphere along the lines of Jürgen Habermas in which a wide assortment of private people come together to debate "general" topics free from the "power and prestige of public office" and "economic dependencies" is made clear by the emphasis the author gives to Frowenfeld's corner. Like the salons, literary societies, coffee houses, and newsletters that Habermas discusses were central for establishing the bourgeois public sphere in eighteenth-century Europe,[115] Frowenfeld's shop serves a similar function.

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[114] The importance of being allowed to openly voice one's concerns regardless of one's status in society is further elaborated in "Madame Délicieuse" (Aug. 1875) In this tale a Creole General with the proud name of Hercule Mossy de Villivicencio decides to lead a political campaign against *le Americains*. His party's platform is wildly reactionary insisting on a "purging out of Yankee ideas" as well as "a blessed homecoming of those good old Bourbon morals and manners which Yankee notions had expatriated." When, the following day, an American newspaper ridicules the General as "antiquated" and calls his party "The Crayfish-Eaters' Ticket," the Creole is not amused and his asks his son, a 30 year-old scholar-scientist, to defend his honor. At first Dr. Mossy presumes that he is to merely retort to the claims of the newspaper in an editorial, but he quickly come to the realization, that if the article is not officially retracted, he is expected to engage in a duel. While sitting in his son's musky office, while the scientist is in search of discovering the author of this article, the General is greeted by the most beautiful Creole woman in town, who is also his close confidant (and the wife of his son as he comes to learn). From her, the General learns that the writer of the seditious newspaper article is none other than herself. Merely relieved that his son has not been killed in a duel, the General accepts the apostasy and recognizes that times are indeed a-changing. What is remarkable about this tale is the emphasis the author places on the important role a free press should play in society. According to Cable, to ensure a functioning democracy newspapers should be free to criticize and discuss all popular, political, and social concerns from a rational standpoint. More startling, however, is the fact that participating in this important public sphere institution is a woman (a Southern Creole belle to be exact!). Cable's point is that good argument can come from any source and preventing the voicing of these arguments on the basis of gender (or race or class for that matter) leads to a failed democracy. Though the editors of *Scribner's* had distinct views against women's involvement in politics (and of course suffrage), Cable's tale hails Madame Délicieuse's mastery of written English and her penchant for "talking national politics." In this short tale, the author again rejects the idea that the public sphere of debate are reserved only for some.

[115] Remarkably, Cable's blueprint for an ideal public sphere recalls Habermas almost point by point. Compare, for example, a central passage in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* in which the author spells

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On 24 December 1803, the actual day of France's cession of the region to the Americans, for example,

> Some half dozen of Frowenfeld's townsmen had gathered, inside and out, some standing, some sitting, about his front, and all discussing the popular topics of the day. For it might have been anticipated that, in a city where so very little English was spoken and no newspaper published except that beneficiary of eight subscribers, the "Moniteur de la Louisiane," the apothecary shop in the rue Royale would be the rendezvous for a select company of English-speaking gentle-men with a smart majority of physicians. (19:255; Dec. 1879)

Away from the jurisdiction of the State and outside the realm of economics and other private interests, the Americans at Frowenfeld's doorstep rationally and critically[116] debate such topics as whether the Cession would hold, the validity of Spanish land titles, and how the "rotation in office" would occur (concerns similar to those confronting the South following the Civil War).[117]

Significantly, "Frowenfeld's Corner" is not in fact limited to this "select" stock of Americans. On other days, the storefront is visited by Creoles—and within the store itself

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out the "institutional criteria" necessary for public sphere formation: "*First,* they (the *Tischgesellschaften, salons,* and coffee houses) preserved a kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing the equality of status, disregarded status altogether. The tendency replaced the celebration of rank with a tact befitting equals. The parity on whose basis alone the authority of the better argument could assert itself against that of social hierarchy and in the end can carry the day meant, in the thought of the day, the parity of "common humanity" ("*bloss Menschliche*"). *Les homes*, private gentlemen, or *die Privatleute* made up the public not just in the sense that power and prestige of public office were held in suspense; economic dependencies also in principle had no influence ... *Secondly*, discussion within such a public presupposed the problematization of areas that until then had not been questioned (by which Habermas means that a new domain of "common concern" had arisen, outside the jurisdiction of Church and State) ... *Thirdly*, the same process that converted culture into a commodity ... established the public as in principle inclusive ... The issues discussed became "general" not merely in their significance, but also in their accessibility: everyone had to *be able* to participate" (36-37).

[116] Hence the preponderance of physicians, i.e. men of science and, as Cable assumes, analytic intelligence.

[117] It is important to realize that in these early discussions Frowenfeld is in fact a poor arguer. As Cable writes, his "really excellent arguments seemed to put out more heat than light. They were merciless; their principles were not only lofty to dizziness, but precipitous, and their heights unoccupied, and—to the common sight—unattainable. In consequence, they provoked hostility and even resentment." Eventually as a result of the debating process, the chemist learns "to stop making pills with eight corners." He realizes, in essence, that to establish points, one must consider one's audience and express one's views circuitously and in as restrained a manner as possible—a lesson Cable was apparently learning as he tried to impart his progressive views into the pages of a magazine whose editors were particularly conservative in their desire to embrace and redeem the South.

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the proprietor encounters both blacks and women, with whom he discusses a wide range of "general" (as well as private) topics. These discussions, which of course were ultimately intended to reach the larger, very real public sphere of *Scribner's* middle-class readers,[118] were often on the very topics King himself broaches in "The Great South"—though from a wide variety of viewpoints (including those of blacks, immigrants, and women who King effectively silences).

One such debate—on the race question which frames much of the novel—involves Agricola Fusiler, who, in contrast to his relatively open-minded cousin Honoré, represents all that Frowenfeld/Cable cannot tolerate in a citizen of the United States. Ardently refusing to adapt to a new system of government (even as change is inevitable), Agricola is the classic white supremist, glued to reactionary foundations. Though Agricola's own claim to pure white blood is utterly false,[119] the clan elder nonetheless insists that the Creoles are a superior race, who deserve to live off the labor of others and to govern the "underclasses" without interference. Other races, Agricola insists, are notably inferior, especially blacks. For example, when in a discussion with Frowenfeld, the chemist asks if by "we people" Agricola means "white people," the unrepentant Creole answers:

> H-my young friend, when we say, 'we people,' we *always* mean we white people. The non-mention of color always implies pure white; and whatever is not pure white is to all intents and purposes pure black ... Not that there is a prejudice against the negro. By no means. Wherever he can be of any service

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[118] It is helpful to keep in mind that Habermas saw the novel as both developing and publicizing the intimate sphere (Intimsphare) of the private individual so crucial for the creation of the public sphere. The autonomy of bourgeois family life (from the market and the state) and its resulting self-consciousness (through family discussions and debates) allowed each member the "emancipation" of one's "inner realm" (47). "Subjectivity ... the innermost core of the private," Habermas writes, "was always already oriented to an audience (*Publikum*)." Thus it is no surprise that "the sphere of the public arose in the broader strata of the bourgeoisie as an expansion and at the same time completion of the intimate sphere of the conjugal family.

[119] Wishing to emphasize the very dubiousness of Creole claims to racial purity in order to reject notions of white supremacy generally, Cable's original manuscript began, not with a masked ball, but with the tale of Lufki-Humma, an Indian princess who, several generations prior to the start of the novel, had married a Grandissime (see Barbara Ladd 50).

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> in a strictly menial capacity we kindly and generously tolerate his presence. (19:261; Dec. 1879)

In this speech Cable seeks to expose the kind of thinking about race that marked southern Democrats in the 1870s.[120] As with King in "The Great South," Agricola's "The People" solely means whites possessing "natural" eminence.[121]

To counter Agricola's racism and classism, Cable effectively does something King does not: include the actual voices of blacks, women, and the poor. What is more, rather than relying (for the most part) on stereotyped characterizations, the author depicts his version of "the People" as possessing intricate histories and complex personalities. Honoré Grandissime, f.m.c., for example, is far from being a stereotypical black man.[122] Handsome, refined, intelligent, sensitive, and a shrewd manager of his inherited money, Honoré, f.m.c. would clearly be an esteemed citizen in his native city were it not for his racial lineage.

Recognizing the inhumanity and irrationality of racism in its various guises, Frowenfeld befriends this "shadow" and challenges him as a fellow citizen to enact change rather than "endure a tyrannous contumely which flattens [black men and women] into the dirt like grass under a slab" (20:24; May 1880). In self-defense that serves to further

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[120] See Heather Cox Richardson, xiv-xv.

[121] That citizenship in New Orleans is unfairly restricted is reiterated by Frowenfeld when he says to Honoré (white) that "they [the quadroons] want a great deal more than free papers can secure them. Emancipation before the law, though it may be a right which man has nor right to withhold, is to them little more than a mockery until they achieve emancipation in the minds and good will of the people—'the people,' did I say? I mean the ruling class."

[122] As Barbara Ladd writes, the male mulatto rarely appears in fiction of the mid-nineteenth century (and scholarly attention to him and yet more scant) owing to the fact, she surmises, that the "male octoroon is simply more disturbing in some ways, or more disturbing in particular ways, because of the more explicit challenge he makes to cultural and political legitimacy in a society that restricts women from direct participation in many of its institutions" (2). The radicalism of depicting a Louisianan mulatto as a fully conceived human being is further evident when one considers the way the mulatto elite were then being treated. As Joel Williamson writes in *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United Sates*, during Reconstruction, whites "began to deride mulattoes as 'neither fish nor fowl' and to heap upon them such epithets as 'ring streaeked and striped' and 'yellow niggers.' Mulattoes had no race, they taunted, and hence no identity.... By the end of Reconstruction, white Southerners were able to condemn the whole of the Negro community as a body, out of hand and without regard to variations in color" (92).

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individualize the quadroon even as it diminishes his stature, Honoré, f.m.c. protests that he is prevented from taking such a noble course of action owing to a broken heart and the self-realization that he is "no Toussaint L'Ouverture."

Though Honoré is too psychically damaged to pursue Frowenfeld's exhortations (he ultimately commits suicide in France), other blacks resist their oppression far more resiliently and express their disdain openly, and unequivocally. One such creation, described by Philip Butcher as "one of the most realistic Negro characters in American literature" (54), is Clemence, a street vendor, who dispenses wit and wisdom as she sells her rice croquettes and ginger cakes. Beneath her friendly, seemingly innocuous banter, however, runs a bitter denunciation of her condition and those who oppress her race. As her sharp tongue announces, she is the very antithesis of the happy-go-lucky black mythologized throughout the pages of "The Great South." In fact, when told that slaves are the happiest people under the sun, she denies the lie vociferously:

> "Oh, ... white folks is werry kine. Dey wants us to b'lieb we happy—dey *wants to b'lieb* we is. W'y, you know, dey 'bleeged to b'lieb it—fo'dey own cyumfut. "Tis de sem weh wid de preache's; dey buil' we own sep'ate meet'n-houses; dey b'leebs us lak it de bess, an' dy *knows* dey lak it de bess." (20:383; July 1880)

As Cable realistically projects, such "reasonableness" can only get a member of an oppressed group into trouble. Accordingly, towards the novel's end, the author grimly depicts Clemence being shot down in cold blood as she escapes a lynch mob.

More than simply an attack on racial prejudice by showing full-fledged humans cursed by its ills, *The Grandissimes* is an attack on any social/economic system that prevents individuals from rising in the world by his or her own efforts on account of race, class, caste, or any other artificial barrier. His characterization of Raoul Innerarity, for example, further

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promotes the author's faith in free labor ideology, the idea that any person has the right to freely contract for work, and with industry, raise his economic and social position within a fair market system. Initially, the young Creole is a painter who, upon realizing that a marketplace for his amateurish work does not exist, accepts a position as the chemist's accounting clerk. By working long hours and becoming indispensable to his employer, Raoul comes to substantially increase his monthly earnings and eventually becomes shop manager when Frowenfeld enters early retirement.

In depicting the impoverished Aurora and her daughter Clotilde, who because of their low caste cannot marry well, and as ladies cannot work to earn their keep, Cable further clarifies his conception of a just political economy, this time as it should also apply to women. As his fiction makes clear, Cable's humanism, based on equal rights and opportunity, truly extends to all individuals.

Though the editors generally found the depictions of the Nanacous the best part of the novel (for their beauty, charm, and amusing dialect, *not*, it must be added, for the author's feminist message),[123] Cable's efforts to inscribe his black characters with humanity and intelligence and to critique the behavior and attitudes of recalcitrant white southerners were not well-received. In letter after letter, his editors warned him to stay away from the details of history and the "terrible suggestions" that might garner the ire of their southern readers. While the novel was still in manuscript, a note from Robert Underwood Johnson, who oversaw the manuscript while Gilder was abroad, insisted that "the Bras-Coupé matter [is] not a vital part of the plot and perhaps capable of condensation" and that the characterization

[123] In *Heroines of Fiction*, William Dean Howells, for example, praises Cable most highly for his delineation of Aurora and Clotilde. In "The Native Element in American Fiction" James Herbert Morse also concentrates on the duo: "The finest part of the artist's work," he writes, "is in the nice shading of character between Aurore and her daughter Clotilde" (37: 368; July 1883).

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of Palmyre and Bras-Coupé "are thought to be impossible" (qtd. in Ladd 51). Later, Underwood, in illustration of the magazine's protective position towards the South, would object to chapter proofs that implied the region as yet undeserving of redemption, warning, in a letter dated 2 April 1879, to avoid "pamphleteering" altogether. Shortly thereafter the editor would complain that "It is inartistic for [Clemence] to *reason* so about slavery" and, on 2 December 1879, he described his belief that "the f.m.c. [was] the least interesting part of your story" (qtd. in Ladd 51). Adding to Cable's difficulties was the fact that both of the editors assisting Underwood on the manuscript were southerners themselves including Mrs. Sophie Bledsoe Herrick (the daughter of the slavery apologist Albert Bledsoe) and Irwin Russell, the Mississippi poet then making his fame in *Scribner's* as an early leading figure in the school of Plantation Myth fiction. Russell, in particular, took issue with numerous points in Cable's manuscript such as the scene in which Palmyre Philosophe embraces the white Honoré Grandissime when he returns from his educational sojourn in Paris. "Alteration is imperatively required," Russell wrote objecting to its suggestion of miscegenation (qtd. in Elfenbein 51).

Though Cable would occasionally tone down his critique of the South and delete some of his direct attacks concerning "the race question," the novel remains one of the most prophetic and powerful literary products of the nineteenth century decrying the lingering injustices of the South. Though subsequent work in a similarly reformist vein such as *Dr. Sevier* (Nov. 1883-Oct. 1884),[124] "The Freedman's Case in Equity" (Jan. 1885) and "The Silent South" (Sept.1885) continued to appear in *Scribner's-Century*, his refusal to write, in

[124] In the pages of *The Century*, Malcolm Mckay vilified Cable for including in this novel the line "'Go marching on,' saviors of the Union; your cause is just. Lo, now, since nigh twenty-five years have passed, we of the South can say it" (957: Oct. 1884). In response, Cable refused to back down, explaining that in both slavery and secession the region was in "error in ... every aspect" (152: Nov. 1884).

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the words of Gilder, "something intensely interesting ... but without the terrible suggestion you so often make use of"(Turner 67), led to a diminishing demand for his writing services (and a flat-out rejection by Gilder of his novel *John March, Southerner* in 1893). In place of the fiction he refused to write—that which appealed to white southern nostalgia and racial supremacy—*Scribner's* editors actively sought the conservative works of southerners James Lane Allen, Joel Chandler Harris, Grace King, Sidney Lanier, Thomas Nelson Page, Mary Stuart Johnston, and nameless others, who would continue the precedent of southern mythmaking established by Edward King.

Astoundingly, instead of hailing Cable (as they do Albion Tourgée) for attempting to stem the growing tide of literature "distinctively Confederate in sympathy,"[125] most academics today misread the author's own attempt at avoiding "pills with eight cawnehs" (pills with eight corners),[126] perversely having anointed him as one of the founding fathers of southern liberalism [those, in the words of Jane Dailey, "who considered preservation of African Americans' constitutional rights compatible with white social and political dominance" (88)].[127] Some critics, for example, cite his essays "The Freedman's Case in Equity" (Jan. 1885) and "The Silent South" (Sept. 1885) (in which the author denies advocating either social equality for blacks or racial mixing) as being the final word on the subject, ignoring, as John Cleman has suggested, "a good deal of the subtlety and irony of his

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[125] Albion W. Tourgée, "The South as a Field for Fiction," *The Forum*, VI (December, 1888), 405.

[126] The advice Honeré gives Frowenfeld to make his ideas more palatable for his hearers. The book version of this line reads: "Mr. Frowenfeld, you never make pills with eight corners, eh?" (153). As Turner writes, part of Cable's insistence on realistic detail was a literal dictation of dialect that proved so difficult for readers to follow that he learned to simplify his transcriptions in the published version.

[127] Those who misrepresent Cable as a closet white supremist include, but are not limited to, Jane Dailey in "The Limits of Liberalism in the New South: The Politics of Race, Sex, and Patronage in Virginia, 1879-1883" (in *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights*); Stephanie Foote in *Regional Fictions: Culture and Identity in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*; Lawrence J. Friedman in *The White Savage: Racial Fantasies in the Postbellum South*; Ronald Takaki in *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America*; and Joel Williamson in *The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation.*

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strategy" (120) which gives in to opponents on smaller issues in order to win on larger fronts. These critics also ignore tales like "'Tite Poulette" and "Belles Dame Plantation" (as well as Cable's own "social mingling" with eminent blacks of his day).[128] Other critics turn directly to *The Grandissimes* noting that by its conclusion all the notable black characters are either killed or banished from the city. Apparently, these critics do not seem to recall the scenes of enormous violence Cable depicts in the work, especially following the partnership of *Freres Grandissimes*, that would make any black uneasy to remain in the South.[129] Like the second half of *Huckleberry Finn* in which Jim gets reenslaved even after Miss Watson has officially freed him (which accurately depicts the post-Reconstruction South as more "old" than "new"), the black erasure in the Cable's work might best be read as another dose of Realism in regards to the race issue in postbellum America, particularly given the fact that a black "hegira" actually occurred in Louisiana in 1879. Finally, critics of what Barbara Ladd has rightly called "one of the most important novels published in the United States during the late nineteenth century" (47) also fail to realize that Cable was acutely aware that any attempt to cast out (or segregate) black culture was an impossibility given that *cultural* miscegenation had long since transpired throughout the South.[130] Rather than reading Cable in full cultural and biographical context, including a consideration of the limits his editors imposed upon him and the fact that his work was engaged in an ongoing dialogue with installments of

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[128] As Lawrence J. Friedman writes, Cable "had been deeply impressed with the abilities and the deportment of several Negro intellectuals, particularly Charles Waddell Chesnutt, George Washington Williams, and Carter G. Woodson" with whom he both visited in their homes and kept up life-long correspondences (101).

[129] Cable himself would eventually find life in the South unbearable. By 1885 (following a vicious attack of "The Freedman's Case in Equity" throughout the Southern media), he would write to his wife: "I must admit I shall not from choice bring up my daughters in that state of society. The more carefully I study it the less I expect of it.... (qtd in Friedman 115). Soon thereafter, he would move his family North permanently.

[130] An example of the inevitable influence of black culture on white is presented in Gavin Jones' "Signifying Songs: The Double Meaning of Black Dialect in the Work of George Washington Cable." Jones shows how the dialect of the Creoles is in fact heavily influenced by black speech indicating the depths to which Cable pursued his intention to mock Creole claims to racial supremacy.

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King's "The Great South," critics and historians continue to question the politics of a man who once told Mark Twain he would not go on stage with him if he proceeded to recite his base "Nigger" impersonations as he intended.[131] To repeat a quote from Cable: "We ought to stop saying that."

[131] According to Guy Cardwell in *Twins of Genius*, Cable, while touring with Twain on the lecture circuit, successfully convinced his partner to rename his comedy sketch "Can't Learn a Nigger to Argue," which he found offensive (105).

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CHAPTER IV: MODERN INSTANCES:

VANISHING WOMEN WRITERS AND THE RISE OF REALISM

"I suppose a she-critic is a kind of monster; women should only be criticized"

Catherine Condit in Henry James' "Impressions of a Cousin"
(*Century Magazine*, Nov. 1883)

The appearance of William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance* (December, 1881 through October, 1882) in the newly renamed *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* edited by Gilder, who replaced Holland shortly before his death in the fall of 1881, marks the symbolic beginning of what has come to be known as the High Realism period in American literature.[132] Self-consciously free of melodrama and exotic circumstances, relying more on analysis of character than on story for its effects, and candidly presenting life "as it is" including its more unpleasant aspects, *A Modern Instance* closely adheres to Realist tenets—largely established in opposition to the sentimental fiction of women—that Howells would elucidate in his reviews and essays of this decade.[133] Not coincidentally, the work, as I will show, marks an end to the dominance of women's fiction appearing in *Scribner's-Century*, superceded throughout the 1880s by a substantial increase of works written by men, and in part, *for* men as much as for women. Significantly, the abridgment of women's writing in

[132] By the "High Realism" era, I intend the period when Realist tenets had become recognizable and accepted as authoritative *and* a number of highly skilled novels were being produced that reflected these tenets. Though period designations are always somewhat arbitrary, the era of "high realism" can usefully be said to begin with *A Modern Instance* (the first great work of the leading spokesperson for realism) and to diminish in dominance in the 1890s with the rise of Naturalism and the "Romantic Revival," literary movements which themselves serve, in part, as responses to the school of realism.

[133] See, for example, *Criticism and Fiction* (1891) consisting of essays written for "The Editor's Study" at *Harper's Monthly*. Even when women writers are not mentioned *per se* in relation to realism, they seem to represent the absent cause against which Howells reacts. For example, when making his famous claim on behalf of "the simple, the natural, and the honest" (II), Howells, given the cultural context in which he is writing and the substance of his other writings, implicitly makes a claim against women's literature, presumed to be confused, unnatural, and deceptive.

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the pages of a leading national magazine originally founded on the strength of its female contributors tells us a great deal about how the "culture of letters" known as High Realism not only viewed sentimental fiction[134] as a threat to its own existence (albeit coded as a threat to the nation), but aggressively enacted means to curtail women's involvement in the production of "serious" fiction while training "the weaker sex" to be disciplined readers of Realism ostensibly for their own, and by extension, society's good.

Howells' first great masterpiece, which we can examine for the dynamics of High Realism, traces the lives of two willful individuals, Marcia Gaylord and Bartley Hubbard, who marry, against the wishes of Marcia's sober-minded father, with life-destroying results. It is a novel of degeneration wrought, on Bartley's side, by egocentric callousness and selfishness and, on Marcia's side, by romantic blindness and stubbornness. Though the work consists of almost five hundred pages, the actual tale of the young couple's elopement, removal to Boston, growing marital strains, and divorce is actually less important than the "character studies" which Howells provides, specifically, the decisions his protagonists make and the actions they take based on their morality and limited viewpoints. As Howells makes clear in a precis of the novel to Holland,[135] his literary intentions as a Realist were clear, even as the details of his story remained intentionally vague:

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[134] By and large, sentimental fiction in the high realism era came to be synonymous with "women's fiction" even though, as David S. Reynolds has pointed out, a large percentage of men also contributed to this genre. The tendency of nineteenth-century male editors and writers to equate "women" with "sentimental," as Amy Kaplan in *The Social Construction of American Realism* stresses, points to a desire to scapegoat "women's fiction" as both a source and manifestation of societal ills. In *Gender, Fantasy, and Realism in American Literature* Alfred Habegger further attributes the denigration of the term sentimental and its primary association with women to American Realists' "anxiety of influence." In his book, he convincingly argues that the fiction of Howells and Henry James, for example, was initially tremendously influenced by the American female literary tradition, an inheritance they would come to consciously and stridently "establish themselves against" (106).

[135] Holland's request for a submission from the reigning man of letters was one of his final acts as editor. The offer helped quell a long-running feud between both men beginning when Howells, as assistant editor of the *Atlantic*, reviewed Holland's book-length poem *Kathrina* (1867) and accused the author of damaging the cause of literature with his lachrymose verse and didactic platitudes.

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> The wish of the Scribner management to know the scope of my proposed story is perfectly reasonable, and I should be glad to gratify it even minutely if I could. But I have a difficulty which they will readily understand. The plot is the last thing for which I care. In whatever I do, I try to make the faithful study of character and the dramatic treatment of incident in my hold upon the reader.

As Howells had recently learned from reading Turgenev, character rather than plot should be the center of a novel's interest and themes should largely be brought out by dialogue.[136]

Importantly, Howells' interest in "character painting" also served extra-literary functions that stemmed from his predicament as an American writer of the genteel class. Worried that postbellum America was becoming increasingly immoral and shallow, Howells saw in Realist principles the means to counteract what he and others of his class perceived to be a siege on the national character. Consciously seeking to refrain from a motherly-like intimacy with the reader, Howells let his readers contemplate and solve the ethical dilemmas of his protagonists for themselves, ideally building their own character in the process. Like many adherents of classical liberalism of the time, Howells throughout the 1880s believed that societal ills such as the rise in divorce rates, growing materialism, class unrest, and the decline in business ethics were largely due to a lack of self control and weak character in the individual. Writing Realism was his contribution helping to ensure that readers bettered themselves and, by extension, the nation at large.

A superb example of Howells' concentration on character analysis with an eye on building character in his readers (especially his female ones) is the initial courtship scene between Bartley and Marcia. This scene takes place in Marcia's father's house after the couple has returned from a church social. Sitting at a table, Bartley impresses his date by

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[136] In *My Literary Passions* Howells wrote of Turgenev: "Here was a master who was apparently not even trying to work out a character, but was standing aside from the whole affair, and letting the character work the plot out" (229).

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disfavorably comparing the town of Equity to larger cities he has known. "You know my opinion of Equity," Bartley tells Marcia. "If I didn't have you here to free my mind to, once in a while, I don't know what I should do" (23:245; Dec. 1881). Bartley's sense of self-importance and flattery of his host is extremely effective in winning the affections of Marcia, described as "proud to be in the secret of his discontent with the narrow world of Equity." The author's concentrated study in character continues as he describes how Bartley next "spoke of himself":

> He told of the processes by which he had formed his own character. They appeared very wonderful to her, and she marveled at the ease with which he dismissed the frivolity of his recent mood, and was now all seriousness. When he came to speak of the influence of others upon him, she almost trembled with the intensity of her interest. "But of all the women I have known, Marcia," he said, "I believe you have had the strongest influence upon me. I believe you could make me do anything; but you have always influenced me for good; your influence upon me has been ennobling and elating." (245)

The effect of these words on Marcia, playing on the supposed beneficial affects all "good and true" women of the Victorian age naturally induce in men bring the host to the melting point. When Bartley soon gets up to go, her infatuation is caught in one of the novel's most memorable images: "'Good night,' she panted, and after the door had closed upon him, she stooped and kissed the knob on which his hand had rested" (245).

In creating this scene between two young lovers, Howells takes great pains to depict the values and judgements of each protagonist. From his words and actions, the reader readily sees Bartley for the self-centered, crafty, smooth-talker that he is. Simultaneously, the reader quickly concludes that Marcia, passionate and beautiful, is gullible as a goose. Dangerously so, as Howells' tale will tell, for the man whom Marcia too readily gives herself to and marries does indeed turn out to be a selfish, unethical lout. Not only does he steal

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stories from friends, but he continues flirtations with women even when married. Indeed, his use of people as stepping-stones and money-oriented approach to journalism justify Atherton's early conclusion about Bartley that he "had no more moral sense than a baseball." This is the lesson a foolish and foolishly in love Marcia learns far too late, but not too late, the author hoped, for his young female readers for whom his study of Marcia's character was primarily aimed.

As Daniel Borus writes, the Realists' desire to portray in their fiction life and people as accurately and honestly as possible, was, in part, "to expand the horizons of the domestic novel and to deflate the conventions under which it operated" (112).[137] By writing about masculine enterprises such as journalism or other forms of industry and/or discussing unpleasant topics such as divorce, bankruptcy, suicide, or even class conflict, Realists sought to inform women readers of the world outside the parlor and beyond the bounds of their supposedly fabulated imaginations. Ostensibly, such exposure would serve to break women from romantic illusions when making real-life decisions, when managing money in the absence of a father or husband (as in *A Woman's Reason*), or when choosing life-mates (as in *A Modern Instance*), for example. As *A Modern Instance* shows, part of presenting topics realistically also resulted in the frequent rejection of the traditional love story. Feeling that

[137] As Lora Romero in *Home Fronts* points out, establishing the precise contours and politics of a generic term such as nineteenth-century domestic fiction (itself a re-naming of the fiction abused by the label "sentimental") is a fictional endeavor in and of itself. Neither entirely conservative nor subversive, different women writers of domestic fiction in fact wrote from varied positions on a variety of subject matter. Romero's recognition of the failure of even contemporary literary critics to see how individual texts are implicated, *albeit individualistically*, in the value systems of an earlier bourgeois society suggests that the carte blanche assessments of women's literature by nineteenth-century male Realists are somehow fictions as well—a notion now well established by recent scholarship (see, for example, Nina Baym's *Woman's Fiction*, Mary Kelley's *Private Woman, Public Stage*, and Jane Tompkins' *Sensational Designs*). Accordingly, the predominant interest of this chapter is not to dispute the grounds on which Realists' claims rest (this I do in chapter two), but to investigate the reasons "the men of realism" had in generically describing an entire body of fiction as "pernicious" as well as the manner in which they sought to discipline the field of literature.

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women's novels "flatter the passions and exalts them above principles,"[138] Realists intentionally wrote anti-romances which often depicted men and women in difficult relationships that, as in the case of Bartley and Marcia, ultimately and necessarily fail. The Realist love story was, in effect, an antidote for women bred on romance novels and served to show how courtship could actually turn out if one were not heedful of a partner's motives and/or character (Borus 112; Habbeger 106).

Also inciting Realists to free the domestic novel from the supposed ill effects of sentimentality was "to extend full readership to men" (Borus 113). Though the novel in America has always had its male readers and producers, the Victorian public, in general, tended to view fiction reading and novel writing as somehow effeminate.[139] The Realistic novel, in its newly invented American form, sought to make novel reading, as well as novel writing, a masculine endeavor.

A clear attempt to extend its audience to include male readers, *A Modern Instance* is, in part, an exhilarating and detailed depiction of the man's world of journalism and the kinds of men that inhabit it. In a work that did indeed attract a new and enlarged pool of male readers to the pages of *Century Magazine*, Howells traces the journalistic career path of the handsome, quick-witted Bartley (who Mark Twain thought was modeled on his own life)[140] as he makes his way from editing the Equity *Free Press*, a small country paper, until

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[138] Howells, *Criticism and Fiction*, (94-104).

[139] Writing about Edith Wharton, Amy Kaplan, for example, notes that "by the time Wharton was growing up in the 1870s, popular fiction had become synonymous with women's fiction among middle-class readers, and novel writing was viewed as women's work ... and by 1894 Thomas Higginson would write ... that 'women were the originators of the modern novel'" (70).

[140] Bartley Hubbard's initials suggest that Bret Harte was probably the primary model Howells had in mind in creating his protagonist. Harte, after all, had a glorious beginning as a reporter-turned-novelist, who quickly experienced a demise in his fortunes, owing, as many speculated, to his moral deficiencies and taste for liquor. Twain, however, was not entirely off the mark. Like Twain, Bartley liked his hot scotch at night and both suspiciously have the same quote from Emerson carved onto their fireplace mantel: "The sign of a home are the people who frequent it." Late in life, Howells confessed that he had himself mostly in mind when creating Hubbard. See Edwin H. Cady in his introduction to *A Modern Instance* (NY: Penguin, 1984), xviii.

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becoming a leading Boston reporter. From the opening chapters of the novel, the reader learns that journalism is an extremely hectic and challenging occupation, requiring careful management of time, resources, and people. Bartley's desk, for example, is regularly described as cluttered with papers and letters demanding attention. Bartley himself is frequently depicted as working on weekends and being on call for new article ideas almost around the clock. As Bartley's expulsion from his first editorial post for knocking a subordinate unconscious shows, it is also a field filled with sudden, unexpected surprises. As Howells makes clear, journalism is a rough and ready world requiring high energy, resiliency, and the ability to think and act on one's feet. It is a world that modern male readers could relate to, and in some measure, admire.

Importantly, though Bartley seems to engage in a manly, exhilarating occupation, it is clear that Howells ultimately questions the virtues of the profession. By showing Bartley's rise as a reporter to be largely due to his willingness to steal stories, to his unethical dealings with sources and other journalists, and to his view of copy as essentially a vehicle for profit, the author suggests that something is rotten in the state of newspaperdom. Howells' views towards the practice of journalism in his day are especially noteworthy when he demonstrates the type of intelligence necessary to write the kind of articles the mass media covets. When Bartley writes up Kinney's logging camp, for example, Howells cannot help but mock the insipidness that journalism encourages:

> It took Bartley two days to write out his account of the logging camp. He worked it up to the best of his ability, giving all the facts that he had got out of Kinney, and relieving these with what he considered picturesque touches ... he enlarged upon its present character and its future development, in relation to what he styled in a line of small capitals, with an early use of the favorite newspaper possessive, COLUMBIA'S MORIBUND SHIP-BUILDING. And he interspersed his text plentifully with exclamatory headings intended to catch the eye with startling fragments of narration and statement such as THE

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> PINE TREE STATE'S STORIED STAPLE, MORE THAN A MILLION OF MONEY, UNBROKEN WILDERNESS, WILD CATS, LYNXES AND BEARS, BITTEN OFF, BOTH LEGS FROZEN TO THE KNEES, CANADIAN SONGS, JOY UNCONFINED, THE LAMPLIGHT ON THEIR SWARTHY FACES. (23:928; April 1882)

Howells' lampooning of newspaper copy as frivolous relates to his general impression of Bartley as flashy and clever, but ultimately a man without a core. In writing his novel, Howells, it is clear, hoped to expose the meretricious ways of men like Bartley to help readers discern the difference between substance and show. While admitting that journalism did have its merits as a free-wheeling, quasi-intellectual activity with the potential to contribute positively to society, Howells could not accept the kind of sensationalist journalism on the rise that Bartley engages in and that William Randolph Hearst was to make famous, and exorbitantly profitable, in the following decade.

The largely negative attention Howells in his novel pays to Bartley and his profession makes sense in a magazine like *The Century*. Like many genteel forums of the day, the editors of the magazine had a low opinion of the mass media suddenly on the rise and gaining readers at an enormous clip. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, in fact, editorials and essays in *Scribner's-Century* frequently lambasted newspapers for luring readers with headlines and content that titillated rather than enlightened. As one editorial entitled "The Morals of Journalism" laments: "murders, suicides, seductions, adulteries, burglaries, thefts, scandal—all disagreeable things—detailed histories of events which appear to prurient tastes and a morbid desire for coarse and brutal excitements—are not these the leading material of a great multitude of our daily papers?" (8:492; April 1878). As this commentary suggests, the magazine's hostility against mass circulation papers was not simply a matter of the competition they presented. The newspapers were also perceived as threatening for

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promoting the lurid and tapping into the unrational, which, *Century's* public-minded editors felt, could lead to unsavory imaginations and/or criminal acts. Fearing "modernist" subjectivity, as we now know the term—genteel editors and writers preferred to stay away from the non-rational basis of human beliefs and motivations, seeking instead to promote an ethic of self-control, restraint, and reasonableness.

At the heart of this "containment policy" was the felt need to contain the rise of individualism in its various manifestations. Realist writers and the genteel magazines in which their work often first appeared connected perceived crises such as class conflict, the rise in immorality, growing materialism, the agitation for women's rights, and the massive surge in immigration as threatening the fabric of a united, recognizable, and stable America. As William Gladden in his essay "The Rise in Divorce" (running concurrently with *A Modern Instance*), put matters: "individuality," the scrooge behind these forces of change, was threatening "to decompose society into its ultimate atoms" (23:417; Jan. 1882).[141] Newspapers, with their huge class-wide readership, it was feared, could unleash the individual passions of the citizens derailing their social commitments and willingness to obey authority. Most worrisome of all, the easily digested, titillating offerings of the media might lead the American reading public away from the control and watch of the northeastern elites.

Similar accusations could also be made, and were made, about popular fiction of the time, especially the widely read romance novels written largely by and for women.[142] As

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[141] Citing Sir Henry Sumner Maine's famous 1861 pronouncement in legal history that "the movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from Status to Contract," Gladden argues that the rights of the individual (that a contract based society emphasizes) have worn down the "mutual obligations and fidelity" to family, community and society. Whereas Gladden admits that the rights of individuals, particularly those of wives and children, needed to be legally recognized, he is adamant in his assertion the rights claims have gone too far. To defend his point, he not only points to a rise in claims for divorce, but to the agitation for women's suffrage as well as "the less radical movements of the elevation of women" (Nov. 1881, vol. 23, no. 1, 415).

[142] Newspapers were only part of the problem, however. Also of great concern were the dangerous effects of sensational works known as dime novels. In "What Our Boys Are Reading" (April 1878), Holland, for

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commentary in *Scribner's-Century* and other genteel publications show, the problem with sentimental literature, according to the men who practiced and promoted Realism, was its addictive and non-productive aspects. On one hand, women's novels of romance were chastised by male critics as being the equivalent of "mental opiates" producing "intellectual impotence" or "intellectual inebriety" (qtd. in Glazener 96). Aimed at women, who were already thought to be highly susceptible to "addictive consumerism," these works, in theory, caused female readers to be emotionally and sexually disfunctional. Another problem with women's writing is that it did not guide or improve readers, but only served to keep women in a state of emotional excitation or dreamy fancifulness leaving them unprepared for actual challenges and decisions (Glazener 96).

In the face of so many literary forms vying for the attention of America's readers, combined with the general decline in the influence of church, community, and family, which *A Modern Instance* so scrupulously documents, the genteel establishment which Howells, Holland, and Gilder represented, believed it was their duty as cultural custodians and authors to direct and oversee the morals and choices of its own fairly large readership. This is no more clear than in the manner *The Century* during the 1880s sought to discipline its women readers in how to live and how readers of both sexes should learn to "read for Realism."

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example, worried that "periodical literature for boys" which "can be easily obtained, and easily concealed" are being read "not only among the idle and vicious boys in great cities, but also among school-boys whose parents are careful about the influences brought to bear on their children" (685). To further its crusade against sensationalist children's literature, in the issue preceding the first installment of *A Modern Instance*, *The Century* printed a sketch by Mark Twain entitled "A Curious Experience" (23:35-45; Nov. 1881) which seemed to rail against the negative influence of dime novels. In the tale an enlisted teen-ager causes havoc in the Union army owing to his secret activities which his officers believe to be the work of a spy. It turns out that the teen has been reading sensationalist adventure tales that lead to his bizarre and threatening activity, though in fact he is innocent as a lamb. Given the perverse genius of Mark Twain it is difficult to know his own precise stance in regards to dime novels, but his tale does indicate that he is subtly lampooning the genteel establishment's intense concern regarding the supposed detrimental effects of "what our boys are reading."

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By "reading for Realism" I invoke Nancy Glazener's illuminative phrase which implies that the reception of Realist texts was intended to be a learned activity requiring active involvement on behalf of the reader. Correctly viewing the writing of Realism as "an intensely ideological activity" (1), Glazener sees its intended reception as a form of mental training guided by the Realist author's "cultural politics" manifested in a varying body of "prescriptions." As Glazener writes, "Sometimes reading for Realism was identified with valuing texts about American contemporary life and construing their representations as 'typical' rather then 'idealizing'; sometimes it was identified with practicing emotional restraint, rather than giving in to the absorptive, addictive reading that was supposed to be invited by inferior forms of fiction; sometimes it was identified with reading for 'character' rather than 'plot'" (14). For Glazener, the Victorian reader of Realism was never a free agent, but under taut instructions to read with a purpose and to carefully consider the lessons the Realist writer proposed.

Exemplifying Glazener's argument concerning the ideological production and guided reception of Realist texts is Howells' follow-up novel to *A Modern Instance* entitled *A Woman's Reason* (Nov. 1883-Nov. 1884). As its title indicates, the novel is a highly prescriptive work evidencing the author's own biases and concerns about how a presumably alien sex tends to think and how, in turn, women *should* think. To accomplish his task, the author performs another dissection of a female protagonist's character as he had with Marcia Hubbard, though this time with more sustained focus.

A Woman's Reason, which Howells had originally intended to be his most realistic work to date,[143] treats the life of an affluent young lady named Helen Harkness, who loses

[143] As Kenneth S. Lynn writes, Howells in this work clearly failed in his attempt to capture the full range of classes in America. "The squeamishness that had made it impossible for Howells to take a reporter's job in

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her fortune when her father dies intestate. Rather than pretend to live in the wealthy style, to which she is accustomed, the author has his protagonist live within her means. As the author hoped to demonstrate to his wide female readership, Helen possesses "a woman's reason" in that she looks for relatively inexpensive living quarters, cuts down on expenses, and, eventually, after various attempts at unpractical work, finds an occupation that is both sensible and lucrative.

In a slightly earlier editorial appearing in *The Century* called "Woman and Business" a writer with the initials S.B.H. writes that "two things should be included in the education of every girl: she should be taught practically the values and use of money, and she should be trained to do some sort of work by which she can earn a livelihood" (23: 954; April 1882). The reason for such training, S.B.H. explains, is to enhance in young women the "reasoning faculties, the power of estimating the relative value of things" (954) which will serve them well when managing a household budget and to provide a security measure in the case of misfortune. Elucidating his point further, the author explains that

> just because marriage is a woman's noblest life, it should never be entered into but from the purest motives. No woman should look to marriage for a home—for a maintenance, but always and only for her highest life. Women were not intended to be thrown out into the world to be jostled and wounded in the struggle for a livelihood. It is the veriest perversion of a true social life which makes it otherwise, but it's the part of wisdom to look at things as they are, and to meet the existing conditions. (954)

This editorial, which stresses the need of young women to hope for the best but to think practically, is wholly consistent with the lesson narrated in *A Woman's Reason*.

Unsure about her marriage prospects and trained as a lady in languages, music, and painting on an amateur basis, Helen is nonetheless determined to find suitable means to

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Cincinnati, or to project his imagination into the lives of the impoverished in Venice, effectively prevented him from completing *A Woman's Reason* in 1878, as he had expected" (274).

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support herself. At the suggestion of her neighbors at Miss Hewitt's boarding house, where Helen is living in an attic apartment, she initially takes up decorating pottery, only to have trouble convincing storekeepers to display her wares. Her next attempt at earning money involves coloring photographs, but at this too she fails. With the help of her friend, Cornelia Root, Helen next gets three novels to review from the editor of the *Saturday Afternoon*.

Discounting the possibility that Helen might be a writer of merit according to Realist guidelines, Howells clearly indicates that this weekly tabloid is just another organ of the mass media that, like the literature of women generally, is both frivolous and seductive. In a mock treatment of the periodical to display its frivolity, Howells, for example, has Helen's landlady praise the *Saturday Afternoon* for all the reasons a Realist would disdain. It is commendable, Ms. Hewitt tells Helen because it "gave you the news about everybody, and kept you posted, so that you could tell just where they were and what they were doing, all the while" (26:433; July 1883). Using Hewitt's own language as self-parody, Howells exposes a variety of literary criticism distinctly coded as female by virtue of its being simultaneously irrational, abstract, and impressed with subject matter that does not serve a greater purpose other than provide gossip.

Increasing the force of Howells' satire, Ms. Hewitt prefaces her commendation by admitting that although she was no judge of art, "she knew what she liked" (433). An attempt on Hewitt's behalf to defend her critical abilities as that of an enlightened amateur, this line actually serves to mock her further, by being another wasted utterance by one who knows "nothing" about art. As it turns out, however, amateurism is the best that Howells' female characters can be allowed to achieve in the arts—to be a professional, one gathers, is

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invariably to be male. As the reader learns, Helen's job as a reviewer is simply the result of a favor on behalf of the editor, who, when he gets Helen's reviews, rewrites them entirely.[144]

As Helen's means for support dwindle, she is reduced to moving in with her former servant Margaret and her Irish husband in an unfashionable part of town. Now living in East Cambridge, Helen finally finds a successful trade making bonnets for servant girls. In an egregious breach of his own Realist tenets,[145] Howells rewards his heroine for her persistence by reuniting her with her handsome cousin Robert Fenton, who had been shipwrecked in the South Pacific while serving as a naval officer. The couple marries and then repurchases Helen's former home turning it into the Everton Institute of Industrial Arts for Young Ladies. At the novel's end, Helen leaves her readers with the lesson that women must learn to be practical just in case they remain single. As Howells concludes, his protagonist

> is glad too have solved in the old way the problems that once beset her; ... She is the same, and yet not quite the same; ... her sympathies, if not her opinions, have been enlarged; and, above all, her unconsciousness has been trained to meet bravely and sweetly the duties of a life which she is content should never be splendid or ambitious. (26: 921; Oct. 1883)

At last disabused of womanly idealism, Helen Harkness comes to serve, in effect, as Realism's poster child. No longer aiming beyond her designated sphere, Helen has learned to be a contented and responsible woman.

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[144] Particularly galling about Howells' treatment of Helen's ill-fated foray into writing for the magazines, from a feminist perspective, is that the 1870s and 1880s presented several high-profile women who turned to writing due to financial insolvency and achieved wide commercial and critical success. Three such writers, with whom Howells would be familiar, were Helen Hunt Jackson, Mary Mapes Dodge, and Frances Hodgson Burnett who were also frequent contributors to *Scribner's-Century* in the 1870s before achieving enormous public and critical acclaim elsewhere (Dodge as author of *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates* and editor of the children's magazine *St. Nicholas,* Jackson as an activist for Native Americans and the author of *Ramona,* and Burnett as author of the children classics *The Secret Garden* and *Little Lord Fauntleroy.*

[145] The rewarding of a righteous heroine, who has sacrificed and suffered in her maidenhood, with a handsome husband (usually her cousin) is a standard motif in much nineteenth century-women's fiction. That Howells, the "great" Realist, applies a sentimental formula to his own novel, evidences the never fully evaporated influence of women's fiction on American Realists that Habegger discusses.

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The very fact that Howells details the plight of an impoverished young lady and shows how difficult it is for an unmarried adult female to find means to support herself during the Victorian age shows that he is both a Realist, and in his eyes at least, a feminist. As Edwin Cady notices, Howells truly "wished to help women become freer psychologically and intellectually, more honest, more mature, more realistic, healthier" (233).[146] Also clear, however, is that he also could not transcend the reigning belief systems of his day, which viewed women to be quixotic and infantile. Believing that frivolous romances encouraged women's innate irrationality and dangerously loosed their libidinal energies, Howells would make his form of Realism serve the same function as Helen Harkness's Institute of Industrial Arts for Young Ladies. It would serve to make young women practical, dutiful, and productive in the useful arts, leaving men as producers of knowledge and "serious" art in the form of Realism.

Howells' famous novel, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, next to be serialized in *The Century* (1885-1886), is another work that, in part, concerns the education of women, but like *A Modern Instance*, also purposefully concerns topics that would interest male readers. While the novel sees the return of Bartley Hubbard, who is at the time still married to Maria, this novel is less concerned with depicting the world of journalism than the male-dominated world of business and commerce. In the character of Silas Lapham, for example, readers get an inside look of the life of a leading paint manufacturer, who has offices across the globe.[147] Just as Howells closely followed Bartley's rise and fall in his trade, the author here describes

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[146] See also Mary Scriber's *Gender and the Writer's Imagination: From Cooper to Wharton*. Scriber writes how "Howells is a remarkable instance of good intentions gone awry through the convergence of inferior artistry and unwitting allegiance to the idea of sexual differentiation" (12).

[147] According to Harry T. Moore in his afterword to *The Rise of Silas*, Howells' work was "the first novel of scope and of any artistic merit to be devoted to a study on American businessman *Lapham* (NY: Penguin, 1980, p. 339).

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Lapham's business affairs in comparable detail honing in on his relationship with a former business associate, which ultimately determines Lapham's own rise or fall.

It is Tom Corey's romantic interest in Penelope Lapham, instead of her sister Irene (to the surprise of the entire family), however, that connects to the central theme of the present chapter. Whenever the wealthy suitor (and recent employee of Silas) visits the Lapham house, the family assumes that he is there to visit the stunning Irene and, as a consequence, the rather plain, yet highly intelligent Penelope generally excuses herself to read in her room. Yet, unbeknownst to either sister, after his first encounter with Irene, Corey has come to the conclusion that she is "as practical as she's pretty" but "tiresome" owing to her "range of ideas" being "extremely limited" (29: 672; March 1885).

As Howells seems to imply, if this were a typical romance novel, the handsome Corey would certainly fall for the more beautiful Lapham daughter, but instead he prefers the bookish, clever Penelope, who, he declares, is "everything that's unexpected" (672). Since *The Rise of Silas Lapham* is quite consciously a Realist text, which seeks to teach women how the world really works (or rather should work), Corey's surprise preference for Penelope is a lesson for women that men of quality actually want their mates to possess intelligence and a character of their own.

When Penelope initially pines that she cannot give herself to Corey owing to her obligations to her sister, the novel also make clear that such self-sacrifice is again the work of romance novels and makes little sense. Penelope, a voracious reader of sentimental fiction, initially denies her suitor, having just read the latest best seller *Tears, Idle Tears*. Its plot—a girl giving up the man she loves because another girl cared for him first (a parody of the real-life best-seller *St. Elmo* by Augusta Evans Wilson)—has convinced her of her decision. Only

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by the end of the novel is she finally convinced that such thinking hurts more people than it helps.

That sentimental books are largely to blame for women's "romantic" ways of thinking is clearly one of the central premises of Howells' novel. In fact, this theme is made explicit in the famous party scene held at Bromfield Corey's mansion in which Silas drinks too much and embarrasses himself and his family. At this party a discussion erupts again over *Tears, Idle Tears*, which one female guest describes as "perfectly heartbreaking, as you'll imagine from the name; but there's such a dear old-fashioned hero and heroine in it, who keep dying for each other all the way through, and making the most wildly satisfactory and unnecessary sacrifices for each other" (29: 868; April 1885). At this Penelope-like (and Miss Hewitt-like) commentary, the men at the party can only scoff. One man in particular, the Reverend Sewell (a pillar of morality and reason who later reappears in *A Minister's Charge*, another *Century* serialization), seems to speak for the author himself, when he laments how

> I don't think there ever was a time when they (sentimental novels) formed the whole intellectual experience of more people. They do greater mischief than ever... The novelists might be the greatest possible help to us if they painted life as it is, and human feelings in their true proportion and relation, but for the most part they have been and are altogether noxious. (868)

As Sewell's comment makes clear, popular romance books are the enemy of society and Realist books its savior.

Throughout the pages of *The Century*, teaching women to discard sensibility for sense seemed to go hand in hand with instructing readers, of both sexes, how to read (and appreciate) the type of serious and beneficial literature called for by Sewell. Appearing slightly prior to the first installment of *A Woman's Reason*, for example, was Howells'

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widely discussed essay "Henry James, Jr." (25: 24-29; Nov. 1882). This article elaborated and heralded the literary art of a modern master writing in the new "master" genre, Realism—a dual announcement that ruffled more than a few European feathers at the time. Significantly, the conception of the article was suggested by *Century*'s editor Richard Watson Gilder, who wished to align the leading Realists of the day with his magazine. In addition to Howells' essay on James, there had already appeared essays on Howells (by Thomas Sergeant Perry), Walt Whitman (by Clarence Stedman),[148] and an essay on Mark Twain (by Howells) was forthcoming.

In "Henry James, Jr." Howells makes clear what the new literature of the day ought to look like and how it is to be achieved. Beginning with a brief biography of James, the author shortly comes to what he admires in the fiction of his friend and mentor. Most noteworthy, Howells writes, are "the finished workmanship in which there is no loss of vigor; the luminous and uncommon use of words, the originality of phrase, the whole clear and beautiful style" (25). In essence, what pleases Howells most about James is his "manly" writing style. For example, instead of the "loose and baggy style" that James himself ascribed to the novels of George Eliot, there is craftsmanship. Instead of sentiment, there is vigor. Instead of the same old platitudes, commonly associated with women's literature of the time, there is originality. Suggesting rationality, as opposed to feminine irrationality, James' style is both 'luminous' and clear.

Other male-coded features also stand out in this review including James' "impartiality," his attendance to character rather than fate, and a strong "analytic tendency"

[148] Though today considered a Romantic poet, Whitman began to achieve renown in the 1880s as a Realist writer. An 1880 review of De Kay's "Hesperus and Other Poems," for example, discusses the work as being "powerful, manly verse ... a wholesome corrective ... hitherto ... supplied by such men as Browning, Emerson and Whitman [in distinction] to the tendency of imaginative literature of our day, and especially of poetry, to *feminize* itself, if we may coin the term" ("Dekay's 'Hesperus and Other Poems'" 20:470; July 1880).

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(26). All three of these factors that, as Howells has it, make James' writing excellent signal a feminine opposite. Impartiality, for example, has as its binary opposite the inability to not obtrude, excessive maternal concern if you will. Story, as opposed to character painting, implies undue reliance on the non-rational for narrative effect. And the analytical, of course, opposes the emotional, commonly associated with the feminine. Though he never actually uses the term "Realist" to describe James, just as he never mention's the fiction of women outright, it is clear that Howells has both in mind. This is particularly so when he notes that James' work "prefers to avoid all manner of dire catastrophes" (28), "catastrophes" being the recognized trademark of women's literature, its opposite, everyday occurrences, being the signal stamp of Realism. Clearly, given the cultural context of gender tensions during this time, women's literature as Realism's absent cause is hard to deny; Howells' essay on James serves only to reinforce this fact.

Of course, it was not the gender-coded use of terms that caused the international furor that ensued following the appearance of this essay. The source of contention that annoyed, most especially the British, was Howells' assertion that the modern art of fiction as practiced by James had displaced the work of outdated masters such as Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope and Reade. Given to authorial intrusiveness and a mannerist style that often served no higher moral purpose, these writers, Howells contends, have been dethroned by one "whose style is always easy without being trivial, and ... often stately, without being stiff"(28).[149]

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[149] Not surprising, what has been called the "Battle of the *Century*," led to a series of parries and polemical thrusts between English and American reviewers of the essay. An essay in the highly regarded English journal *Blackwood's*, for example, published a seething response entitled "American Literature in England" penned by "Titus Munson Coan." The anonymous review sought to refute the so-called excellence of the American School of Realism and called its two leading exemplars inferior to even Cooper, Brockden Brown, and Bret Harte and nothing but a "select circle of *puffistes litteraires*." Interestingly, Richard Watson Gilder, long maligned (somewhat mistakenly) as an excessively skittish and squeamish editor by modern critics, was in fact greatly thrilled by the attention Howells' essay received, just as he thoroughly enjoyed the increased readership

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Whereas a number of literary historians have detailed the volatile parries and polemical barbs that were exchanged by British and American writers and editors during what has been famously called the "Battle of *The Century*," less attention has been paid to the significance of Howells' essay appearing in the *Century* at a time when the fiction-writing profession was seeking a masculine identity at the expense of (though Howells would call it a service to) women readers and writers. Howells' decision to cite James as the master Realist was appropriate, for James' work had long sought to valorize male ways of seeing and writing set in opposition to female ways. In fact reading his work as it appears chronologically in *Scribner's Monthly* and later *The Century*, one notices certain themes that repeat and finally culminate in his famously anti-feminist novel *The Bostonians*. These themes include male ways of seeing as generally rational, sober, consistent, and most importantly, serious. The feminine manner of viewing the world, in turn, is consistently either naïve, limited, crass, or a combination of these traits. Whereas, as Fred Kaplan remarks, the tension between "romantic female naivete and male Realism" (129) is a dominant one throughout James' career, the works appearing in *Scribner's-Century*, a magazine consciously seeking to establish Realism and "high" culture as reigning forces of authority, helps us to understand James' own role in the establishment of serious art as male and mass culture on the rise during this time as effeminate and needing discipline.

One of James' earliest tales to appear in *Scribner's* was "Crawford's Consistency" (12:569-584; August, 1876), which, like Howells' *A Modern Instance*, concerns a severely strained marriage (following a failed engagement).[150] The story examines the life of a young,

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the controversial *A Modern Instance* had brought in. See William L. Stull, "The Battle of the *Century*: W.D. Howells, 'Henry James, Fr.,' and the English," *American Literary Realism* 11 (1978): 249-64.

[150] S. Gorley Putt, for one, has remarked on the curious fact that "so many of James' stories are based on the theme of unhappy or uncompleted marriages—marriages avoided, abortive marriages, misalliances, marriages

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handsome gentleman/scholar named Crawford as told from the point of view of his good friend, a male physician with keen observational and analytical talents, whose obsessive concern into the affairs of Crawford suggests a homoerotic interest. This is especially apparent whenever the narrator depicts Crawford's fiancées, both of whom he despises inordinately and deems as unworthy of his friend. The physician's disdain for these women, however, does not seem to stem from jealously, but due to their own obvious failings which the tale-teller (and the tale) take great delight in exposing.

Crawford's first engagement is to Elizabeth Ingram, a young beauty whose "market value" as a rich man's wife was early acknowledged by her mercenary parents, who had kept their daughter "behind high walls and triple locks" (572) under the surveillance of nuns until her eighteenth birthday. As the market for extremely rich suitors is not particularly strong when the freshly debuted Elizabeth first catches Crawford's eye, the Ingrams can only assent to the engagement that quickly follows. At the last moment, however, the family calls the affair off, apparently because a more suitable suitor has been found in a young southern planter who, it was rumored, "owned three-eighths of Alabama" (581). Shortly thereafter, a devastated Crawford, in an act the narrator finds incomprehensible, becomes engaged to a woman from the working class, who readily agrees to marry Crawford on account of his modest fortune. Though the narrator comes to see less and less of his friend, he notices that his crass wife abuses the gentle Crawford horribly. When his money has given out, she even throws him down the stairs leaving him in the hospital. Nevertheless, Crawford is

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cursed by vague supernatural agencies, the love of the living conveniently shelved in favor of love for the dead..." (*Henry James: A Reader's Guide*, Cornell UP, Ithaca 1966: 267.) Putt suggests that this particular thematic obsession owes largely to author being a "historian of the present" and that the marriage market was simply a preeminent concern amongst his class of readers. Jonathan Freedman in the introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Henry James* argues that the author's concern with failed marriage and/or plots of familial dissolution relates to his own desire "to pose a remarkable affront to dominant domestic ideals" (5) by emphasizing the family as an arbitrary, and perhaps unnatural, social institution.

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"consistent" to his wife to the end of her life, never once complaining or attempting to leave her.

What is particularly interesting about this tale, given its context in *Scribner's Monthly* still dominated by women's fiction at the time,[151] is the stark contrast James paints between his primary male and female characters. Whereas Crawford and the narrator come across as decent, worldly, and educated, Elizabeth and Mrs. Crawford are their polar opposites. In fact, each woman seems to represent a segment of American culture that James himself viewed with increasing caution and disdain.

Elizabeth Ingram, for example, seems to be a feminine representative of the emerging bourgeoisie culture of America's *novae-riche*, a character-type he would soon famously satire in Daisy Miller (and later in *The Bostonian's* Verena Tarrant). Kept innocent, pure, and "marketable" by calculating parents (who strongly resemble Verena's highly memorable parents), Elizabeth is both intensely beautiful and intensely vacuous. Described by the narrator as having "no more intelligence than a snowy-fleeced lamb" and possessing the "sensibility of a wax doll" (575), it is her powerful sexual allure alone that manages to decisively hook Crawford's attention. Unfortunately, brought up without worldly experience or true culture, Elizabeth has no standards by which to gauge the general excellence of her suitor and ultimately serves as the "hollow reed" of her parents' will when they find a more suitable mate by virtue of his greater material worth.

The language of Mrs. Crawford, replete with ungrammatical phrasings and malapropisms, also serves as an index to her lack of culture. Viewing women as the carriers, transmitters, and "guardians" of culture and language, James, in portraying the degraded

[151] James was often loathe to contribute to *Scribner's* which he felt to be dominated by 'sentimental scribblers' in contrast to the better quality (i.e. more realistic) fiction supposedly found in the *Atlantic*. See Kaplan, 213-14.

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speech of Mrs. Crawford, suggests a culture that has atrophied, a declension, for which women, the author believed, were largely responsible.[152]

Indicating the depth of Mrs. Crawford's, and by extension culture's, depravity, even when married her clothes remain as gaudy and "unfashionable" as her language is vulgar and crude. "She belongs," both Crawford and the narrator agree, "to the most sordid reality ... the last word of coarseness, and the flower of commonness" (578). While Crawford seems to marry out of spite or self-pity, his wife's designs are firm: she will get from him "four thousand for [her] own use." Not surprisingly, when the money runs out owing to a deflation in the stock market, her affection for her husband runs dry as well.

The physician/narrator and his handsome friend, in contrast, are the refined and weighty products of scientific learning and genteel culture. The physician, for example, exudes good sense and rationality and utilizes elegant diction, whereas Crawford is a connoisseur of knowledge in all its branches and the possessor of "fastidious taste" and excellent manners. Apparently, the latter's two choices for a marriage partner seem to represent the only range of options a man of culture and learning has in a society becoming increasingly crass and materialistic. One can, like the narrator, remain a bachelor, or like Crawford become a husband and exercise stoicism in the face of unsympathetic cultural forces as encompassed by Mrs. Crawford.

James' tales, published in *Scribner's-Century*, which follow "Crawford's Consistency" similarly portray women as limited, easily manipulated, and/or lacking the capacity to penetrate reality's surface. The "Ghostly Rental" (12: 664-679; September,

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[152] See Elsa Nettles' *Language and Gender in American Fiction* which discusses James' "The Speech of American Women" (1904). This four-part essay held that in America, women, not men, were the arbiters of taste and language, a function they were performing poorly. Rather than overseeing language skills in the home, women permitted their children and spouses to "mutter, grunt, or mumble" without correction. For James, American speech had become "an inimitable union of looseness and flatness" (25-27).

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1876), for example, sets a young man's desire to investigate a house rumored to be haunted against an aged spinster named Miss Deborah who is sure of this fact without actually having ever seen the house. In fact, Miss Deborah has never been anywhere. For much of her life, she has sat by her window only looking out on life and commenting upon it based on her limited view point. Initially, the narrator is impressed with all Miss Deborah seems to know, realizing only by the end of the story the folly of both her methods and conclusions:

> When I asked her how she had acquired her learning, she said simply—"Oh, I observe!" "Observe closely enough," she once said, " and it doesn't matter where you are. You may be in a pitch-dark closet. All you want is something to start with; one thing leads to another, and all things are mixed up. Shut me up in a dark closet and I will observe after a while, that some places in it are darker than others. After that (give me time), and I will tell you what the President of the United States is going to have for dinner." Once I paid her a compliment. "Your observation," I said, "is as fine as your needle, and your statements are as true as your stitches." (670)

"The Ghostly Rental" essentially contrasts ways of knowing and ways of living and provides a clear lesson. If an artist, or any other individual for that matter, is determined to see reality "as it is" and seeks to live life fully, he or she must avoid the potential hollowness that can come from merely observing life from a afar, or from a single limited viewpoint.

That it is the man rather than the woman who is usually able to see clearly, or like Ralph Touchett must act as the guide to counteract Isabel Archer-like female naiveté (or defenselessness in the face of ultimate freedom),[153] is made explicit in "Four Meetings" (15: 44-57; Nov. 1877). This tale is literally broken up into four meetings that an urbane world traveler has with Caroline Spencer, a young schoolteacher given to extreme romanticism.

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[153] James in *Portrait of a Lady*, I believe, seems to hold deep reservations concerning the resiliency of female sensibility in the face of, what Philip Fisher calls, "hard facts." If we further consider the heroic ideal James sets up for the artist in "The Art of Fiction" that he must be entirely free, while ultra-disciplined ("he upon whom nothing is lost"), the masculine bias of this view becomes clearer. Critics such as Martha Banta in fact connect James' artistic theory with the growing emphasis at the turn-of-the-century on the "strenuous life" as the source of male salvation, a philosophic outlook advocated by James' brother William and yet more famously by Theodore Roosevelt.

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The narrator first meets Miss Spencer at a party of a close friend in the small New England town of Grimwinter. In a discussion about Europe, Caroline explains to her new friend that although she plans to visit one day, she already knows a great deal about it from reading "the romantic poets ... histories and guidebooks" (46).

To his surprise, the narrator next finds Miss Spencer, three years later, at an outdoor cafe in the small French town of Le Havre. He learns that the newly arrived visitor is enormously enamored of the town she is in having observed its "local color" from her chair for several hours while waiting for her cousin, an art student, to return from exchanging her American money. Suspecting that the cousin may never return, the narrator extends his table visit, though his suspicions come to naught when a young man in a "rusty black velvet jacket" finally makes his appearance. When the narrator comes across Caroline yet later in the day, however, he finds her visibly upset "manipulating apricots." As she explains, her cousin had indeed convinced her to lend money to him and his wife (a disinherited Countess so she is told) until "his great picture is finished" (50). On account of her largesse, Caroline can no longer afford to travel Europe and must return home, her entire trip having lasted thirteen hours!

Five years later, the narrator returns to the town where he first met Miss Spencer and discovers that she still resides there. Apparently, she opened her house up to her cousin's wife, the Countess, who claimed she had no one else to turn to after her husband's death. The narrator learns that the Countess not only lives rent-free as a demanding guest, but Caroline was never returned the money she had loaned. The romantic illusions which

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Caroline clings to in her spinsterdom suggests the foolishness of a life not lived. And once again, the fool that plays this unlived role is a woman.[154]

As James' fiction in *Scribner's-Century* shows, the female point of view regularly suffers either from romantic delusions, sheer bad taste, and/or the misfortune of simply being female in the Victorian Age. Whether read as a misogynistic writer or a feminist one (in the manner that William Dean Howells may be called feminist for his time), however, there is little denying that James had a view of women that generally precluded their ability to consistently make rational and/or artful decisions in a man's world. Nowhere is this more true than in *The Bostonians* (serialized in *The Century* from February 1885-February 1886), a majestic work of art on a subject that had been preoccupying James since he first began his writing career (in 1865) as a book-reviewer for *The Nation,* at the time a staunchly anti-feminist monthly.[155]

Alongside *The Princess Casamassima*, *The Bostonians* is often considered James' most realistic novel in that it concerns pressing contemporary issues, namely the agitation for women's rights which had been gaining in momentum ever since the end of the Civil War. In his *Notebooks* (dated 8 April 1883) the author writes:

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[154] In "Impressions of a Cousin" (November, 1883) James explores the life of a spinster with far greater depth and sympathy even as the overriding theme of this tale, like his others in *Scribner's-Century*, share a common anti-feminist thread. The story is a masterful diary account of an extremely bright woman hampered, again, by a lack of worldly experience, partly owing to her position in society as the poor, unattractive relation dependent on the generosity of a rich cousin. As lines such as "I am so horribly tongue-tied that I must at least relieve myself here" reveal, the claustrophobic life of this diarist is palpable and resembles, as some critics suggest, the diary pages of Henry's bed-ridden genius sister Alice. Although an artist whose insight spares her best friend from a man hoping to marry for money, it is clear that Catherine Condit's "impressions" are at best limited and sadly diseased. As her last name suggests, Catherine's paper thoughts are the unfiltered conduit of a brilliant woman whose limited life experiences prevent her art, in paint or on paper, from transcending the mundane.

[155] Following the Civil War, *The Nation* had become extremely conservative in regards to women's issues. In 1870, for example, it ran several essays opposing female suffrage as well as a satire by E.L. Godkin, its editor, who urged that not just women, but babies too should be allowed the vote. Henry James at times joined the anti-feminist fray writing in one review of "modern women" whose "extravagance is part of their increased freedom" even as they remain "remarkably patient, submissive, sympathetic ... well-disposed to model themselves on the judgement and wishes of men" (qtd. in Kaplan, 78).

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> The scene of the story is laid in Boston and its neighborhood; it relates an episode connected with the so-called 'woman's movement.' The characters who figure in it are for the most part persons of the radical reforming type, who are especially interested in the emancipation of women, giving them the suffrage, releasing them from bondage, co-educating them with men, etc.

As James' own "etc." implies, the concerns of the novel clearly extend beyond the movement itself: it is in fact a work that vehemently attacks American culture that, in the author's mind, has been co-opted by an out-of-control female sensibility in the forms he had already partially mapped in his earlier fiction. On one hand, his depiction of Olive Chancellor as a rigid, short-sighted, controlling spinster is reflective of a culture that is no longer creative, but tied to "dead" causes that freezes souls and kills true inspiration. The young and beautiful Verena Tarrant, on the other hand, who Olive covets to join her reformist camp, represents the virginal energy of the day in need of form and guidance. As James' novel warns, her quick intelligence, sex appeal, and oratorical talents are easily given to bogus causes, or worse, crass entertainment in an age, as Warren Susman and others have noted, increasingly impressed by personality, rather than character.

That Realism as an art form is engaged in a civil war with a culture that has become overly effeminized is made apparent with the introduction of Basil Ransom. A southerner of deeply conservative tendencies, whose very being (and writing we may assume) has shades of the didactic Realism appearing in the pages of *Century,* Ransom seeks to win Verena for his own purposes, namely to bring her back into the domestic sphere. As he later explains to his beloved: "My plan is to keep you at home and have a better time with you there than ever" (31:87; Nov. 1885). Basil's ideal, it seems, is a society in which there are clear distinctions between the positions and roles of men and women, a society that allows men the proper pursuit of their destiny in the public sphere and women the right to develop their

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sensibilities and interests within the domestic, familial realm "outside and above all vulgarizing influences" (87). Such a separation of spheres implicates men as the rightful producers of culture and women as its ideal carriers and transmitters—a reactionary notion that James himself would support throughout his long career, though stopping far short of Basil's fanatical desire to silence women altogether.[156]

As her last name implies, Olive Chancellor presents a formidable, albeit "twisted," opponent against whom Basil must battle to achieve his goal. Variously described as "strenuous," "anxious," "hard," and "perverse," Chancellor is in many ways the opposite of her judicial-looking and clear-headed nemesis, whose "duty" is to himself and for "laying-off" in his private time. The contrasting sternness of Olive's character is even exemplified by her parlor where Basil first waits on her. Epitomizing the vulgarity and sterility of a democratic society that increasingly derives its vocabulary of self-expression in things, Olive's central guestroom is filled to the brim with objects that connate wealth at the expense, James seems to joke, of comfort and taste. As Basil observes:

> He had not as yet been in many houses in New York, and he had never before seen so many accessories. The general character of the place struck him as Bostonian; this was, in fact, very much what he had supposed Boston to be. He had always heard Boston was a city of culture, and now there was culture in Miss Chancellor's tables and sofas, in the books that were everywhere, on little shelves like brackets (as if a book were a statuette), in the photographs and water-colors that covered the walls, in the curtains that were festooned rather stiffly in the doorways. (29: 535; Feb. 1885)

After proceeding to think about the possibility of "becoming a partner in so flourishing a firm" (535), James' hero concludes that even as "this cushioned feminine nest made him feel

[156] Exemplifying James' attitude towards women's agitation for equal rights is a well-known letter from Violet Hunt, English fiction writer and founder of the Women Writers' Suffrage League. To this letter which asks the renowned author to autograph a story to help raise money for a suffragist campaign, James replies: "I will with pleasure 'sign' the numbers of the English Review that you may send me—by which I suppose you mean something of mine—"The Velvet Glove?" in those numbers. No—I confess I am not eager for the avenement of a multitudinous & overwhelming female electorate--& don't see how any man in his senses *can* be; I am eager at present only for dreadnoughts & aeroplanes & people to man—not to woman—them!...." (Horne 478).

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unhoused and underfed" (particularly given his own poverty), it is not for him. The room's polymerized "chromo-culture"[157] and material hardness, like the pit which presumably shapes Olive's nature, fails to nourish its occupant. As James writes, Basil, at the last moment, "was conscious at bottom of a bigger stomach than all the 'culture' of Charles Street could fill" (535).

The fact that James seeks to satirize the "empty" culture pervading Olive's domicile is made especially evident by a textual difference in the novel's serial version. In *The Century* version, James puts the word "culture" in quotes as if to emphasize the true cheapness of Charles Street. Perhaps owing to the negative publicity he received from being too hard on Olive and her Bostonian environs,[158] he removed it in the book version, even as the meaning of the passage remains clear (Habegger 185). For James, the cheap material culture of the New England parlor reflected a demise in the taste and manners of Americans generally. Though founded on the "manly ideals" of Emerson and Thoreau, who James respected, the author felt that American culture had become severely degraded owing to the rise of the mass forms of media and entertainment and social activism, such as the agitation for women's rights, which broke down necessary social distinctions and ordering practices.

At risk of contamination by America's increasing vulgarity is the pure femininity of Verena. Raised like Elizabeth Ingram in "Crawford's Consistency" by exploitative parents,

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[157] The material overflow of Olive's parlor depicts what Miles Orvell in *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940* calls a "a culture of imitation" in which middle-class American identity has come to be expressed in a mass array ill-chosen 'things'" (38). Like Twain in *Huckleberry Finn* and *A Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, James too cannot help venting his disgust at the vulgarity of American culture brought about, as he tries to show, by the democratization of taste.

[158] Responding to the poor sale of the novel in book form to his editor, George E. Brett, an agent at Macmillan Company, explains: "The trouble we have had to contend with in the case of 'The Bostonians' has been the hostility engendered towards it in the minds of certain Bostonians who are supposed to be—I know not how truly—satirized in its pages. They are a noisy and to a degree a powerful bastion and they raised an outcry against the story in its progress through the 'Century' and the curious part of it is that they induced the newspaper reviewers against Mr. James and the consequence is that no unprejudiced review of the book is now possible" (Qtd. in Anesko 99).

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Verena—though more intelligent than her counterpart—is also a "hollow reed" easily manipulated by whoever assumes the role of her manager. Such pliancy is apparently tied to her gender and youth, for, as the narrator repeatedly relates in various ways, "it was in her nature to like being overborne" (30: 881; October, 1885). Initially, she is managed by her father Selah, a mesmeric healer, whose fondest dream is to get Verena noticed in as many newspapers as possible. When Olive Chancellor promises to "bring about the day when (receipts) would flow in freely" (29: 904; April 1885) by having Verena join in on her work on behalf of the rights of women, Mr. Tarrant does not hesitate. To him, nothing could be finer in the modern age than publicity *and* money.

Also vying for possession of Verena is Mattias Pardon, a suave, young newspaperman, who too is viewed by James as a signal player in a culture that has become increasingly feminized. To emphasize his degraded state, the author gives Mattias decidedly feminine features. "He had," James writes,

> small, fair features, remarkably neat, and pretty eyes, and a moustache that he caressed, and an air of juvenility much at variance with his grizzled locks ... His friends knew that in spite of his delicacy and his prattle he was what they called a live man; his appearance was perfectly reconcilable with a large degree of literary enterprise. (30:62; May 1885)

The commercialism, showmanship, and anti-intellectualism of the "long-haired" Mattias, which make for unpardonable sins in James' eyes, are, once again, points of admiration to Verena's father. As James cynically reports by entering Mr. Tarrant's thoughts: "the advantage for the girl of having a husband who was at the same time reporter, interviewer, manager, agent, who had the command of the principal 'dailies,' would write her up and work her, as it were, scientifically—the attraction of all this was too obvious to be insisted on" (30:62; May 1885). In the end, Mattias and Olive join forces in the possession and

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management of Verena in a business arrangement that makes reform indistinguishable from entertainment.

Although her audiences (described by Basil as "the stupid, gregarious, gullible public") clearly cherish what Verena offers at the lectern, Basil is less impressed by his lover's speeches (30:878; Oct. 1885). Though he finds Verena to be beautiful and enchanting, the southerner finds her words to be simply "fluent, pretty, third-rate palaver" (30:556; Aug. 1885). It is clear in fact that he ties her rhetorical formulas and cliches on "the woman question" to the rising mass interest in the platitudes and slogans of advertising generally. As he eventually expresses to Verena in no uncertain terms, her cause is not a solution to society's ills, but part of a growing menace. "It's a feminine, a nervous, hysterical, chattering, canting age," Basil laments, "an age of hollow phrases and false delicacy and exaggerated solicitudes and coddled sensibilities, which, if we don't soon look out, will usher in the reign of mediocrity, of the feeblest and flattest and most pretentious that has ever been" (31:87; November 1885). To Basil, the woman's movement is simply more cant in an age of cant—another product of a fully realized democracy destined to bring about a widespread dissolution of taste.

Where James stands in relation to Basil's views appears open to dispute. On one hand, the author/narrator does seem to set himself apart from the words of his protagonist. After Basil has expressed his firm "conviction that civilization itself would be in danger if it should fall into the power of a herd of vociferating women," James attaches the following parenthetical aside "(but I am but the reporter of his angry *formulae*)" (29: 690; March 1885). Also, after describing Basil's view "that women were essentially inferior to men, and infinitely tiresome when they declined to accept the lot which men had made for them," the

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narrator again emphasizes his role as distanced recorder by admitting that he has "sketched a state of mind which will doubtless strike many readers as painfully crude" (30: 436; July 1885). Though such authorial intrusions seem to suggest that in *The Bostonians*, James is finally guilty of satirizing *everybody*, it is still hard to deny, as even the title imparts, that women receive the bulk of the novel's vitriol. Indeed, to this reader, the very defensiveness of the narrator's frequent requests to spare the messenger further bespeak James' affiliation, on some level, to his hero's unhappy message—a notion James' earlier *Scribner-Century* submissions and private writings appear to confirm.

In further typing Basil as a political and social reactionary, James has his hero challenge the vulgarity of the age by submitting deeply conservative essays to various publications such as the fictional *Rational Review*. Though certainly far more conservative than the views often appearing in the editorials and Realist fiction of *Century Magazine,* Ransom's submissions may be usefully viewed as mimicking the project of "cultural containment" pursued by the leading genteel editors and Realist writers of the day.[159] Indeed, the distinction and monetary award conferred on Basil when his work is finally accepted is not unlike the rewards of being published in a "serious-minded" magazine like *The Century*, during its heyday in the 1880s.[160] Illustrating the newly won power of magazines dedicated to high culture to confer status on its writers, it is only after having received a substantial advance for his article that Basil feels "manly" enough to continue his

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[159] This reenactment suggests that James was, in part, parodying the Realist project and preparing himself to move onto less sociologically based, patriotic fictions. For more on this idea, see Sarah Blair's "Realism, Culture and the Place of the Literary: Henry James and *The Bostonians"* in *The Cambridge Companion to Henry James*. This essay convincing argues that in *The Bostonians* are indications of James' growing disenchantment with Realism's stern regulations and aggressively nationalistic subtexts in favor of a more cosmopolitan, modernist, less prescriptive approach to fiction writing.

[160] Hamlin Garland in his memoir *A Son of the Middle Border* recalls how *Century* in 1890 had accepted an early short story of his and a three-part tale of Wisconsin which netted him nearly $500 dollars and a personal letter of appreciation from Richard Watson Gilder. As Garland writes: "It meant something to get into the *Century* in those days. The praise of its editor was equivalent to a diploma" (412).

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self-appointed role in mitigating the hysteria of the day. Indeed, a suddenly confident Basil fulfills his public duty and private aspirations at once by storming the stage where Verena is to present a speech ironically entitled "A Woman's Reason" (in contrast to Howells' unironic title for his own novel).[161] In a "rescue" attempt of both Verena and society that also fulfils his own masculine desires, Basil "with muscular force" wrenches Verena away from the public glare, presumably to take her home where she will be heard of no more.

It is fascinating to note that the silencing of Verena (if read as the silencing of women's voices) is precisely what happened in the pages of the once female-dominated *Century*. From being a publication which owed its success in the 1870s largely to the fiction of women, *Scribner's-Century,* by the early to mid-1880s, had become a publication not only run by men, but largely written by men with Realist inclinations. Although precise statistics are hard to determine, it appears that while well over sixty percent of the literature appearing in the magazine had once been the result of female pens, the age of Realism saw these percentages dramatically reversed.[162]

Significantly, *The Bostonians* was serialized at the same time (and sometimes in the same issue) as Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham* and sections of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, two works that also protest a culture that, according to the authors, seemed to have become overly effeminized. As has been discussed, *Silas* is, in part, directly

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[161] Arguably, James' satiric use of a title from Howells' *oeuvre* is another indication demonstrating the author's growing disenchantment with Realism as the appropriate literary genre of modernity.

[162] In her own examination of *Scribner's-Century* for her biography of Rebecca Harding Davis, Sharon Harris supports my contention that women writers, including Davis, were essentially pushed out of the magazine by the end of the 1870s. As Harris writes, "A survey of *Scribner's Monthly* and its continuation as *Century Magazine* for the 1880s reveals patterns not unlike those recorded during the editorial transition at the *Atlantic* in the previous decade, although the patterns are of an even greater extreme in this case.... in the categories of fiction and essays (that is, works other than poetry), men's contributions constituted 83 percent of the published works. Although an impressive array of nineteenth century American women authors appeared in the periodical during the eighties ... they were almost entirely relegated to the poetry columns. Yet, male authors now retained 60 percent of this category as well, with women's contributions limited to 17 percent of the fiction and essays and 40 percent of the poetry published" (207).

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concerned with the pernicious effects of sentimental fiction, whereas Huck Finn famously sets out on a raft largely to escape Aunt Polly's "civilizing" and to experience adventures clearly coded as male. In a rarely discussed passage at the end of the novel, for example, Aunt Sally asks Tom why he and Huck went to such great lengths to free Jim from Phelps farm when he knew full well that he had already been freed according to Miss Watson's will. To this most reasonable query, Tom's replies: "Well, that *is* a question, I must say; and *just* like women! Why, I wanted the *adventure* of it..."

Also telling, the appearance of works by Howells, James, and Twain coincided with *Century's* "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" series (November 1884-November 1887), a massive three-year feature recounting exploits of the War by its participants. Part of a concerted effort on behalf of the magazine's editors to include more history and less fiction in its pages, these articles were often relayed in a manner that glorified the conflict and showcased masculine heroics, on both sides. Like the Realist project itself, "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" also clearly catered to a largely male audience: its appearance in fact led to a subscription boom that increased the number of readers from 150,000 to over 500,000, most of whom, it can be presumed, were male. What was good for the gander, however, was clearly less beneficial for the goose.

This series alongside works by James, Twain, and Howells and other Realist writers edged out the works of women writers—a reduction, given the gender and genre wars of the time, that was not simply accidental. Though men dominated the pages of *The Century* during this time, the occasional appearance of works by women show that the "dominant sex" did not necessarily always have the final word. A little-known poem published in *The*

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Century in 1885 by Mary Wilkins Freeman, an exceptionally talented Realist in her own right and lately recognized as a "covert" feminist revolutionary, exemplifies this fact:

> "A Maiden Lady"
>
> Of a summer afternoon,
> In her parlor window there,
> She would sit, her meek face showing
> Delicately long and fair,
> Sewing on some dainty garment, no one ever saw her wear.
>
> She'd be dressed in cool old muslin
> With a lilac pattern dim;
> Full soft skirt, and pointed body
> Cut severely straight and prim—
> Maiden-dress and maiden lady, sober, delicate and prim.
>
> She seemed not with love acquainted;
> Half too fine to hold him dear.
> Folk spoke shyly of love matters,
> With this maiden lady near,
> With a feeling it were converse hardly suited to her ear.
>
> When she cried, poor, shy old maiden,
> Her artless secret saw the sun: —
> She had been with love acquainted,
> Always, just like any one: —
> But had kept him in a closet hidden, as a skeleton. (30: 654; Aug. 1885)

All too often depicted as sexless, meek, and pathetic, the "maiden lady" of Freeman's poem goes against male stereotypes of unwedded women. Like Olive Chancellor, Miss Hewitt, Miss Deborah, Catherine Condit, and nameless other spinster-characters portrayed in the Realist canon, the protagonist of this poem also views the world from her own perspective and in relative confinement, but she is hardly as inexperienced as the "reader for Realism" might expect. As Freeman emphasizes, the "maiden lady" *was* "with love acquainted ... but had kept him in a closet hidden, as a skeleton." For her own reasons, the poem's protagonist had kept her passions private. Indeed, she had been a "passionate

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pilgrim" in her own way, only the men, too busy proclaiming their own knowledge claims, never seemed to notice. Wittily, Freeman's poem seems to argue that it was the male promoters of Realism appearing in *Century Magazine* and elsewhere who in fact failed to see life "as it is." It was they, and not their often limited female characters, who remained bony skeletons to their own naiveté and hubris.

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CHAPTER V: PRESERVING AMERICA: THE CONTROVERSIAL TEXTS

Frances Hodgson's *Through One Administration* (November, 1881-April, 1883) John Hay's *The Bread-Winners* (August, 1883-January, 1884)

> When she was a true force, she was ignorant of fig-leaves, but the monthly-magazine-made American female has not a feature that would have been recognized by Adam.
>
> Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (1900)

When Henry Adams penned his cantankerous remark about the "monthly-magazine-made American female" in his autobiography, he was lamenting an age that seemed to have lost its vitality and meaningfulness due, in part, to the extreme cautiousness of its morality-obsessed cultural leaders.[163] Though his zealousness at finding fault with the American Girl and her overly protective dupes may have blinded Adams to the many merits of genteel magazines such as *Harper's Monthly*, the *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, and the *Atlantic Monthly* (especially the key role they played in the promotion and development of the arts in America), his critique was not unwarranted. As William Dean Howells, a preeminent novelist and editor in his own right, correctly acknowledged, "Between the editor of a reputable English or American magazine and the families which receive it, there is a tacit agreement that he will print nothing which a father may not read to his daughter, or safely leave to read herself."[164] The peevishness of the magazine editors, Howells explained in their defense, however, was a necessary though by no means fatal evil—the price to be

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[163] Adams was not alone in his indictment. In "The American Novelist and His Public," H.H. Boyesen also famously wrote of "the Iron Madonna who strangles in her fond embrace the American novelist" (*Literary and Social Silhouettes*. NY: Harper and Bros. 1894) 49. See also George Santayana's "The Genteel Tradition" in *The Genteel Tradition: Nine Essays*. Ed. Douglas L. Wilson (Cambridge: Harvard UP: 1967).

[164] *Harper's Monthly* (79: 151-154; June 1889).

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paid for giving literature a wide readership and status as a potentially highly profitable commodity.

In late nineteenth-century America the felt need of a large proportion of Victorian men to protect the sensibilities of their wives and daughters was part of a larger project called the "genteel endeavor." This endeavor was, by and large, headed by upper-class northern intellectuals such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, George William Curtis, Richard Watson Gilder, Charles Eliot Norton and others who had an abiding interest in maintaining and disseminating cultural standards across the land.[165] Concerned that the emerging industrial-cultural order was causing a deterioration in traditional values, the northern intelligentsia and their numerous supporters in the political and professional realm sought to promote culture as a civilizing force that would strengthen the public mind and moral fiber while preserving WASP ideals. As they saw matters, signs of moral decay and civic irresponsibility in the decades succeeding the Civil War were rampant. Corruption in business and politics as evidenced by the Tweed Ring and the Credit Mobilier scandal as well as the agitation for women's rights, for example, signaled to them that private interests had taken precedence over the needs of the community. They were also threatened by the immense popularity of sensationalism and sentimentalism in journalism, fiction, and theatre—sure indicators, they believed, that good taste, high seriousness, as well as their own cultural authority were on the wane. Also troubling was their perception that the increasing influx of immigrants (especially the "radical" socialist element hailing from Europe) as well as the manumission of former slaves had created a workforce that was unruly, lazy, and, somehow "dangerous."

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[165] For illuminating histories of the "genteel endeavor" and its adherents see John Tomisch's *A Genteel Endeavor: American Culture and Politics in the Gilded Age* and Stow Persons' *The Decline of American Gentility.*

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To counter such perceived threats to what the nativist clergyman Josiah Strong in 1885 famously called "Our Country,"[166] northern elites appointed themselves as the nation's cultural custodians and moral guardians. As part of their effort to achieve a unified national culture that would both order and "improve" the populace, they formed philanthropic associations, established public parks, founded museums, libraries and common schools and published high-minded periodicals such as *The Century, The Nation* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. These venues of acculturation and control sought to inspire respect for civility, art, and traditional values. Indeed, the guiding mission of the genteel endeavor was notoriously didactic—designed to teach men and women how to behave, how to discriminate, and how to view their world and their place in it.

In a genteel publication such as *The Century*, teaching readers how to act and think like right-minded Americans required adhering to strict editorial guidelines. Accordingly, among the many in-house restrictions set by Gilder was the prohibition against profanity, coarse language, and slang (excepting at times dialect) as well as a ban on scenes involving excessive violence and drunkenness. Especially forbidden were any allusions to sexuality. Gilder and his assistant editors were, in fact, on perpetual guard against "salaciousness and gross sensationalism" of any kind. In addition to being wholesome, literary submissions to the magazine also generally had to present moral lessons (without being overly didactic) and to project a view of the world that was high-minded and optimistic. Such restrictions and guidelines were designed to promote readers of great "delicacy and decency of speech." As Gilder explained in defense of his role as editor: "There are many who believe that America

[166] Josiah Strong's best-seller *Our Country* (1885) was a novel-length Christian tract which thundered at society's ills, exacerbated, if not instigated, the author argued, by unwanted immigration. See John Higham, *Strangers in the Land* (39).

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has the purest society in the world. Is not this purity worth paying for with a little prudery?"[167]

The task of preserving a sanitized view of America within the pages of a literary-based magazine such as *The Century,* ostensibly in deference to its large female audience, however, was not always a simple matter. As the editors by the 1880s came to understand, works that fully adhered to genteel codes rarely attracted the attention of their readers as did their more deviant submissions. Realizing that works such as Howells' *A Modern Instance* and Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, for example, dealt with controversial subject matter and (in the case of Twain) used "coarse" language, but were certain to attract a large readership, *Century*'s editors at times overstepped the bounds of genteel propriety and acted pragmatically in publishing America's literary luminaries.[168] In addition, given the commercial climate in which an increasing number of literary magazines jockeyed for a limited number of quality literary wares, an extremely promising work or a work promised by an extremely well-known artist also had to be quickly accepted by a magazine like *The Century* with the potential for troubling consequences that could place the genteel code at risk.[169] Such was the case with Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Through One Administration* (November, 1881-April, 1883) and John Hay's *The Bread-Winners* (August, 1883-January, 1884), two works that caused enormous public controversy during their serialization and varying degrees of in-house anxiety during the editing process.

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[167] *New Princeton Review* 4 (July 1887): 1-20.

[168] Another surprising *Century* inclusion is Joel Chandler Harris' two-part tale "At Teague Poteet's" in which the protagonist is known to derive his income from distilled whiskey. Afraid to frighten away their new contributor with so much obvious talent, Gilder reluctantly agreed to publish this piece, all the while encouraging Harris to submit more "Uncle Remus" plantation tales considered far more acceptable, both politically and artistically.

[169] John Tebbel reports that in 1865 there were 700 magazine, a number which increased to 1,200 by 1870. By 1880 there were about "twice that many ... increasing again to about 3,300 by 1885" (57).

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From its first few chapters, Burnett's novel, for example, caused an uproar amongst conservative readers, who worried about the decidedly immoral suggestion latent in the work. Concerned with the life of a beautiful Washington socialite named Bertha Armory, the novel implied that its heroine was unhappy in her marriage. Wife to a frivolous man, who apparently was using her for her great wealth, Bertha appeared to be on the verge of several affairs. Though she remains faithfully married, the work was clearly written in a feminist vein that proved "reckless" and "provocative" to many of *Century's* subscribers and deeply worried the editors themselves, who had ill advisedly accepted the work before it had been written.[170]

Hay's anonymously written *The Bread-Winners* also deeply upset a number of readers for a variety of reasons. Some complaints stemmed from its primary subject matter, which dealt with the class warfare that erupted during the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. Because of its deep biases in favor of the upper classes, several pro-union readers wrote *The Century*, for example, to protest the novel's unfair views regarding the working class. It is significant to note, however, that what worried the editors (and the majority of their readers it can be presumed) were not the author's elitist prejudices, which they clearly shared, but the sexual suggestiveness and graphic violence imbedded in the original manuscript. Working with "Anonymous" through John Hay himself, Gilder and his associates were generally able to tone the novel's "coarseness" down to their satisfaction, even as scenes such as the genteel hero kissing a sensuous working class girl remained, an episode generating greater media excitement than any other aspect of the novel (Sloane 256).

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[170] See David E. Sloane's "Censoring for *The Century Magazine*: R. W. Gilder To John Hay on The Bread-Winners, 1882-1884." In addition to providing much helpful background material, this article inspired many of the ideas discussed here.

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From a modern liberal standpoint, the relatively staid sensationalism of Hay's narrative is far less unnerving than *Century*'s editors' permissiveness, for example, in allowing the author to caricature union leaders and other members of the working class as dangerously over-reaching, weak of will and intellect and even bestial. As I will discuss, what the editors both approved *and* disapproved in their contributors' fiction tells us a great deal about the "culture of letters" known as *The Century* and magazine publishing in the Victorian era generally. By looking at Burnett's and Hay's novels, I hope to show how *The Century* attempted to picture for its readers a social order that directly corresponded to the editors' conservative worldview. Intolerant of gender, class, and (as the subsequent chapter will demonstrate) racial discord, *their* America, as we will see, sought to be a nation in which graceful and pious women of the genteel class dutifully nurtured their children and served their husbands, working-class men and women were content with their lot, and blacks played submissive and servile societal roles, grateful for the protection and guidance given to them by the white race. As I will also emphasize, the genteel charge of preserving America in the pages of *Century Magazine*, though by and large successful, was fraught with difficulties, a Gramscian reminder that the process of cultural hegemony gains in complexity—as well as in interest—the closer we scrutinize it.

In a letter to John Hay which discusses the "coarse tinge" of *The Bread-Winners* (Hay, the true author of the novel, pretended to act as the agent for "Anonymous"), Richard Gilder warns that what transpired during the serial publication of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Through One Administration* would never be allowed again. As he explains in terms that express continuing vexation:

> —we made the not unusual mistake of beginning Mrs. Burnett's story before it was finished. It began to take on a distinctively immoral tendency. I shan't

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> need [a writer] in Washington trying to convince her of her error—she gave up certain points, but in [this] case the evil was too deep-seated—& the consequence was that in the first year of my editorial independence on the Century,—I brought upon the magazine the only serious, dangerous, and at the same time [correct] criticism it has ever had. After making a social & moral mistake in the opening chapters, Mrs. Burnett inflicted on us the additional misfortune of not finishing her novel inside of the year. The amount of attention that the press & public—social circles of gossip, &c have paid to this novel (most of which is nonetheless perfectly proper & decidedly well intentioned) is amazing. I have never had such a "set-back" since I was an editor. (6 February 1883)

Recalling his "inauguration" as editor-in-chief with dismay, Gilder in effect tells Hay that "Anonymous" is up against a wiser editor than ever before and that he should therefore be prepared to "omit...a *very few* things, mere expressions, that will in no-wise interfere with the trend of the story."

Before discussing what precisely worried *Century's* editor in regards to Hay's work, it is worthwhile and extremely revealing to analyze the case of Mrs. Burnett, a writer, whom *Scribner's-Century* had actually discovered and brought to the national prominence in its own pages. Indeed, analyzing the "deep-seated" evil of Mrs. Burnett's book will bring us closer to understanding the genteel project of a magazine like *Century* as well as the motives of a once accommodating author, who had suddenly, so it seemed, "up and become a new woman."

Contrary to the general perception of literary historians (if they recall her at all), Burnett was not simply the flowery romancer of children's books such as *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1886) and *The Secret Garden* (1911), which, like Lewis Carrol's *Alice in Wonderland* (1865) and J. M. Barrie's play *Peter Pan* (1904), served to create the saccharine image of the Victorian child for generations of readers including our own. Despite her enduring legacy as "The Romantick Lady," the author, in addition to writing for the popular

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children's market, also wrote serious fiction for adults, which have yet to receive the critical scrutiny they deserve. Much of this work originally appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* (the name of *The Century* from 1870-1881) including the short tale "Surly Tim," and several well-received novels such as *That Lass o' Lowrie's*, *Haworth's*, and *Louisiana*, realistic works that portray the working class (in England and America) vividly and sympathetically.[171] Her most complex and interesting novel in the Realist tradition, however, is *Through One Administration*, which rivals Henry Adams's *Democracy* as an aesthetically rewarding dramatization of social and political intrigues in the nation's capital.

Unhappily married herself (she would divorce her husband, an eminent doctor, in 1898), Burnett in this novel traces the ill-chosen marriage of the sole beautiful daughter of a wealthy and distinguished Professor of Science named Nathan Herrick to the first man who will not take "no" for an answer, the handsome, yet frivolous and ultimately spineless, Richard Amory. Only after she is married does Bertha realize the truth of her mate's shallow character, but by then, given the Victorian conventions of times, she is in chains. Bertha first realizes that she has married the wrong man when her husband asks her "to lobby" politicians on his behalf, while withholding the fact that he has invested most of her wealth in a railroad scheme that will only prove fruitful if a particular bill is passed. While Bertha, at first, dutifully tries to accommodate her husband's wishes, his dishonesty reveals itself when Bertha unwittingly manages a bribe for him, and is caught in the act.

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[171] Frances Hodgson Burnett was born in Manchester, England into an upper-middle-class household. Her father Edwin Hodgson died when Frances was four leaving the family's household furnishings business to be run by her mother, Eliza. A plummeting economy in the English mill town (largely due to the American Civil War which had severely stunted the cotton trade and related industries) caused the family business to fail and the Hodgsons moved to New Market, Tennessee, where a relative had settled earlier. Owing to continued financial strife, Frances tried to help support the family by submitting stories to the American magazines. Remarkably, in 1868 *Godey's Lady's Book* accepted the first two tales the sixteen-year-old had ever written—an auspicious beginning for any writer. See Ann Thwaite's *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgeson Burnett, 1849-1924.*

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While the narrative of the novel holds some interest for the modern reader, the actual power of the work lies in the insightful manner in which Burnett analyzes the psychology of her primary characters and the psychology of political power generally. Of central interest, as well as the primary source of concern for the editors of *The Century* and many of their readers, is the subtle portrayal of Burnett's female protagonist who must find ways of coping with her unfulfilled marriage, and the misgivings and confusions of the man (Philip Tredennis) who loves her (and who Bertha realizes she loves in return). Given the novel's originating context in *Century Magazine* which, at the time, was also printing the final installments of William Dean Howells' famous anti-divorce novel *A Modern Instance*, the psychological ambivalence of the central characters in regards to their unhappy fates creates a tension that reaches outside the text itself. As we will see, Burnett, in writing a book that endorses emotional needs over rational ones and the right to be happy over the duties of morality, brashly and brilliantly critiques the patriarchal values openly promoted by the magazine, causing its editors at the time incredible alarm.

In the opening chapter, Bertha Herrick appears before the reader as a young lady who "has it all." Beautiful, bright, charming, young and wealthy, Bertha has returned to her home in Washington, D.C. having just graduated from a woman's finishing school. Not having been "allowed to go out at all" (23: 81; Nov. 1881) while a student, she begins, with assistance from her mother, eager preparations for her debut, the beginning of a long string of parties, balls, receptions and lunches at which she will advertise her lures and accomplishments until married. Her father Nathan Herrick is far less involved in his daughter's coming-out. A retired entomologist with a "tendency ... toward silence and books and research of all kinds" (23:80; Nov. 1881), Professor Herrick had in fact never

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given much attention to his sole offspring. However, now that she has returned home a young lady with obvious charms, "he began to examine the girl through his spectacles with great care and deliberation" (80).

As it shortly becomes clear, Burnett's introduction to Bertha and her father begins her own examination of the characteristics of the "American girl" and how the conditions of her world determine her fate. Significantly, this examination includes a close dissection of "the male scholar" —a Victorian type idealized by a magazine like *Century*—whose analytical mind and sober temperament appears to be, at least in part, responsible for the cultural construction of Victorian women.[172] Suggesting these dual impulses on the part of the author is Bertha's response to her father's sudden interest in her:

> "I do hope you'll like me, papa,' she said, "when you have classified me."
>
> "Classified you!" said the professor, in some bewilderment.
>
> "Yes," answered Bertha. "You know I always feel as if you might turn me over gently with your finger at any moment, and watch me carefully while I struggled until you knew all about me, and then chloroform me and stick a pin through me with a label on it. I shouldn't like the chloroform and the pin, but I should take an interest in the label. Couldn't I have the label without the pin, papa?"
>
> "I don't know," said the professor, examining her more carefully than ever. "I am afraid not." (23: 83; Nov. 1881)

It is discussions such as these with his daughter that lead Mr. Herrick to conclude that though he finds Bertha somewhat clever and witty (without fully admitting the fact), she remains for him a typically "bewildering" female. As he explains to his distant cousin Philip Tredennis, a military officer who has come to visit before his assignment in "Indian country,"

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[172] It appears that *Through One Administration* serves, in part, as a feminist response to the infamous dissections of young women performed by contemporary male Realists such as William Dean Howells and Henry James. Burnett, in fact, admittedly published her previous novel *A Fair Barbarian* (1881) as a direct rejoinder to James' portrayal of "the American girl" in "Daisy Miller" (1878), even as she claimed his literary style to be highly influential in her own development as a writer.

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"she is chaotic, illogical, unpractical—oftener than not she does not know anything of what she is talking about...." (23: 273; Dec. 1881)

In these early chapters we see Bertha, despite her obvious intelligence, slowly buy into the capricious and selfless role that men such as her father and society generally expect of her. In a discussion with her mother about her father's young visitor, for example, Bertha tellingly comments on Philip's "severe" and brooding manner. Though she enjoys his company, she feels inadequate beside him. "I believe he thinks I am frivolous" (23: 83; Nov. 1881) she tells her mother. Unsure if this may indeed be the case, Bertha, in a sudden bout of insecurity, next asks if she talks too incessantly about her clothes. Finding her daughter "as far beyond her mild, limited comprehension as her husband was" (83), Mrs. Herrick protests feebly before shifting the discussion to the "becoming" manner in which Bertha wears her hair. As Burnett shows, without a mirror to reflect her true intelligence and insight, Bertha is forced to play the only role available to her, that of a young lady whose duty is to be pretty, charming, and deferential and who, like her mother, will learn to leave the "serious" thinking to men.

Importantly, Burnett directs much of the blame for Bertha's undeveloped self-hood on the men around her, who, absorbed in reason and untrained in sentiment, fail to grasp the needs of others or even the needs of their own for that matter. This attack on the masculine temperament is particularly acute in the case of Philip Tredennis, who leaves for a military post out West without being able to admit his love for Bertha. Unaccustomed to matters of the heart and unusually self-obsessed, Philip, in his last moment alone with Bertha, is in fact tongue-tied and weakly leaves the Capitol "with a pained and bewildered sense of having lost something which he might never regain" (23: 85; Nov. 1881).

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At his post in the Dakota hills, the reader learns that Philip compensates for his inability to express his emotions, by exerting himself in traditionally masculine terms. As Burnett writes, the Captain became

> well known in military circles as that of a man bold, cool, and remarkable for a just clear-sightedness ... His nerve, courage, and physical endurance rendered him invaluable in time of danger, while his tendency to constant study of the problems surrounding him gave him in time of peace the distinction of being a thinking man, whose logically deduced and clearly stated opinions were continually of use....
> (23: 86; Nov. 1881)

Using terms that generally describe the heroic men appearing in the realistic fiction and the soon-to-be-published Civil War narratives of *Century Magazine*, Burnett's description of Philip's achievements are in fact ironic, the acts of a desperate man trying to escape the sharp pains of a disappointed heart. This is made especially clear whenever Philip thinks of a life with Bertha, which occurs with great frequency. Rather than act on these thoughts, he allows them to remain idle always turning to his books "with quite a fierce vigor ... in his determination to achieve practical knowledge" (86).

Also ironic, instead of writing Bertha directly, Captain Tredennis hears news of the woman he secretly loves solely in letters from Professor Herrick, which themselves are quietly satirized by Burnett. One letter, for example, was written

> with the object of convincing Tredennis that he had been guilty of a slight error in one of his statements concerning the sign-language of a certain tribe. It devoted five pages of closely-written paper to proofs and researches into the subject, and scientific reasons for the truth of all assertions made. It was clear and by no means uninteresting. The professor never was uninteresting, and he was generally correct. (23: 87; Nov. 1881)

The mock treatment of the highly analytic, supposedly infallible scientific mind in operation (coded once again, by the author, as male) is given particular emphasis in this letter. For,

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unlike the others Professor Herrick had been sending over the years, this epistle ends in language that recalls the Captain's deepest evasions, the words: "Bertha is married" (87).

Whether the subtle, yet sure satire Burnett directed at Philip and Mr. Herrick disturbed *Century's* editors, who may have seen in her male characters personality traits resembling their own, is unclear. Also unclear is whether or not they sensed that Burnett was critiquing the new literary genre of Realism currently being promoted and discussed in the magazine, which openly heralded the sober presentation of "hard facts" while opposing the intrusion of sentiment in fiction. What *is* certain, however, is the extreme consternation of Gilder and company instigated by the return of Bertha's cousin to Washington.

The source of this alarm is the fact that Captain Tredennis's reappearance both rekindles the feelings the protagonists have for each other and accentuates Bertha's unhappy fate as wife to a foolish man. Although her husband, with whom she has had several children, appears to treat her well, Bertha is intellectually, emotionally, and presumably sexually frustrated with him. If Captain Tredennis suffers from a gravity and devotion to duty that is overly severe (even as he serves as the novel's moral exemplar), Richard Armory is held to task for his utter lack of seriousness and reasonableness. In further contrast to Philip, who has dedicated himself to achieving stature as a professional military officer (at great emotional cost to himself), Richard Armory is an amateur, a man of multiple causes and interests but none, not even his family, that entirely sustain him. To alleviate the boredom and disappointments of living with such a man, Bertha is often seen in the company of her husband's friend, Arbuthnot (like Alexander Pope's only ally, a man of deep sympathy and understanding),[173] or at the Senatorial galleries taking notes for her own intellectual

[173] Arbuthnot's deep sympathy was apparently too deep for *Century's* editors and their Victorian readers who, in general, disapproved of intimacy between a young man and the wife of another.

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pleasure. Philip's return, however, slowly reminds Bertha of how petty and meaningless her life has in fact become and how much she still secretly cares for the officer.

Though both make an earnest attempt to remain friends, their feelings for each other continue to grow until, in a moment of "disorderly conduct,"[174] Bertha finally admits to another woman that she is in love, not with her husband, but with Captain Tredennis. After explaining to her friend how she feels whenever Philip is near, Bertha cries out:

> There is no end, there never will be! Do you think I do not see the bitter truth? One may call it what one likes, and make it as pathetic and as tragic and hopeless as words can paint it, but it is only the old, miserable, undignified story of a woman who is married, and who cares for a man who is not her husband. Nothing can be worse than that. It is a curious thing, isn't it, that somehow one always feels as if the woman must be bad? (224: 617; Aug. 1882)

Torn between the duty of being an honorable wife and mother and her own private longings, Bertha opts to act as frivolously as possible in front of her lover in the hopes of driving him away.

The primary reason this confession of love so angered *Century's* editors was, of course, its adulterous tinge. Since its founding in 1870, *Scribner's-Century* had argued for the unique role of women in society. Subscribing to traditional Victorian notions concerning the ideal of True Womanhood and Motherhood, the editors expected women of the genteel class, depicted in their magazine, to be spiritually pure and essentially "passionless" as well as submissive to the authority of their husbands and fathers.[175] Associated with the domestic

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[174] Agnes to whom Bertha confesses her heart's longings is clearly the heroine's most intimate companion. Their relationship is an example of the intense same-sex relationships females often had "from the late eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century" which Carroll Smith-Rosenberg in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* brilliantly documents. One might even read Bertha's relationship with Agnes as homoerotic, particularly in light of Burnett's own same-sex preferences suggested by her biographer.

[175] Much literature concerns women's sexuality in the Victorian Era. See, for example, Nancy F. Cott's "Passionlessness: An Interpreation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850," *Signs 4* (Winter 1978): 219-36; John D'Emilio's and Estelle B. Freedman's *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York,

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sphere, Victorian women were not to think of their own needs, but were to direct their energies promoting morality and gentility in their family, and by extension, the nation. Indeed, a strong component of this ideal was that women were by nature selfless, morally superior, and sincere.[176] Bertha Herrick, by expressing how she loved someone other than her husband and by admitting that she will hide her feelings from both Richard and Philip, was effectively violating two central taboos of True Womanhood—that of illicit desire and insincerity.

As if Bertha's adulterous thoughts and her decision to dissemble before the men around her did not sufficiently alarm the editors, Richard Armory's use of her as an unwitting lobbyist only added fuel to a raging bonfire. Basing part of her novel on an 1878 Arkansas land-grant scheme allegedly involving Speaker of the House James Blaine (and Presidential nominee for the Republican party in 1884), Burnett involves Richard with a Senator Planefield (whose name suggests Blaine), both of whom wish to profit from their land claims in "Westoria," which can only come to fruition if a particular bill is passed. To achieve this end, the two try to influence important politicians by holding lavish parties at the Armory house, tactically hosted by the elegant and beautiful Mrs. Armory. When it appears that crucial support is still required from a ranking Senator named Blundel, Richard goes so far as to ask his wife to use her enchantments to influence the politician at their home in private. He also asks her to give him an envelope in which, she only later comes to learn—from the kindly Blundel himself—contains a bribe.[177]

1988); and Catherine Clinton's *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century*. (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983).

[176] See, for example, Karen Haltunnen's *Confidence Men and Painted Women*.

[177] A friend and neighbor of President James A. Garfield and his family, Burnett was uniquely suited to write a novel of intrigue and profiteering in the nation's capitol. Indeed, unlike Bertha Armory (who merely dabbled in politics), Burnett understood the affairs of Washington keenly and, as her novel shows, attempted to play an important role in espousing her views. For example, in attacking James Blaine (a non-radical, or "Half-Breed"

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Given Richard's willingness to essentially prostitute his wife and to illicitly invest her money behind her back, it is small wonder that Gilder, newly appointed as *Century's* chief editor, began asking Burnett in a series of letters when her "distinctively immoral" work would finish. Indeed, what had begun as an apparently charming bildungsroman of a beautiful and seemingly faultless young lady had become, four hundred pages later, the highly sensational tale of a desperate woman trapped in marriage to an unscrupulous villain in gentleman's attire. To Gilder's dismay, but certainly not to *Century's* accountants who saw the controversy increase interest in the magazine dramatically, Burnett refused to rush the narrative she felt needed telling. All told, *Through One Administration* was the longest serial *Century* ever published lasting over two and a half years and delaying, for four months, the serialization of John Hay's *The Bread-Winners*, a work the editors, in stark contrast, were eager to begin and promote.

If Gilder's negative response to Burnett's novel indicated that there were clear guidelines for depicting upper-class behavior in his magazine, his largely eager reception of Hay's novel suggested that here was a work that, by and large, fulfilled *Century's* social and political prescriptions. Although the novel did cause some qualms for the editor in regards to its alleged "coarseness," thematically *The Bread-Winners* is a genteel fantasy-text that serves to address several "dangerous tendencies" worrying the elite classes at the time, namely the problem of newly educated working-class women seeking greater independence, a variation

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Republican, known by his opponents as "that liar from the State of Maine"), the author showed her support for Independent Republicans who favored "good-government" and civil-service reform (associating both Grant and Blaine with corrupt machine politics, the Independents had helped nominate the moderate reformer Garfield in 1880). The Mugwumps, as they came to be known shortly after the assassination of Garfield in 1881 (by a "Stalwart" Republican) received the full support of liberal editors such as Richard Watson Gilder, Samuel Bowles, Horace Greeley, William Cullen Bryant and others, who were instrumental in electing "honest" Grover Cleveland (a Democrat) over Blaine as President in 1884. Support of Civil Service reform in the family house magazines such as the *Century* (evidenced in numerous editorials as well as in *Through One Administration*) also helped lead to the Pendleton Act of 1883, the first federal civil service law.

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on the "New Woman" crisis exhibited in *Through One Administration*, and the advent of labor unrest. Despite being advertised as a work of Realism which served to defend its claim to neutrality (a point enhanced by its anonymity), *The Bread-Winners* is, as we will see, an artfully written model of genteel propaganda arguing for the proper place and role of the lower classes, while defending the natural leadership position as rightfully and necessarily held by the moneyed class.

The first installment of the novel wasted no time in attracting the attention of the reading public, which was simultaneously appalled and entranced by the depiction of an alluring working-class girl who claimed the right to rise in the world, apparently, at any cost and with little effort. Their concern centered on Maud Matchin, the extremely beautiful daughter of a carpenter, who, having recently finished her high school course work seeks "some easy and genteel way of earning money" (26: 570; Sept. 1883). In pursuit of her aim, Maud visits the elegant home of the handsome, young widower Arthur Farnham, one of the leading residents of the "young and thriving" industrial city of Buffland,[178] to ask for his assistance. Though unacquainted with the girl, Farnham receives her, in part, out of *noblesse oblige*, but also because he is struck by his visitor's "singularly fresh and vigorous beauty" (568). As the author writes:

> The artists forbid us to look for physical perfection in real people, but it would have been hard for the coolest-headed studio-rat to find any fault in the slender but powerful form of this young woman. Her color was deficient in delicacy, and her dark hair was too luxuriant to be amenable to the imperfect discipline to which it had been accustomed; but the eye of Andrea, sharpened by criticizing Raphael, could hardly have found a line to alter in her. *The dress of that year was scarcely more reticent in its revelations than the first wet cloth with which a sculptor swathes his kneaded clay; and pretty women*

[178] Buffland was a portmanteau word made up by Hay suggesting both Buffalo and Cleveland, two of the major cities affected by the Great Strike of 1877.

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> *walked in it with almost the same calm consciousness of power which Phryne displayed before her judges.*[179] (568)

Originally serving to make explicit Farnham's primary interest in his guest, Hay's description of Maud was found to be far too sexually charged for Gilder's family magazine and the editor duly excised the line I have placed in italics. With Hay's approval, Gilder, for similar reasons, also cut the conversation between Maud and Arthur that immediately follows. For example, when Maud explains that she didn't give her name in advance because "you don't know me from Adam," Farnham's ribald comment, "I could certainly hardly distinguish you from Eve" (a reference to the slightness of Maud's attire), disappears. Also cut from the interview is Farnham's response to Maud after she boasts of her ability to fend for herself in the world: "You are about as fit to take care of yourself as a plump pigeon at a shooting match," is, or rather was, his private reflection. While these and other similar bowlderizations serve to portray Farnham in a far nobler light than Hay intended (the implications of which I will discuss shortly), it is significant to note, as Richard Sloane first pointed out, that Gilder's edits tempered Maud's sensuous side but slightly, purposely insuring that she remained a provocative girl "on-the-make" (Sloane 263).

As Farnham comes to understand, Maud is willing to do "most anything" for work, from interning in Washington, to working at a local library (where Farnham is board president), to being his own personal secretary. Her sole desire, as she explains, is simply

> not to go on in the old humdrum way forever, doing housework and sewing, and never getting a chance at anything better. I have enough to eat and to wear at home, but the soul has some claims too, and I long for the contact of higher natures than those by whom I am now surrounded. I want opportunities for self-culture, for intercourse with kindred spirits, for the attainment of a higher destiny. (569)

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[179] Phryne was a Greek courtesan and sculptor's model charged with impiety. Upon unveiling her breasts, the court magistrates quickly acquitted her.

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Set in conjunction with Maud's provocative attire and zeal to serve, this statement was designed to strike at the heart of genteel fears concerning the increasing porousness of class boundaries. Though professing class "uplift" in theory, Victorians such as Hay were in fact deeply committed to maintaining distinctions within the social order. While Victorians could grant the lower classes an ability to admire refinement in others (which they encouraged to sustain their own power), acquiring true taste and culture was another matter entirely.[180] Accordingly, Hay has Farnham mock the over-reaching ambitions of a woman whose rightful role is indeed "doing housework and sewing" (569). Musing to himself that "The high school has evidently spoiled her for her family and friends, and fitted her for nothing else" (a notion expected to shared by Century's largely middle-class readership), Farnham quickly disabuses Maud of her "prosperous proposal" to be his personal assistant, agreeing only to help find a position for her in the library.

Although largely a projection of genteel fears concerning the libidinal energies and general excesses of the lower classes,[181] Farnham's interview with Maud, which emphasized the threat of a new type of new woman in America, does have some historical basis. In part a result of the genteel endeavor's interest in providing free common school education for all Americans, increasing numbers of working-class women were, by the 1880s, attending high school, many of whom, it can be presumed, aimed to utilize their education for a better way of life outside of servile employment and/or a confining marriage. As *The Bread-Winners* shows, that which was initially designed to curry support for the genteel endeavor was now

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[180] Kenneth Warren in *Black and White Strangers* argues a similar point about the *novae riche*. In discussing Howells' Silas Lapham, for example, he shows that though Silas has the money to buy a nice house and can afford to get advice for a professional interior decorator, his sense of aesthetics remain that of a boor.

[181] As the historian Melvyn Dubofsky writes, the elite classes tended to believe that America's largely immigrant proletariat, lacked "the well developed superego of the good bourgeois citizen." Culture thus was less for general acquisition, then to keep in check those who "easily succumbed to alcohol, sex, crime, and violence" (84).

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perceived to threaten elite claims to social privilege, political power, and cultural authority. In their anxiety about social unrest generally, the genteel class, as Hay's novel and responses to it indicate, fantasized that educational reforms had unleashed a horde of ambitious Miss Matchins. Over-running America, they seemed to believe, were over-educated (and thus impractical) young women who dangerously insisted in disturbing the "natural" social order by entering professions they were unfit for or by calculatingly "marrying-up."[182]

Given this perceived threat to elite control, the central activity of Hay's novel appears to be the recovery and containment of class distinctions and explaining their utility. Accordingly, Farnham serves to represent the ideal figure of the enlightened gentleman, whose duties lie in promoting the welfare of the community—for supposedly non-selfish reasons—and maintaining order. As Hay's novel suggests throughout its unfolding, his central protagonist, even with the masculine coarseness originally intended by the author, is a man of principle, honor, and courage, one who deserves to lead.[183] In contrast, the author frequently depicts members of the working class as out-of-line troublemakers requiring discipline. Using as its setting the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, Hay's novel is an attempt to rewrite history from the perspective of capital; in the guise of a "Realist" text, the work seeks to justify the police tactics of the upper classes, while anatomizing the source of what he and others of his class perceive to be a growing menace from below.

According to Hay, the origin of Maud's ruin, for example, begins when she is fourteen. Until then, Matilda, as she was then called, was the jewel of her father's eye, largely because she took such "pleasure in helping her mother about her work." Indeed,

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[182] As Alice Kessler-Harris writes in *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States,* a problem similar to "educated" working-class women no longer fit to perform roles traditionally assigned to them occurred with the rise of women's colleges in the 1870s and 1880s.

[183] In a letter to *The Century*, the author writes of Farnham: "I wanted him to be a gentleman, and I think he is" (795; March 1884).

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> It warmed Saul Matchin's heart to see the stout little figure sweeping or scrubbing. She went to school but did not 'learn enough to hurt her,' as her father said; and he used to think that here, at least, would be one child who would be a comfort to his age. In fancy he saw her, in a neat print dress and white cap, wielding a broom in one of those fine houses he had helped to build, or coming home to keep house for him when her mother should fail. (26: 572; Sept. 1883)

Mr. Matchin's idea of worldly success for his daughter which would retain the "proper" feminine sphere of a girl of Maud's class, however, comes to naught. Influenced by a friend and the "vulgar and unhealthy sentiment found in the cheap weeklies," Maud, upon finishing middle school, decides that she will continue her studies at the next level. The consequences of this decision, as Hay's novel stresses, however, are dire. Taught "a little music, a little drawing, a little Latin, and a little French," and continuing to read a "constant supply of light literature" (573), Miss Matchin comes to disdain her lower-class world. At home, for example, she looks upon her father and mother with pity and disregard. Too, rather than visiting her newly married sister (whose "penury ... grated on her nerves") or associating with "young carpenters, coachmen, and journeyman printers" of her own class, she preferred "devouring the brilliant pages of some novel of what she imagined high life" (574). Even Samuel Sleeny, a dull-witted, but handsome and able employee of her father who loves her, fails to capture Maud's attention, for her "only visions were of a rich man who should love her for her fine eyes" (574).

The foolishness of Maud's ill-gotten pretensions are constantly, albeit ineffectually mocked by Mr. Matchin, one of the few members of the working class Hay unabashedly admires. Despite his inability to manage his daughter, Saul, for example, is lauded as a carpenter "of a rare sort." By this the author explains that Maud's father:

> was a good workman, sober, industrious, and unambitious. He was contented with his daily work and wage, and would have thanked Heaven if he could

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> have been assured that his children would fare as well as he. He was of English blood, and had never seemed to imbibe into his veins the restless haste and hunger to rise which is the source of much that is good and most that is evil in American life. In the dreams of his early married days he created a future for his children, in the image of his own decent existence. The boys should succeed him in his shop, and the daughters should go out to service in respectable families. (26: 570; Sept. 1883)

Written without intended irony, this description clearly emphasizes qualities that Hay felt should belong to all members of the working class. To him, they should be hard working and accepting of their place in society. Rather than aspire to a higher-class, they should continue in the occupations of their parents achieving honor by dutiful service to the elites. By emphasizing Saul's English blood, Hay also suggests that the growing unrest of the working class is partly owing to its "foreign element," even as Saul's own sons failed to live up to Anglo-Saxon ideals, "having run away from home, rather than learn their father's trade" (587).

The potential dangers of working-class ambition to the "natural" social order are first captured in Maud's "seduction" of Farnham. On her way out of Farnham's mansion after a second interview, Maud confesses her love for him and announces a fervent desire to be his wife. Having uttered her feelings:

> **She turned pale and trembled, her eyes fell**, and it seemed for an instant as if she would sink to the floor at his feet. *He put his arm around her*, to keep her from falling *and pressed her closely to him*. **She threw her head back upon his shoulder and lifted her face to him.** *He looked down on her*, and the frown passed from his brow as he surveyed her flushed cheeks, her red full lips parted in breathless eagerness; her dark eyes were wide open, the iris flecked with golden sparks and the white as clear and blue-tinged as in the eyes of a vigorous infant; her head lay on his shoulder in perfect content, **and she put up her mouth to him as simply and as sure of a response as a pretty child**. He was entirely aware of the ridiculousness of his position, *but he stooped and kissed her with hearty good-will.*[184] (26: 891; Oct. 1883)

[184] "with hardy good will" was kept in the magazine version, but edited for the first edition.

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In this scene, Hay seeks to profoundly disturb the genteel psyche by depicting a case of class "miscegenation." That he was successful in his scare tactics is clear from the large response of letters to *The Century* from mostly shocked readers and the ensuing debate in the media attempting to determine Farnham's liability in the affair. While my use of bold for Maud's actions and italics for Farnham's suggests equal agency on behalf of both parties, it is worth noting that Gilder's prior emendations of Farnham's "coarseness" (particularly in his initial contact with Maud) leads the reader to view him in this scene as a victim. This assumption is in fact supported by the general tenor of the media debates concerning the novel, such as the one in *Art Forum*, which tended to argue on behalf of Farnham's relative innocence in succumbing to the "wiles" of a working-class temptress.

Unfortunately for Farnham, the mother of the woman he comes to love interrupts his encounter with Maud. Although Mrs. Belding automatically assumes the innocence of her neighbor, the story falls upon far less sympathetic ears when she tells it to her daughter. Although Alice had begun to take a romantic interest in Farnham, she primly confesses, "I'll never speak to him as long as I live." As her cliched response reveals, Alice is the epitome of the "monthly-magazine-made American female" Henry Adams in his biography so detests. Indeed, her characterization as an idealized specimen of Victorian True Womanhood is clear from the moment Farnham first sees her (shortly before his compromising encounter with Maud). Finding Alice one day in Mrs. Belding's library instead of the widow herself, for example, Farnham is immediately entranced by this young woman's angelic features. He notices especially her "bonny face...quite uncommon in its beauty":

> The outline was very pure and noble; the eyes were dark-brown and the hair was of tawny gold, but the complexion was of that clear and healthy pallor so rarely met with among blonde women. The finest thing about her face was its expression of perfect serenity. (26: 578; Sept. 1883)

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The depiction of Alice as a pure and enchanting angel is further enhanced by the fact that little mention is made of her figure. In marked contrast to the detailed depictions of Maud's alluring bodily attributes and provocative attire, the reader learns only that Alice possesses "a large full form with a grace of movement which had something of majesty in it" (577).

By giving Alice the last name of Belding, it appears that Hay, while adhering to the dictates of genteel propriety in his depiction of the novel's heroine (and largely because he adhered so closely), was in fact satirizing genteel prescriptions of the perfect young lady. Like the earthy masculine traits Gilder strips from Farnham in his role as editor, Hay seems to depict Alice as also gelded by cultural forces, stripped, that is, of sensuality and sex. Whereas part of his novel clearly serves to warn against the advances (sexual or otherwise) of working class women, Hay, apparently, also joins Adams, in bemoaning the desexing of women of his own class. Yet despite Hay's efforts to critique certain elements of his hero and heroine, his ironic intentions were clearly lost on Gilder, who, in a letter to the author, actually extends his highest praise for the characterizations of Farnham and Alice. In this letter, which begins with a lament concerning a "certain harshness about" the novel, Gilder writes that the work is "redeemed" largely because the "heroine impresses the reader as she does the hero, and the reader sympathizes with both hero & heroine—but especially with the hero" (qtd. in Sloane 258).

While Hay, as his original manuscript and personal letters show, wished to contribute to the new school of Realism emerging in the pages of the *Century* by depicting his characters "as they actually appear in real life," or, in the case of Alice, by satirizing ideal conventions, he was apparently willing to accept Gilder's edits (which largely extinguished

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his satire and diminished his realism) so long as his primary interest in critiquing the working class was not jeopardized. That this *is* his central interest is made clear in the novel's highly ironic title. The actual Bread-winners, it turns out, are members of a secret organization of men, who claim to have organized for the purposes of bettering the conditions of laboring men and working-class lives generally. From Hay's vantage point, however, the group and the people it represents mean only mischief and anarchy as well as an excuse not to work.

The Bread-winners are first introduced when a small band of armed men converge on Farnham while riding his horse in the countryside informing him that he must turn back. When Farnham asks who the villains who have grabbed his horse's reins are, a spokesman, described as "dirty-looking ... young and sinewy, with long and oily hair and threadbare clothes, shiny and unctuous" answers: "We are Labor Reformers. We represent the toiling millions against the bloated capitalists and grinding monopolies..." Unimpressed by the group, whose "appearance was so grotesque, in connection with the lofty title their chief had given them," Farnham sneers that he would have assumed their "special line" to be something more sensible such as "spelling, or Civil Service" reform and quickly rides off (26: 901; Oct. 1883).

The author's description of the reformers in this scene as revolting and sub-human is an activity that he will repeat incessantly throughout the novel. Later chapters, for example, introduce a man named Bott, a frequent speech-giver for the Bread-winners and spiritualist by trade. When not raising the dead for money in his apartment, Bott, described as "imperfectly developed" and having features of a "sanguinary and sinister character," rails to his fellow unionists against the "the pride of so-called science, the arrogance of unrighteous wealth, and the groveling superstition of Christianity" (23: 739; Sept. 1883). Unsurprisingly,

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the topics of his censure represent the achievements of civilization held in highest esteem by most Victorians of the day, further evidencing Bott's savagery. Another member of reproach whose features suggest utter depravity is Brother Bowersox, whose "head was not large, but ... round as an apple, with heavy cheekbones, little eyes, close-cut hair, and a mustache like the bristles of a black-brush." Emphasizing a bristling, vicious nature, the reader learns that "he had been a driver on a streetcar, but had ... been dismissed for insolence to passengers and brutality to his horses" (740).

Hay's greatest vitriol, however, is reserved for Andrew Jackson Offit, the central organizer of the Bread-winners. As his last name suggests, Offitt is a first generation immigrant (presumably of Polish and/or Jewish descent), whereas his first and middle names connect him with the first President believed to have been elected largely due to widespread support amongst the lower classes. Andrew Jackson Offitt's name is clearly significant, for Hay, an Independent Republican who would serve as William McKinley's Secretary of State,[185] shared with *Century's* Mugwump editors a disdain for corrupt party politics supposedly inaugurated by the Jackson administration and believed to have been exacerbated by the postbellum immigration explosion. True to this highly skewed, elitist version of Jackson's legacy, Hay depicts Offit as an unscrupulous "professional reformer" whose brutish physiognomy, like Bott and Bowersox, reflects a vile nature. As Hay writes in the meticulous detail of an ethnographer, Offit had a face

> whose whole expression was oleaginous. It was surmounted by a low and shining forehead covered by reeking black hair, worn rather long, the ends being turned under by the brush. The mustache was long and drooping, dyed black and profusely oiled, the dye and the grease forming an inharmonious

[185] John Hay replaced William R. Day as Secretary of State in 1896 and became an important influence in directing U.S. policy in international affairs into the twentieth century. Ironically (given Hay's rampid nativism and dread of leftist politics as displayed in *The Bread-winners*), William McKinley was assassinated in 1900 by a man named Leon Czolgosz, a self-proclaimed anarchist.

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> compound. The parted lips, which were coarse and thin, displayed an imperfect set of teeth, much discolored with tobacco. The eyes were light green, with the space which should have been white suffused with yellow and red. It was one of those gifted countenances which could change in a moment from a dog-like fawning to a snaky venomousness. (26: 737; Sept. 1883)

Described in bestial and demonic terms, Offit, it becomes clear early on, will play the novel's central villain. Indeed, as a union organizer, he is held primarily responsible for cajoling a cast of dull and gullible workers into action against capital. Rather than being committed to the cause out of justice and for the sake of his constituents, however, Offitt, as Hay makes clear, earns a substantial living off union dues; his own claim to bread-winning, ironically, is rattling off socialist bromides "as a listless child says its alphabet without thinking of a letter" (738).

In Hay's debasement of Offitt and other members of the "dangerous classes" (including Quinlin, the Irish mayor who refuses to assist in Farnham's efforts to raise a militia), one sees evidence in support of Richard Slotkin's argument that the growing labor unrest of the 1870s gave rise to the Victorian notion that depravity was inherently class-based. Shifting from the Republican doctrine that all American workers could rise socio-economically given enough effort, the postwar years began to convince the elites that workers were becoming inassimilable into the main stream and that the best hope would be to keep them contented in their lot or to contain their aggression via force and intimidation.[186]

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[186] Even as *The Bread-Winners* disparages labor organizers and their constituents, it is important to realize that not all of *Century's* readers shared the author's views. Edward J. Shriver, for example, in an open letter to the magazine challenged Hay's notion that "trades-unions are composed either of ignorant and lazy dupes, or of such wretches as Offitt." After a short discussion of modern wage-theory arguing against the absurd notion that labor is simply a commodity, "for which the buyor only should dictate price," Shriver adds that it is "simply untruthful and worthy only of the more ignorant class of journalists to continue the assertion that trades-unions are mainly controlled and strikes inaugurated by agitators, interested only for what they can take out of them... Nor is it fair or true that only the incompetent and idle workmen support these movements." In response to Shriver, Hay is non-apologetic. After making the technical claim that he does not *per se* represent "Mr. Offitt and his friends as trade-unionists" (a point he would attempt to make clear in the first edition of the novel), Hay shifts the argument by stating that "no important strike has ever been carried through without violence, and that

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Emphasizing the distinction between the agitators, described as disorganized, lazy, and wallowing in degradation, and the superior class of men against whom they battle, the actual strike in Hay's novel is viewed as nothing an organized band of vigil-antes cannot readily handle. A Captain in the Civil War, Arthur Farnham's experience organizing men and strategizing maneuvers, talents believed to be natural to the Anglo-Saxon race, serve him in good stead. Organized on rational principles and consisting of Buffland's "best men," Farnham's militia gallantly and ably protects the wealthy neighborhood where the Captain resides. Demonstrating the heroism of the militia as against the pusillanimity of the agitators is the rush on the Belding estate. When "a half-dozen ruffians" demand an assessment of Alice and Mrs. Belding "in the name of the Revolutionary Committee," these "tramps and jailbirds" are quickly overcome by Farnham and his men, who appear as white knights gallantly rescuing damsels in distress. The strikers' lack of resolution and fortitude is perhaps best exemplified in the manner that "The Great Strike" ends—with women calling their husbands home:

> Every woman went for her husband and told him to pack up and go home. Some of 'em—the artful kind—begged and wheedled and cried; said they were so tired—wanted their sweethearts again. But the bigger part talked hard sense, —told 'em their lazy picnic had lasted long enough, that there was not heat in the house, and that they had to come home and got to work. The siege didn't last half an hour. (226)

Although it appears that the novel was generally well-received as an important contribution to American literature, apparently not all readers of the novel were pleased with Hay's revisioning of labor history. Owing to a small, but steady stream of protest, Hay, at

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no long strike has ever been ended without murder." Hay's point is simply that secret organizations of labor, no matter their name, are a hindrance to a just, orderly and honest society. His solution to this perceived menace is stated in equally simple terms: "No one who has read the newspapers, for the last ten years, is ignorant of the existence of those secret orders, the offspring and the hideous caricatures of trades-unions, which come to the surface occasionally in the Pennsylvania courts, in connection with a story which begins with assassination and end, most properly, with the gallows." (27: 157-8; Nov. 1883)

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the completion of the novel, published a letter in *Century* designed to clear his name and explain his motives. In it he addressed three common criticisms directed to him including class snobbery, the use of hyperbole, and the alleged cowardliness of not signing his name to the work. Defending himself against the view that *The Bread-Winners* was "conceived from an aristocratic point of view," Hay made the dubious claim that he himself was "a working man, with a lineage of decent working men" somehow extending the laboring class to include wealthy, college-educated businessmen (like himself) and medical doctors (like his father). He further added that in America it was not possible to even been an aristocrat; "if such a thing exists," he wrote, "I have never met it." In regards to the criticism which claimed that "the incidents are extravagant and untrue to nature," Hay's defended himself as a writer in the new genre of Realism. All his characters he argued were drawn from real life and his only thought in writing the novel was "to give an absolutely truthful picture of certain phases of our social life which I had never seen in print" (27: 795; March 1884). Hay's reasoning, while reductive to the extreme, shows the degree to which all Realist texts are, as Amy Kaplan has written, social constructions. Importantly, his use of anonymity, justified he feels owing to business interests that may have been "seriously compromised," enhances the novel's claim to neutrality, a claim, again, that is caught in a web of false logic.

Despite the negative publicity Hay received from some readers disturbed by the author's reckless use of facts and shameless class bias, it is telling to note what centrally worried *Century's* editor (next to the coarseness of Maud and Farnham) was not the novel's politics (which they apparently endorsed), but the brutal depictions of violence following the strike. The first offending scene is when Offitt, realizing that the end of the strike has ruined his sole income source, almost murders Farnham in an attempt to rob him of his rent money.

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Also troublesome to the editor was the brutal manner in which Sam Sleeney kills Offitt after he has been set up for the attack on Farnham.

The political objectives of Gilder in ultimately giving the green light for the version that appeared in his magazine are clear. Even more than Hay, the editor wished for the upper class characters to be viewed in the best possible light, while fairness in regards to representations of the laboring classes appeared to be a non-issue. The social order desired by the magazine, in which the genteel c lass leads and carefully watches over the lower classes, and both classes remain a part, coincides with the ending of Hay's novel in which Alice marries Farnham and Maud joins with Saul. As a note of caution in regards to the latter couple that suggests the need for continued surveillance, the reader learns:

> Their lives were henceforth bound together for good or evil. We may not say how much of good or how much of evil was to be expected from a wedlock between two natures so ill-regulated and untrained, where the woman brought into the partnership the wreck of ignoble ambitions and the man the memory of a crime. (27: 351; Jan. 1884)

Like Burnett's *Through One Administration*, the conclusion of *The Bread-Winners* demonstrates that the custodial role of the genteel classes was a full-time affair. Perpetually threatening the social order were aggressive, independent women, disgruntled workers, and, as the subsequent chapter will show, newly freed blacks.

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CHAPTER VI: "DEY'S MIGHTILY IN DE GRASS": RECONSTRUCTING THE NEW" NORTH IN THE PLANTATION MYTH FICTION OF *SCRIBNER'S-CENTURY*

Now, us dat is fabored wid wisdom an' grace
An' had de fus' pick for a 'sirable place,
We ought for to 'member de duty we owes,
To sheer wid our brudders as fur as it goes,

So sometime in chu'ch I's a-gwine to serjes'
Dat some-un be sent what kin talk to 'em bes'—
(An' mebbe dat's *me*) for to open deir eyes,
Recomstruc' de pore critters, an' help 'em to rise.

from Irwin Russell's "Novern People" (13: 430; Jan.1877)

"'Dey was good ole days, dose times befoah de wah!"

A black servant in Virginia Frazer Boyle's
"How Jerry Bought Malvinny" (40; 892; Oct. 1890)

Today a large, yet still patchy, body of cultural criticism addresses the origins, development, and permutations of the nineteenth-century American minstrel show. This theatrical tradition of "blacking up," to borrow from the title of Robert C. Toll's landmark book on the subject, was "the first American popular entertainment form to become a national institution" (Toll vi). Since then it has had a profound, if often subtle, influence on a wide array of cultural productions, accents of which have been discerned in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, D.W. Griffith's *Birth of A Nation*, the comedy television show "Amos and Andy," the swagger and sounds of Elvis and Mick Jagger, the cartoon figures Bugs Bunny and Road Runner, as well as the "down and out" hipster ethos of the Beat generation, famously dissected by Norman Mailer in "The White Negro." In

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addition to Toll, scholarship by Ann Douglas, Leslie Fielder, Eric Lott, Alexander Saxton, Eric Sundquist, and others have clarified our understanding of the profusion of meanings behind the "riffing off" (and, to a certain extent, fabrication) of African American culture, both on the theatrical stage and off. Yet, while we now seem to know a great deal about antebellum minstrelsy and later usurpation of this form by blacks and whites alike, critical investigations of Gilded Age literary "black face," excepting analyses of the major fiction of Joel Chandler Harris and Mark Twain, remain remarkably scant (especially in proportion to the enormous amount of this material published between 1870 and 1900).

The critical oversight of what is now known as Plantation Myth fiction may have something to do with the very discomfort this material evokes (even though it seems educators at all levels have found a way to teach *Huck Finn* despite its repetition of the word "nigger" over one hundred times). Indeed, major anthologies of post-Civil War American literature continue to exclude fiction by James Lane Allen, Thomas Nelson Page, Irwin Russell, Ruth McEnery Stuart, Maurice Thompson, and other southern writers despite their popularity in their own time. The presumed transparency of this fiction also seems to have precluded close critical attention, as if beyond its apologia for the "Lost Cause" and distorted representations of blackness, little remains to be said either thematically, stylistically, or ideologically. An analysis of this literature as it appeared in *Scribner's Monthly Magazine* (which became *The Century* in 1881) from the 1870s through the 1890s, however, suggests otherwise, for the development of the Plantation Myth school in its pages, while in many ways exhibiting traits that mark a direct line of descent to antebellum blackface theater, is a complex and vastly influential cultural phenomenon in its own right.

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According to its leading historians, minstrelsy first achieved widespread popularity during the 1840s and was initially strongly associated with Jacksonian democracy[187] and the urban scene. Its leading innovators were Thomas Rice, Dan Emmitt, and E. P. Christy, sons of middle-class Irish/Scot immigrants, who, as young men, sought to escape the demands of Victorian propriety and regulation by entering the bohemian world of the stage.[188] Having scoured the country in search of native material to enhance their acts, these men quickly became famous for their caricatures of the music, dance, and antics of blacks, which they performed at urban night clubs before largely working-class audiences.

As Alexander Saxton suggests, the central allure of minstrelsy at this stage, for performers and audiences alike, was its celebration of "the new urban mass culture as against the 'high' culture of the old elite" (169). Accordingly, its hero was the outlandishly dressed Jim Dandy (later known as Zip Coon), originally a gallant and swaggering Bowery b'hoy, who in blackface was the truly free "urban free black." "Uncloyed by nostalgia or regret," Jim Dandy was a connoisseur of the city and the "new sorts of work, money, movement, excitement" it offered (169). Minstrelsy at this time also included a wide variety of other black characters such as the happy-go-lucky plantation "darkie," the "frontiersmen and riverboatsmen" (Toll 66), and even the occasional discontented slave,[189] but, by and large, its aim was to revel in moral permissiveness and to satirize the rich and powerful. However, as race and slavery grew as political issues, the problems of urbanization became increasingly apparent, and western migration left hundreds of thousands of pioneers nostalgic for the

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[187] According to Saxton, the defining characteristics of Jacksonian democracy are "egalitarianism (anti-monopoly), nationalism (territorial expansion), and white supremacy" (176).

[188] Another important innovator was Stephen Foster whose sentimentalization of blackness in plantation songs often of the dearly departed achieved for minstrelsy middle-class respectability. See Lott, 188-191.

[189] Robert Toll notes that up until the 1850's, minstrel troupes expressed ambivalence towards the institution of slavery, alternately portraying it as beneficent and advantageous to blacks or as cruel and inhuman (66).

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homes they had left behind them, this theater form changed its emphases. Increasingly depicting abolitionists as "stupid, hypocritical, [and] cowardly" (Saxton 177), blacks as both requiring and desiring oversight, and the southern countryside as a place of purity and simplicity, the plantation myth eventually usurped class satire and sexual transgression as minstrelsy's *raison d'être.*

In *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*, Eric Lott also emphasizes strong white working-class allegiance to this admittedly "'counterfeit' cultural phenomenon" (4), but deftly complicates its symbology. For Lott, "the minstrel show was less the incarnation of an age-old racism than an emergent social semantic figure highly responsive to the emotional demands and troubled fantasies of its audiences" (6). At work in this "precognitive form" was a structure of racial feeling in which the working class identified psychologically with "free" black behavior and erotically with the black male body, yet was simultaneously revolted by such energies. In their perception of black existence as superego-less, white males experienced an ambivalent desire to both "be" and "not be" black and so loved African Americans by stealing their blackface possibilities, even as they denied their essential humanity.

But what happens when blackface minstrelsy leaves the working-class stage and is permanently printed on the pages of a northern "quality" magazine founded after the Civil War and with a fervent interest in gaining a national audience? What transpires, in other words, when the audience is no longer working class, but elite, and the authors are no longer bohemian slummers from the North, but, by and large, apologists from the South, many with aristocratic inclinations? In other words, whose "structure of racial feeling" are we now talking about when we discuss the Plantation Myth fiction appearing in *Scribner's-Century*

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and what are its ideological contours? Furthermore, what is at stake when transcriptions of regional black dialect are framed by highly wrought, "proper" written American English, and depictions of the black body (and mind) are presented to a genteel audience, a large proportion of whom are women? What, to push further, might all of this have meant to a largely northern audience exasperated by the southern "Negro Problem" when far more pressing issues seemed to be threatening the supremacy of Anglo-Saxon ideals? To answer these and other related queries it is helpful to first turn to Sidney and Clifford Lanier's "Uncle Jim's Baptist Revival Hymn" (which furnishes the title of this chapter) and subsequently to analyze the development of the Plantation Myth school of literature in the pages of *Scribner's-Century* decade by decade.

Appearing in the magazine in May of 1876, the Lanier brothers' poem, written in the dialect of a black preacher, is prefaced by an explanation of the meaning of the refrain "Dey's mightily in de grass" and some of the more unusual words that also appear. The authors begin by explaining that the phrase was recently used by a "certain Georgia cotton-planter" at a convention to explain why Cincinnatus decided to leave farming for politics, for, like the famous Roman orator, he too had been feeling frustrated to find that the grass in his fields had become overgrown "in defiance of his lazy freedman's hoes and plows" (132). The Laniers next discuss how their literary creation Uncle Jim, a baptist minister, uses the same metaphor in a sermon to his black parishioners explaining that their souls are similarly being choked in noxious weed:

> *Solo*: Sin's rooster's crowed, Ole Mahster's riz,
> De sleepin'-time is pas';
> Wake up dem lazy Bapitissis [parishioners]
>
> *Chorus*: Dey's mightily in de grass, grass,
> Dey's mightily in de grass. (132)

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On the surface, the sermon (whose opening stanzas I have just provided) is a straight forward demonstration of how a black preacher uses nature imagery and a colorful "natural" language to prod his languid race into virtuous action. Striking, however, are its undercurrents, specifically what it reveals about the intended audience as well as its subject matter.

As the introduction expressly admits, the audience is "the northern reader," one presumably concerned with southern black life (as the very fact of this piece and numerous others like it suggest) and "proper" language usage as well as its deviations. An interest in linguistics can be presumed by the elaborate "exegetical commentaries" provided by the Laniers. The reader learns, for example, that

> the phrase 'peerten up' means substantially *to spur up*, and is an active form of the adjective 'peert' (probably a corruption of *pert*), which is so common in the South, and which has much the signification of 'smart' in New England, as e.g. a "peert" horse, in antithesis to a 'sorry'—i.e. poor, mean, lazy one. (132)

Recalling the interlocutor, or aristocratic "white voice" of theatrical minstrelsy,[190] these explanatory interruptions formalize a distinct power relationship between opposing types. Essentially utilizing the primitive language of the preacher and his exotic sermon as orthographic and ethnographic studies establishing *difference*, the recondite tone and language of the Laniers (Sidney was at that time a linguistic scholar and poet of some renown) strive to demonstrate the degree to which one race has become civilized and the other has stagnated.

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[190] As Toll writes discussing the features of the minstrel show, the interlocutor served as master of ceremony. "With a precise if somewhat pompous command of the language, an extensive vocabulary, and a resonant voice, the interlocutor personified dignity, which made the raucous comedy of the endmen even funnier. When the endmen mocked his pomposity, audiences could indulge their anti-intellectualism and antelitism by laughing at him" (53). Laniers' poem shows how the role of the interlocutor is both retained and transformed in Plantation Myth fiction. While remaining the "minstrel mentor to a brace of African Telemachuses," the interlocutor is no longer abused for his aristocratic airs, but revered for his superiority. This transformation suggests, on one hand, a change in audience (from white working class to upper middle class) as well as a new focus on demarcating distinct racial categories.

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The distinctive properties of the white and black races are further demarcated by the complaint of the Atlanta cotton planter that his "free" labor force no longer works as hard as it once had under slavery, a theme underscored by the content of the preacher's sermon who reiterates his flock's need for close oversight. In this early representative piece of Plantation Myth fiction, we see a reconstruction of "white over black" (Jordan) power relations at work, a recognition that draws us back to our original query concerning the very fact of white interest in black life: Why in 1876 do middle-class northern readers (the majority of *Scribner's-Century's* readers) have a need to subordinate and restrict blacks as citizens, when just a decade earlier they had such high hopes for their egalitarian status?

As the remainder of this chapter will show, it is not simply the southern planters who feel "mightily in de grass" over the fact that they no longer have dependable workmen and who sense an unjust loss of authority, but white northern elites too are "in de grass" over the current affairs of the union. Facing labor uprisings in urban centers, corruption in politics (including New York City's notorious Tweed Ring, the alleged frauds of southern black congressmen, as well as abuses within the ranks of President Grant's own cabinet), a massive increase in "new" immigration, and, more broadly, an overriding sense that "mobocracy" is challenging Victorian "natural" hierarchies, northerners are suddenly willing to bargain with southern whites in the redemption of Anglo-Saxon supremacy. To borrow a phrase from Joel Chandler Harris' immortal Brer Rabbit, the Old/New South has gone "fishin' fer suckers" (Harris 341) with literature in the northern magazines and has found a "New" North willing to take the bait.

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The 1870s: Dismantling Reconstruction

If the editorial history of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Through One Administration* and John Hay's *The Bread-Winners* made the conservative nature of *Scribner's-Century*'s views clear in regards to issues of gender and class, the Plantation School of southern literature first appearing in the magazine in the 1870s left little doubt where the editors stood in regards to race. By the early 1870s, largely owing to accounts of Reconstruction by James S. Pike (in the Horace Greeley-run *New York Daily Tribune*), Edward King (in his enormously influential "The Great South") and other northern journalists sympathetic to the plight of white southerners,[191] most northern Republicans had come to believe that southern blacks had failed to live up to their newly won civic responsibilities and were in Pike's terms "prostrating" the region.[192] Former supporters of the Radical Republican agenda had also grown impatient over the waving of the "bloody shirt" and were coming to believe that their "idealistic" program for the South was a ruse covering up large-scale corruption elsewhere. As Washington Gladden, a regular contributor to *Scribner's-Century's*, reflecting on this "dark period in the life of the nation," writes in his memoirs:

> The sordid and unsocial tempers bred by the war were bringing further their corrupt fruitage. Grant was in the middle of his first term, and was beginning to exhibit the incapacity for civil leadership, which might naturally have been expected of him. The reconstruction measures were working out their dubious results; much was made of "Southern outrages," but it had become evident to many Northern men that these were largely fictious, invented or magnified to draw attention from the abuses with which the national administration was reeking, and to stifle the cry for reform of the Civil Service. (192-93)

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[191] Also influential were the articles of Robert Somers and Charles Nordoff (see W. Magruder Drake and Robert R. Jones, "Editors' Introduction," in Edward King, *The Great South*, xxi-xxii).

[192] See Eric Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1963-1877* and Heather Cox Richardson's *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1902.*

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Scribner's-Century's position on Reconstruction as a failure of misguided idealism, as Gladden suggests, was evident from its earliest issues, in which appeared the dialect verses of Thomas Dunn English, editor, at the time, of the deeply reactionary *Old Guard.*[193] In "Caesar Roman" (July 1871), English's first appearance in *Scribner's*, an elderly black slave hears of the Emancipation Proclamation, but refuses to leave his master's plantation because of all his fond memories and his love for "Mas' Jeemes." As Ceasar explains:

> Yes, I heen about de proclamation—
> Ole Mas' Linkum's—dessay, boss, it's right;
> But fo' seventy yeah on dis plantation,
> Young Mas' Jeemes an I have fit de fight—
> An' to-day
> Whah I've bin I mean to stay. (300)

In the second stanza, the reader learns how Ceasar and his master grew up together as "pardners ev'ry day." Caesar accompanies "Mas' Jeemes," for example, when he goes off to college and is at his side when he marries Nancy, a lady with "spirit ... full o' grace an' pride" (301). The saddest moment of Caesar's life occurs when his master's young son, Randolph, rescues him from the river and drowns in the process. Master Randolph's death causes both "Mas' Jeems" and his wife great sorrow, the latter dying on the day of the funeral. From that day forth, Caesar has seen his role as the comforter and caretaker of his former owner "who sits al day wropt up in fancy" (301).

Like "Ceasar Roman," "Momma Phoebe" (Nov. 1871) is also about the misfortunes inaugurated by the Civil War only this time the narrator is an old Negro "mammy." In this

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[193] Now best remembered as the author of the sentimental poem "Ben Bolt" and for his widely-reported fistfight with Edgar Allan Poe in 1845, the long-lived magazinist founded in 1870 the *Old Guard*, "an anti-Lincoln, pro-Confederacy periodical," as William Crisman describes it, "even after the war" (103). See also Rayburn S. Moore's "Thomas Dunn English, A Forgotten Contributor to the Development of Negro Dialect Verse in the 1870s" (*American Literature*, March 1961: 72-75).

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poem, the old woman relates the day she marched onto a battlefield in search of her son and master only to find the latter dead and the former dying. Recalling Roxy from Twain's *Puddn'head Wilson*, the narrator reminisces how she had "nussed" both "Mahs" William and "his milk-bruddah" (62) and watched over them until both went off to college "togeddah." The aim of this history is to elicit the reader's empathy for a female slave who has tragically lost "bofe her dahlin' men-children" (62) [Figure 25].

Written entirely in "Negro Dialect" and containing the deep pathos that would become a trademark of the genre, "Ceasar Roman" and "Mother Phoebe" can rightfully be considered the "ur-texts" of the Plantation School. As I have described, the poems exhibit many of the school's classic motifs including the portrayal of loving master/slave relationships, "the rescue" (or attempted rescue) of a loyal slave by his master (and vice versa), as well as characterizations of the selfless, nurturing "mammy," the beautiful and proudly loyal southern belle (a mythical image perfected in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*), the handsome and noble plantation owner, and his devoted black foot-servant. As will become increasingly evident, all of these elements were designed to reconstruct a vision of the South "radically" at odds with Radical Republican ideology until, by the 1890s, mythology had somehow fused with reality.

Another southern writer who helped set the style of Negro dialect and plantation subject matter in verse form was Armistead Churchill (A.C.) Gordon. Gordon's material was in such demand that, by 1888, he had enough material to publish (with Thomas Nelson Page) the highly influential verse collection entitled *Befo de War: Echoes in Negro Dialect.* As this title suggests, Gordon's work closely resembled that of English. In fact, his poem "Kree," first published in *Scribner's-Century* in October of 1876, practically duplicates the plot-line

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of "Ceasar Roman" with the exception that it is the slave "Kree" who dies drowning rescuing his young Master from a river, who in turn dies of sorrow "two months later."[194]

As Eric Lott discusses, blackface minstrelsy has long been marked by a sentimental fascination with "death, nostalgia, and doom" (187). For him, "minstrelsy's nostalgia intimated by emotional antidote all the forces in American life that seemed to be pulling the country apart" (191). He notes, for example, how at mid-century, in response to tensions stemming from "metropolitanization, the frontier, immigration, and urban weightlessness," blackface musicians such as Stephen Foster "took up these facts as explicit themes" coating them in enormous, and enormously welcome, pathos (191).

Scribner's "blackface" tales of the 1870s suggest that many of these themes remained central for its own readers and creators, but also that new concerns had arisen. For example, the frequent exhibition of "dying" affections between master and slave served to show that the institution was not as immoral as northerners had once made it out to be. Furthermore, in describing the untimely deaths of masters *as well as* slaves (the latter subject having been Foster's forte), the Plantation School sought to evoke readerly empathy for the fallen southern white man, whose natural eminence—as the slave always seemed to realize—was unquestioned.[195]

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[194] "Kree's" very redundancy recalls how few plot devices and/or characters are ever added or changed in Plantation Myth fiction despite swamping the pages of Northern magazines for almost a quarter of a century. What this suggests is that plot was not its driving interest, but sentiment, or "right feeling." For this school, like almost all American literature in the nineteenth century was, as Glenn Hendler argues, a "public instrument designed to play in a sentimental key" (1). According to Hendler, American fiction of the Victorian era sought to win minds as well as hearts by serving variously as "adjuncts to social movements," "agents of character formation," and/or "sites" for playing out "ideological and aesthetic conflicts" (1).

[195] Significantly, the nobility of whites and the wholesomeness of plantation life generally are also expressed by the very fact of the school's blackface. As the white authors of "Caesar Roman" and "Kree" demonstrate, by seeming to authentically capture the language of their black protagonists, and thus presumably expressing their true sentiments, English and Gordon are able to express a point of view that further reinforces the superiority of the white Southerner and the mythology of the old regime as a paradise for all its denizens.

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Although Irwin Russell is often credited for creating the prototype of the contented former slave in literature,[196] it is clear that this dubious distinction belongs to English. As we see in the pages of *Scribner's-Century*, Russell's true role was in refining their black characters to artistic perfection (Moore 73), showing how art can reside even in works morally repugnant to a modern audience and hinting as well at another reason for the incredible durability of the Plantation Myth School: the sheer virtuosity of its more skilled practitioners to endow their portraits of a lapidarian world with seeming authenticity.[197] Russell's first dialect poem to appear in the magazine was "Uncle Cap Interviewed" (Jan. 1876) in which an elderly former slaves expresses his fond remembrances of life under slavery. "De oldest man about," Cap recalls life in Virginia when housing was nonexistent, a situation soon remedied by hard-working slaves like himself. In contrast to such industry, he laments how "young folks dat's a growin' up now days ... ain't wuf shucks...." Disturbed that "tings ain't like dey used to wuz in ole Virginny State," the old man thinks poorly on freedom and ends his monologue by confessing "what good is 'at to me?" (454) A related poem entitled "Mahsr John" (May 1877) serves as another panegyric of a former slave for his master. "De greates' man de country ebber growed," Mahsr John once had a

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[196] Joel Chandler Harris perhaps began the myth of Russell's role as the founding delineator of the freed black who yearns for an older time. In his introduction to *Poems by Irwin Russell*, Harris called Russell a pioneer in creating "the literary possibilities of the negro character" and cited as "the most wonder thing about the dialect poetry" to be its "accurate conception of negro character."

[197] In "Negro in the Literature of the Reconstruction" (*Phylon*, 22. 1961: 5-14), Theodore L. Gross writes that "Southern writers of Reconstruction did not create a literature of artistic merit—they produced propaganda" (5). While this statement is one held by most critics of this period, it is not precisely accurate; while most plantation myth fiction is indeed repulsive and simplistic in its ideology (particularly to modern sensibilities), some of it is enormously well-wrought. The widely acclaimed artistry of writers such as Harris, King, Russell, and Woolson insured that their work not only qualified as literature worth reading (demonstrated by the badge of distinction given to it by appearing in a "quality" magazine such as *The Century*), but was also, simultaneously, an important tool for swaying public opinion. As Jean Wagner points out, the success of the Plantation School may also have to do with its "blending" of structures and techniques from English ballads as well as the sheer repetition of motifs and narrative that "induces one to accept as true what is not true" (47).

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thousand slaves. With an approving tone, the speaker notes how "he worked 'em, shore's your born!" Manipulating the soon to be familiar "Southern-aristocrat-as-fallen-hero" motif, his footman laments how, after the war, this once "pow'ful rich" planter "aint hardly wuf as much" (127).

Appearing exclusively in the final pages of *Scribner's* in a section entitled "Bric-a-Brac" (where the work of English and Gordon also appeared) and generally accompanied with illustrations (an early precursor of today's comic pages), Russell's work was particularly adept at amusing his readers at the expense of Jim Crow-like comic "darkies." In "Nebuchadnezzar" (July 1876), for example, an elderly freedman tries to work his own plot of land working behind a stubborn mule. Convinced he can cure his beast of his "shines," the old man explains to the reader his cool understanding of the situation:

> Some folks dey would 'a' beat him;
> Now, dat would only heat him—
> I know jes' how to treat him:
> You mus' *reason* wid a mule. (288)

Drawing on the racist notion that the reasoning powers of blacks were on a primitive level (in this case below the level of a mule), Russell ends the poem with the farmer lying on his back stunned by the jolt his mule has given him [Figure 26].

Published in 1876, Russell's poem is one of a barrage of comic sketches appearing in *Scribner's-Century* satirizing Radical Reconstruction. This government-implemented program was largely premised on the belief that blacks, upon being given basic constitutional protections, needed only a plot of land and farming implements to achieve self-supporting autonomy, the crucial first stage to becoming model citizens. Despite the fact that blacks were never even given the "40 acres and a mule" they had been promised, Russell in this work lampoons the very notion of black self-sufficiency. His attributing poor reasoning

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skills to blacks further suggested to northern readers that they were inherently incapable of participating in government, never mind holding leadership positions.

According to Russell, the best that blacks could do following their emancipation was to accept their subordinate place below whites and try to remain industrious. In "Half-way Doin's" (March 1876), for example, a baptist preacher, similar to the Lanier brothers' Uncle Jim, admonishes his parishioners not to shirk their responsibilities, for "ebery time a lazy nigger stops to take a nap,/De grass keeps on a-growin' for to smudder up his crop" (760) [Figure 27]. In "Precepts at Parting" (October 1876), Russell, this time in the voice of a black freedman to his son, provides further advice to blacks confronting freedom for the first time. Responding to his son's appointment as a waiter aboard the "Robbut E. Lee," a metaphor presumably for the new ship of state that Southern apologists were hoping America would become, the father offers "nuggets of wisdom" aimed at inculcating racial deference such as "You'll easy git 'long wid de white folks ... as long as dey notice he works" and "... nebber git airy—be 'spectful to all de white people you see ..." (766) As his verses demonstrate, Russell depicted blacks in a manner palatable to white readers that assuaged their guilt in having allowed human bondage for so long and even offered arguments in slavery's defense (namely, that blacks were innately inferior and childlike).

The work for which Russell was most famous for in his day, however, is "Christmas-Night in the Quarters" (Jan. 1878).[198] Consisting of passages that are written alternately in high literary English and black dialect, this "negro operetta" (as Joel Chandler Harris called it) promotes the idea of seemingly vast linguistic and cultural differences amongst the races.

[198] As Jean Wagner writes, elements of Russell's poem even found their way into minstrel shows of the time (55n.).

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Written in rhyming iambic couplets and erudite language, the opening passage, for example, signifies the discourse of high literary (i.e. "white") English:

> When merry Christmas-day is done,
> And Christmas-night is just begun;
> While clouds in slow procession drift
> To wish the moon-man "Christmas gift,"
> Yet linger overhead, to know
> What causes all the stir below;
> At Uncle Johnny Booker's ball
> The darkeys hold high carnival. (445)

In stark stylistic contrast is the following stanza supposedly written in the authentic language of an uneducated black wagon driver, responsible for hauling to "the frolic" forty guests behind ten oxen. Like the stubborn mule "Nebuchadnezzar," the driver's animals are "a-laggin,'" a situation he compares to the present political fate of "de 'Nited States":

> De people rides behind
> De pollytishers [politicians] haulin'—
> Sh'u'd be a well-bruk ox,
> To foller dat ar callin'—
> An' sometimes nuffin won't do dem steers,
> But what dey mus' be stallin'! (445)

The driver, like the other blacks given speaking roles throughout the poem, effectively demonstrates his racial difference, i.e. his inferiority, by his humorous, barely intelligible speech pattern. At the same time, his thoughts are clearly those of a white man (presumably the author's), whose interest lies in dismantling the Reconstruction policy of allowing blacks to run for political office (which can only lead to "stalling" and "stealing").

The plot that follows depicts the Christmas festivities of slaves, who have congregated together, as they are allowed to do once a year, from plantations near and far. The opening entertainment is a sermon from a Baptist preacher (that ubiquitous staple of Plantation Myth fiction), who prays to the great "Mahsr" above to "bless us ... Ef dancin's

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wrong—oh, Mahsr! Let de time excuse de sin!" (446) As Russell hopes to show, the primal urge for song and dance for blacks is hard to check by either religion or morality. Accordingly, when the "rev'rend man" is "scarcely through," Old Josey sounds his "A" on the fiddle and the dancing and singing begins [Figure 28].

In addition to descriptions (and illustrations) of a frenzied barrage of stomping and shouting [Figure 29], the reader overhears Aunt Cassy's "gruesome" conjure tales, followed by a nonsense lecture about "de hair what isn't dar [on] de 'possum's tail" (447). As Twain's Jim and blackface minstrelsy generally remind us, depicting blacks as superstitious as well as comically absurd (as opposed to scientific and rational) is part of a long tradition of what George Frederickson has called the "racial romanticization" of blacks by whites (107). Like the language difference of the white narrator and the black speakers, the very behavior of the slaves, even when based on seemingly benign stereotypes, suggests an enormous divide between the culture of white Victorians and the exotic Other. Russell's point, it seems, was to accentuate these differences as evidence of inherent inequality, a logic implicit in the equal, but different statutes "naturalized" into law in the 1890s.[199]

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[199] According to Elsa Nettels, the period following the Civil War was marked by an enormous interest in both creating standards for written and spoken American English and discovering the many and varied dialects of the American people. The impetus for this dual-pronged movement was, in part, our nation's renewed interest in creating a culture distinct from England. The originality of America's varied voices was to provide the material for new cultural achievements, while the science of philology (institutionalized with the founding of the American Philological Association in 1869, the Modern Language Association in 1883, and the publication of *Century's* own 6-volume American English dictionary between 1889-1891) would help to categorize these regional dialects, out of, or more likely, against which a "pure" and "unaffected" national language could be forged. Ideally, awareness of different dialects was also intended to forge a sense of commonality amongst a varied people; by learning about others who sound different, Americans would in fact discover everyone's common humanity. As we have seen, however, interest in standard and nonstandard English also had its darker ideological aspects. For many middle-class Americans—a group still in formation in late nineteenth century—correct standards of language usage needed to be established in order to mark one as cultivated. Conversely, this same impulse implied an interest in demarcating inferiority as the failure to speak or write properly. With the freeing of blacks following the Civil War, the influx of massive numbers of "new" immigrants (many of who did not know English at all), as well as a growing concern that language usage was degenerating owing to the "barbarism" of the masses, reference to standard written and spoken English increasingly became an anti-democratic impulse aimed at exclusion. As writers who earned their bread by submitting to the major magazines comic verses ridiculing the thoughts and expressions of not only blacks, but Irish, Germans, Chinese

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In addition to deriving a sense of superiority, Victorian interest in representations of blackness (and the exotic Other generally) also stemmed from a desire to achieve psychic release. As Ronald Takaki writes, the combination of Protestantism and Republicanism, upon whose ideals this nation was founded, caused white Americans to view profligacy and pleasure as signs of weakness and unsound character. To achieve a great and virtuous nation, its people had to enter into "iron cages," a metaphor for keeping one's passions in check and adhering to "honest industry, sober frugality, and simplicity of manners" (6). Those who were not self-regulating (namely non-whites) were not qualified to be naturalized citizens, though their presence in American life often came to symbolize forbidden pleasures.

To a certain extent, the frolic and fun exhibited by blacks in "Christmas Night in the Quarters" represents Russell's own interest in exiting the borders of Victorian culture (like Stephen Foster, Russell was notorious for his bohemian lifestyle and alcoholism, found dead from drink in a Southern boardinghouse at the age of 29). Gauging from the popularity of this piece, a desire to break out from the iron cage of genteel restraint was shared, apparently, by his readers. As Russell writes, suggesting that the fascination behind blacks' alleged freedom was not simply to show them as incapable of self-government, but a Freudian slip into the forbidden:

> Observe them at their Christmas party.
> How unrestrained their mirth—how hearty!
> How many things they say and do,
> That never would occur to you! (448)

As artistic as Russell's piece admittedly is, the first work in this vein of truly exceptional literary merit to appear in *Scribner's-Century* during the 1870s was Constance Fenimore Woolson's "King David," which also makes explicit the myth of African

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and other "furriners" show, white, middle-class readers of the periodicals invested psychically in the presentation of those who had not yet become Americans, and as one senses from Russell, would never become.

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Americans' penchant for childlike merriment and their consequent incapacity for self-government. Written in the trademark realistic mode that sets Woolson apart not just from other Plantation Myth writers, but from most writers of her generation, this tale addresses the entire gamut of issues relating to Reconstruction being debated at the time and draws conclusions reflective of the magazine's own view of this social experiment as a "fool's errand" (to borrow from a title of a novel by Albion Tourgee).

Woolson's tale concerns a well-meaning northern school teacher, named David King, who has come South to teach a school for newly freed slaves in the black settlement known as Jubilee. The fate of the experiment begins ominously enough with a description of the scholars leaving their first class that not only helps to explain the town's unusual name, but recalls the superego-less blacks described in Russell's "Christmas Time in the Quarters":

> Then what antics, what linked lines of scuffling, what double shuffles, leaps and somersaults, what rolling laughter, interspersed with short yelps, and guttural cries, as wild and free as the sounds the mustangs make, gamboling on the plains! (781)

With the end of the war, David had burst into enthusiasm over his new found calling despite the warning of a local New Hampshire farmer expressing a sentiment many northerners, by the end of the 1870s, would come to share: "I don't see as you're called, David. We've paid dear enough to set 'em free, goodness knows, and now they ought to look out for themselves" (781). David, however, is determined to serve his charges well. Described as possessing childlike, imitative minds, the black scholars playfully reverse David King's name (hence the story's title), but even after five months cannot advance beyond the word "cat." The problem, the teacher soon realizes was that "They learned, some of them, readily; but they forgot as readily" causing him to confess that "he would have given years of his life for the power to prevent their suffrage." In desperation, David

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considers another way to help his forlorn flock: he would rent a field and try to raise cotton with their help "at fair pay."

Despite repeated signs that suggest he desist from his latest attempt at do-gooding, the teacher seeks out Harnett Ammerton, "a born partrician" now poor, to rent some of his lands. The conversation is less than cordial as Ammerton tries to dissuade the teacher of his plans arguing that blacks "have not capacity for anything save ignorance." Ammerton forecasts that "the negro with power in his hand ... will become an element of more danger in this land than it has ever known before," and thus should remain under white control. His words though seem to have little affect on his listener even when

> At this instant an old negro came up the steps, with an armful of wood, and the eye of the Northerner noted (was forced to note) the contrast: there sat the planter, his head crowned with silver hair, his finely chiseled face glowing with the warmth of his indignant words; and there passed the old slave, bent and black, his low forehead and broad animal features seeming to typify scarcely more intelligence than that of the dog that followed him. (784)

Despite taking note of this contrast between the white Southerner and his black servant—a racial dichotomy stressed with enormous frequency in almost all Plantation Myth fiction—David remains undaunted, even as his faith is further challenged upon his return to Jubilee when he finds "three of his freedmen drunk, and quarreling in the street" (784).

Woolson's point up to this part of the tale is an obvious attack on northern idealists who seek to help in areas outside their expertise. The second half of the tale—in line with Eric Foner's influential discussion of how white Southerners not only effectively decreed blacks to be ineffectual politicians, but themselves to be victims of northern greed and corruption—is a full-fledged attack on unscrupulous northern "invaders" known as Carpetbaggers.

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As Woolson relates, the appearance of alcohol in Jubilee has been introduced by "one of that class which has gone down on the page of American history, knighted with the initials C.B." While David has essentially been rejected by his scholars, "'The Captain' the negroes called him, ... was highly popular already, three hours of the captain being worth three weeks of David, as far as familiarity went." Owing to the influence of this man, "a glib-tongued, smartly dressed fellow, well supplied with money, [whose] errand was, of course, to influence the votes at the next election" (785), Jubilee soon becomes known "far and wide as a dangerous and disorderly neighborhood."

When Hammerton, in desperation, asks David to join in "an association for our own protection" (presumably the KKK), the northern teacher stubbornly insists that he must continue with his social work, a decision, the reader by the end of the tale, is practically compelled to recognize as misplaced arrogance and tomfoolery. At last, David too realizes that his mission has been a "great lesson" in failure and returns to New Hampshire. As a town gossip, whose words end the tale, accurately reflects, the teacher "didn't find the blacks what he expected, I guess" (789).

In Woolson's tale is to be found the full retinue of reasons behind the South's desire to dismantle Reconstruction. In it, *Scribner's* readers found blacks to be unintelligent and prone to dissipation and violence without proper white oversight. They also encountered the Southern patriarch as not only noble and knowing, but vastly superior to both blacks and northern interlopers of all stripes. For Woolson, like English, Gordon, and Russell, the ideals of Radical Reconstruction were based on false information and selfish motives; like them, she saw her role as contributing to a far more "accurate" rendering of the South.

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The 1880s: The Plantation is Born Again

As class unrest, the woes of urbanization, agitation for female suffrage, "new" immigration as well as racial discord reached crisis levels in the 1880s, the northern industrial capitalist class and its genteel spokespersons came to view the interests of Southern whites with ever increasing favor. Embracing both Whig and progressive elements in the South, the northern elite hoped to form a coalition that could counter the atomizing forces they believed were threatening the nation. Thus, while the 1870s saw *Scribner's-Century* begin making overtures to Southern writers to explain their region and advance its interests, the call for sectional unity under the banner of nationalism reached a feverish pitch during the 1880s, exemplified by the magazine's long-running Civil War Series which allowed leaders of both sides to wax eloquently and "love each other," as Richard Watson Gilder wrote, "as never before" (qtd. in Kaplan 90). To help forge this alliance, *Scribner's-Century* continued to foster Southern fiction writers and even brought three—Thomas Nelson Page, James Lane Allen, and Joel Chandler Harris—to enormous fame.

A Virginian aristocrat-turned-lawyer whose family lost its fortune during the War, Thomas Nelson Page first started contributing to the magazine in 1877 with the dialect poem "Uncle Gabe's White Folks," a work in which a black narrator rejoices to hear that his former master's son has returned to buy back the family plantation. The author soon realized, however, that his literary powers were best expressed in the form of the short story. Thus, in 1881, Page sent Gilder a tale entirely in dialect in the voice of another former slave who, like Russell's Uncle Gabe and English's Caesar Roman, tells of plantation life before the war with nostalgic longing. The work entitled "Marse Chan: A Story of Ole Virginia" was immediately accepted but did not appear in print until April 1884.

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The critic Herbert Smith theorizes that the reason Gilder waited so long to publish the tale was that he didn't feel his readers were ready for fiction entirely in dialect. As Smith writes,

> In 1881 printing such a story might have been a risky undertaking, but by 1884 the readers of *The Century* had been exposed to so many of Irwin Russell's poems and to so many stories and poems by Joel Chandler Harris in Negro dialect that Page's story was no longer extraordinary. (56)

This view is questionable, however, given the fact that dialect had long been used, quite extensively, in fiction appearing in *Scribner's-Century.* In the same year as English's "Ceasar Roman," for example, two tales, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps' "Not a Pleasant Story" (Dec. 1871) and Mary Mapes Dodge's "Miss Maloney on the Chinese Question" (Jan. 1871) were written entirely in what Richard H. Brodhead terms "ethnically deformed speech." A sounder rationale for the delay in publishing Page's story is that the deeply felt pro-Southern biases embedded in it (far balder than even Woolson's "King David") were probably unpalatable to northern readers still somewhat wary of Southern intentions following the collapse of Reconstruction in 1877. However, as Burnett's and Hay's novels show, the intervening years between 1881 and 1884 were marked by ongoing class and social tensions, causing the elite to fear that a unified WASP vision of America was at greater risk than ever before. By 1884, Gilder correctly sensed that the Victorian American reading public would be fully receptive to the ultra conservative views espoused in Page's most famous work.

"Marse Chan" begins on a leisurely note with a white, gentleman-like tourist visiting the eastern part of Virginia, observing from a distance "once splendid mansions ... set in proud seclusion among groves of oak and hickory" (27: 932; April 1884). Continuing his gaze, he imagines the mansions' former occupants as highly private citizens, a "race" who "desired but a level path in life" while "the outer world strode by them as they dreamed."

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With these lines, Page's mystification of an earlier Golden Age also begins. His is a memorializing process that through the course of the tale will attempt to create a "new" South out of the ashes of the old by selectively remembering, or rather constructing, the past as idyllic, while purposefully forgetting any indication of the region's former evils.

Like all origin stories, this birth of a new order is depicted as vulnerable, threatened by other competitors. Breaking the narrator's reverie, for example, is the voice of Sam, a former slave, impatiently calling to "a noble-looking old orange and white setter": "Jes' like white folks—think 'cuz you's white and I's black, I got to wait on yo' al de time. Ne'm mine, I ain' gwi' do it!" (933)[200] Even though the black man, upon spying the white traveler, quickly explains that he is "jes' prodjikcin' [fooling] wid" the animal, Page's point is manifest. The threat to the new national order are "masterless" southern blacks who have begun to forget their "natural" place on the bottom rung of the social ladder and, for the time being, lord over the rightful property of whites ["Dey don' nobody live dyar (in the mansions) now, cep' niggers" (933), Sam, at one point, tells the narrator].[201]

Significantly, the white narrator's appearance returns Sam to his former subject position as witnessed by his sudden deference to the visitor. After a few words with Sam, for example, the narrator relates how "Instantly, and as if by instinct, the darky stepped forward and took my bridle" (933). By asking Sam to relay to him the tale of Marse Chan, the

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[200] Particularly striking about this scene is the depiction of the setter as "white." What seems to be happening here is the transformation of an older cultural order invested in the notion of difference based on biology (skin color) to a new order in which difference (and its antithesis: uniqueness) is determined by what Paul Gilroy terms "cultural belongingness" (50). The setter is thus "white" because of his "noble" deportment (his vulnerability, in being old and blind, also suggests whiteness—specifically Southern aristocratic whiteness—being challenged at the time). In addition, Sam's difference is emphasized not by his color, but by his speech and seemingly "natural" subordination. See Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, 49-50.

[201] This line recalls Twain's parody of white assertions of blacks as human ciphers (regarding them not merely as property but without the right to hold property) in *Huckleberry Finn*. When the Sir Walter Scott ferry explodes and sinks, a white rescuer asks an evacuee if anybody was hurt. "Nope, just a nigger" is the reply.

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narrator hopes to achieve a similar affect. That is, in recalling the past, the narrator hopes Sam will call to mind his proper place as a dutiful servant.

Like the faithful slaves of English, Gordon, and Russell, Sam begins his flashback by immediately proclaiming his closeness to his former master. He recalls, for example, the days when Marse Chan was just a baby and he was told to be his faithful body servant, a role he adopted with love and ardor. Whether fishing, attending school ("I use' to go 'long wid 'im an' tote he books," 934), or courting Miss Anne "Chahmb'lin," Sam recalls being constantly at his young master's side. Well-fed, lightly worked, and never beaten, Sam's view of these days are halcyon. As he explains in terms that explain why Page's tale is generally left out of modern day anthologies: "Dem wuz good ole time, marster—de bes' Sam ever see! Dey wuz, in fac'! Niggers didn' hed nothin' t' all to do" (935).

Being faithful in his role, Sam's commentary implies, is easy when one has a noble master such as his. Indeed, Marse Chan is depicted as the classic southern gentleman. His impeccable qualifications as a man of chivalry and courage, for example, are evident when he carries his young fiancée Miss Anne across a stream during a storm and by the two duels he fights, the first to defend the honor of his father and the latter to defend the reputation of Miss Anne (even after she has refused him over a feud with her father). Even Marse Chan's aspect and attire signify the southern gallant. As Sam gushes,[202] when "Marse Chan dress up in he uniform, ... he sut'n'y did look splendid, wid he long mustache an' he wavin' hyar an' he tall figger" (939). Further highlighting his manly bearing and glamorous aura are

[202] Numerous commentators have made much of the closeness between black and white men in American fiction during this era. Most famously, Leslie Fielder labels relationships such as that between Marse Chan and Sam (and Huck and Jim) as "innocent marriages" which seek to forget/forgive past hostilities. See Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel.* Recently, Caroline Gebhard argues that the "homoerotics of ... master-slave relations may be interpreted as part of the logic of a new racial order in which all black must 'want' to cater to all whites" (143).

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Channing's actions in battle, during which he regularly leads his regiment to brave deeds and impossible successes.[203]

In her essay "Reconstructing Manhood: Race, Sentimentality, and Camp in the Plantation Myth," Caroline Gebhard argues that the overblown qualities of the southern aristocrat, as depicted in so much postbellum southern writing, reveal a male identity crisis for that region at the time. "The extravagance, the posturing ... the glamour and pathos" (133) associated with former officers of the Confederacy, Gebhard argues, served to make them figures of sympathy for a national audience. Whereas black men and white women (such as Uncle Tom and Little Eva in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) were the "original objects of sentimental identification" (136) for antebellum readers, the Plantation School aimed at producing the southern white male body as the new locus of sympathy. Such identification, Gebhard writes, helped promote "sincere mourning for the Old South" (140) and served to produce in readers the "social desire" to redeem the region and its defenders.

Focusing primarily on issues of southern masculinity and race, Gebhard's insightful reading leaves out, I believe, the larger cultural implications of Page's tale.[204] While ostensibly lauding aristocratic southern males, "Marse Chan" is a work that insists upon respect for Anglo-Saxon property and properties for men of the South *and* North. The return of Miss Anne's affections for Captain Channing, after she "cut" him for offending her

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[203] Described most brilliantly is his campaign to capture the enemy's flag in which he dies a hero's death. As Sam relates, "I jump up an' run over de bank, an' dyar, wid a whole lot o' dead men, an' some not dead yit, onder one o' de guns wid de fleg still in han', an' a bullet right th'oo he body, lay Marse Chan. I tu'n 'im over an call 'im, 'Marse Chan!' But 'twan' no use, he wuz done gone home, sho' 'nuff. I pick 'im up in my arms wid de fleg still in he han's."

[204] By appearing in the *Century* at a time of widespread social and economic unrest, the tale's central theme should be read, I believe, as a call for conservatism on many fronts. As Page's later commentary in "The Old South" expresses (which equally applies to the aim of his most famous tale and, one may add, *Century Magazine* itself): "Whilst it proudly boasted itself democratic, it was distinctly and avowedly anti-radical—holding fast to those things which were proved, and standing with its conservatism a steadfast bulwark against all novelties and aggressions" (44).

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father's honor, for example, can be read as another instance in the fiction of *Century* encouraging the submission of women to reasonable and worthy men (significantly, Sam, speaking for all Victorian men, labels "wimmins" such as Miss Anne as "mons'us onreasonable," 938). Relatedly, Page's detailing of the property line disputes between the Channings and their reckless neighbors, the Chamberlins, argue for the need of strict national laws insuring against fraud, trespass, and other infringements against rightfully held private property. The urgency of this latter theme can be further deduced by considering the positioning of the tale in the pages of *Century*. It appears, for example, in the issue following John Hay's defense of his virulently anti-labor novel *The Bread-Winners* as "an absolutely truthful picture of certain phases of our social life" based upon the rise of secret orders "known to threaten lives and property" (28: 153; May 1884).

By the 1880s, in reaction to a society seeming to spin radically out of control, calls for increased law and order had become the new mantras of the magazine.[205] In myriad, often highly inventive ways, minority races such as African Americans, as well as agitating women and immigrant laborers, were the favored targets of the genteel regime's iron fist. As Maud Matchin's "disciplining" and Offitt's extermination in *The Bread-Winners* show, writers of "quality" magazine fiction, with the encouragement of their editors, often depicted the female gendered and/or racialized Other in a manner designed to symbolically redeem the "natural" order. As even its last line demonstrates, this aim is also evident in "Marse Chan." Signaling a renewed sense of his "proper" sphere marked by servility and a concern for white property, Sam calls to his wife with heartfelt concern: "Judy, have Marse Chan's dawg got home?" (942)

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[205] "Marse Chan" also immediately precedes an editorial entitled "Mob or Magistrate" (27: 944; April 1884) calling for a more efficient "machinery of justice" that will carry out more legal hangings to offset the rise in private lynchings, suggesting a severe crisis in maintaining the rule of law.

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The genteel fear of "masterless" blacks and its connection to labor and feminist agitation is also captured in the writings of James Lane Allen. With an analytical rigor far more sophisticated than any other Plantation Myth writer, Allen utilized his extensive training as a literary critic to defend the Old South as generative of good character across racial, gender, and class lines, most famously in his essay "Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom' At Home in Kentucky" (34: 852-867; Oct. 1887).[206] Part of *Century Magazine's* wider assault on women's fiction (discussed in chapters four and five), this essay, like James in *The Bostonians* and Howells in *A Woman's Reason*, attempts to both disparage and "discipline" a

[206] Allen's "Two Kentucky Gentlemen of the Old School" (April 1888) is another famous study of black and white "character." It begins with the conventional scenario of an "old man on an old horse ... a white-haired personification of the very Past; and such indeed, he was" (945). The man depicted is a Southern aristocrat named Colonel Romulus Fields, who, one year following the end of the Civil War, is touring the county outside his plantation in central Kentucky, a country village he once knew and loved well (and, as his latinate name suggests, presumably founded). Surveying the scene, the Colonel reflects on the difference of how life used to be and its present horror: "The rich had grown poor; the poor had become rich.... The negroes were drifting blindly hither and thither, deserting the country and flocking to the towns. Even the once united rural church was jarred by the unstrung and discordant spirit of the times." Formerly, Colonel Fields had been a "model master" and planter who looked after his faithful slaves with deep care and devotion. His "pure, tender, noble" heart had been on display often, for "more than one poor wretch he had bought to save ... from separation from his family." But "Now all was changed" (946). Upon his return to his now dilapidated mansion, the gentleman informs his servant and former slave Peter Cotton that he will move into town. The ever faithful Cotton chooses to go with him, for he was "inseparable from [Field's] person and ... altered fortunes." In an attempt to keep step with developments of the "New" South, the Colonel opens up a hardware store, but as he had little interest in making profits or tending to issues of management, the business quickly fails. At the urging of his elderly friends, he then runs for mayor, but as he refuses to buy people's votes, his defeat is assured. Peter Cotton experiences a similar failure to keep pace with the times. Encouraged long ago by his master to become a preacher, Cotton was once renown for his Sunday visits to slave cabins exhorting such commandments as "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh." But before the "new" negroes of the town, now dressed in "silk hats, and walking canes and broadclothes ... gloves and satins, laces and feathers, jewelry and fans" (948), his old-fashioned sermons have no effect. Recognizing that true nobility and spirituality no longer have a place in the region of their birth, the two "gentleman" exit society completely. Their mutual rejection of modernity, however, draws them "more and more closely to each other" (951). After several years of peaceful retirement, the Colonel, sensing his end is near tells his loyal servant that: "I have fixed things so that you will be comfortable after I am gone. When your time comes, I should like you to be laid close to me. We can take the long sleep together. Are you willing?" Suggesting that a black man's place is always by his master's side, Cotton answers, "That's whar I want to be laid" (951). Of particular interest and relevance to this essay is how Allen's tale expresses the fear that the South is becoming like the society of its conqueror. Given to materialism, political corruption, and vice and lacking respect for genteel status and simple neighborly etiquette, the "New" South, as the author depicts it, plays directly into the fears of *Scribner's-Century's* Northern middle-class readers who sense the same scenario is bringing down their own region. Allen's depiction of the loyal foot-servant also speaks directly to the many problems with labor then affecting so many Northern cities. In contrast, for example, to labor unions' seemingly constant demands for greater pay and fewer work hours, Field's servant epitomizes the perfect (i.e. perfectly content laborer). Indeed, when the Colonel suggests paying Cotton upon his emancipation, his servant tellingly responds that he "didn't have no use fur no salary" (951).

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woman for her "unreasonableness" and the dangerous consequences such a frame of mind potentially generates. Deceptively cordial in tone, Allen's essay is in fact a virulent attack on Stowe's descriptions of slave life in her famous novel implying that—in the face of northern and southern reconciliation—one of the most important issues leading up to the Civil War is not merely to be forgotten, but rewritten. In place of Stowe's unequivocal stance against the institution of slavery, Allen proposes that in many ways the antebellum South should serve as a social and economic model for the entire nation.

Allen's article, with illustrations by E. W. Kemble,[207] begins in the tradition of the regional sketch when a genteel outsider—presumably the narrator himself—visits an exotic zone, in this case a settlement of freed blacks. Though only a short distance from the nearest "white" town, the narrator compares his visit to "the crossing of a vast continent between the habitats of alien races" (852). Remarking on this difference is important, for the Regionalist's goal is to present readers a quaint locale (as part of the genteel agenda to escape from the pressures of modernity) as well as to domesticate the world of the other, establishing their place in "the national hierarchy of speech and manners" (Ayers 339). Allen's account shows, however, that at work in regionalizing blackness is an additional element, namely the rigid structuring of typology that reinforces notions of racial essentialism, all importantly in a magazine aimed at middle-class whites.

Upon arriving at the village, the first sound the sojourner hears is a "crooned song of indescribable pathos," which plays on the romantic racialization of blacks as melodic carriers

[207] Helping to essentialize blackness in Allen's essays are its illustrations by E. W. Kemble, who first found employment with *Century* as illustrator of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. The editors liked Kemble's work so much, they contracted him to illustrate an enormous amount of its Plantation Myth fiction thereafter. As Earl Briden writes in "Kemble's 'Specialty' and the Pictorial Countertext of *Huckleberry Finn*" [*Mark Twain Journal* 26.2 (Fall 1988): 2-14], Kemble's ability to caricature black types, which resulted in "any distinct personality and individual reality" to be "absorbed ... to a racial abstraction," clearly contributed to *Century's* interest in retaining the artist.

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of great sorrow. Soon thereafter he hears a jocund musician, a "Moorish-hued *amoroso* in gay linen [who] thrums a banjo in a measure of ecstatic gayety, preluding the more passionate melodies of the coming night." As the descriptive opening continues, additional stereotyped notions of black life are presented in rapid succession:

> Here a fight; there the sound of the fiddle and rhythmic patting of hands. Tatters and silks flaunt themselves side by side. Dirt and cleanliness lie down together. Indolence goes hand in hand with thrift. Superstition dogs the slow footsteps of reason. Passion and self-control eye each other all day long across the narrow way. If there is anywhere resolute virtue, all round it is a weltered mulch of low and sensual desire. (852)

In this passage, the reader is made privy to a battle between inherent blackness (unrestrained passions, indolence, carelessness) and the ideals superimposed by high-minded Anglo-Saxonism (order, self-control, reason, virtue) with the former perpetually threatening to overpower the latter.

While the author hopes to show that the habits and traits of blacks are obdurate features, a corollary aim is to argue that the antebellum world of discontented slaves painted by Stowe to enormous effect, was largely inaccurate. In stark contradiction of the claims made by the woman Lincoln once praised for having "started" the Civil War, Allen explains that Kentucky had long sought gradual emancipation and had only been waiting for the proper time to begin—a moment recklessly delayed by the "intervention of abolitionists" like her.[208]

Seeking to bolster his claim, Allen depicts Kentucky plantation life as a pleasant experience for all, filled with mutual love and admiration between both races. He discusses,

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[208] In his chapter entitled "Uncle Tomitudes: Racial Melodram and Modes of Production," Eric Lott points out that the writing of competing versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* obsessed Americans from the moment of its publication. Allen's essay is certainly in the tradition of this counter school, but it also provides ample evidence (especially in its defense of Stowe's depiction of Uncle Tom's noble character) that, as Lott explains, Stowe herself participated in the tradition of blackface minstrelsy as much as she broke from it (212).

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for example, the close relationship of the master's son to his "Mammy" into whose "black arms" he would often run crying "himself to sleep in the lap of African sympathy" (858). The household cook, too, was equally well-disposed to the young master, whose "keys were as the keys to the kingdom of heaven, for his immortal soul was his immortal appetite" (858). Also noteworthy, the reader learns, was the intimacy of the plantation owner's son to the black children: "To them he showed his first Barlow knife; for them he blew his first homemade whistle" (858).

The greatest mutuality of love and kindness existed, apparently, between the Mistress and her black charges. Extending her role as a "true woman" beyond the confines of her own home and into the management of "the cabins," the Mistress watched over and trained her slaves as if they were her own children:

> Upon her falls the labor of private instruction and moral exhortation ... She must remind them that their marriage vows are holy and binding; must interpose between mothers and their cruel punishment of their own offspring. What is hardest of all, she must herself punish for lying, theft, immorality. (861)

The mistress also cared for her "negresses" when they became old or sick (ministrations the black slaves would reciprocate both during and after the war). "In view of what they accomplished," writes Allen, "there is nothing they have found harder to forgive in the women of the North than the failure to sympathize with them in the struggles and sorrows of their lot, and to realize that *they* were the real practical philanthropists of the negro race" (861).

Allen's aims in describing the responsibilities of the Mistress are twofold. On one hand, he wishes to show how well blacks were treated under her benevolent rule. Equally important, the author wishes to show how upper-class white women themselves benefited

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from the institution of slavery. In extending the domain of her maternal activities, the Mistress was able to further develop her skills as nurturer and educator, reaffirming "natural" gender distinctions in the process. Clearly, the author's interest in making the traditional role of the "true woman" appear not merely attractive, but heroic, was aimed, in part, at *Century's* large northern female readership, many of whom had been sympathetic if not actively involved with the cause of abolition, and some of whom were now being tempted to participate in the "new" woman's cause. In praising southern women above even that of their northern counterparts, the author suggests that in the Old South women knew their rightful place and were richly rewarded for their obedience to it.

According to Allen, the effects of the slave system worked to everyone's benefit. Exemplifying this fact was none other than Uncle Tom himself, whose "noble" character, the author readily admits, Stowe accurately captured. Not only was Tom the model overseer and loyal, contented servant—"the greatest of all the negroes" (858)—he was also the most beloved, especially by the master's son [Figures 30 and 31]. According to Allen, what Stowe had so egregiously failed to see, however, was that this most cherished servant's qualities were the product of his nurturing environment:

> For of all races, the Africans—superstitious indolent, singing and dancing, most impressionable creature—depended upon others for enlightenment, training, and happiness. If therefore, you find him so intelligent that he may be sent on important business commissions, so honest that he may be trusted with money, house, and home, so loyal that he will not seize opportunity to become free; if you find him endowed with the manly virtues of dignity and self-respect united to Christian virtues of humility, long-suffering, and forgiveness, then do not, in marveling at him on these accounts, quite forget his master and his mistress,—they made him what he was. (858)

If southern paternalism served the interests of blacks well, its effects, the author seems to imply, could help solve the labor problems of the present. Indeed, much of the article is a

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defense of Kentucky's plantation system as a model business arrangement. In addition to demonstrating the natural harmony between labor (slaves) and capital (their owners), the author boasts, for example, of his region's ideal labor conditions; namely that it is free of "miasmic districts or fatal swamps" (858). Furthermore, the small size of the farms and the type of staples they produced did not require long "seasons of forced and exhausting labor" obviating the need for an impersonalized labor force (in contrast, presumably, to the capitalist-industrial model of the northern factory which alienated employees from their employers).

In a time of frequent labor strikes, shrill calls for women's rights, and racial tension, Allen's proposed system of elite white male control met with widespread approval both in the South *and* North. In the depictions of the Old South by its many apologists, northerners saw, after all, idealizations of their own "new" selves.

As influential as Allen's conservative tales and essays were, no author more fully established the mutual love of black and white relations, and the horrible state of affairs when blacks are left to their own devices than Joel Chandler Harris.[209] Too young to join the Confederate army when the Civil War began, "Joe," as he was always known to his close friends, opted to work as an assistant editor of Joseph Addison Turner's *The Countryman*, the largest plantation periodical of its day. Following the war, he continued to work as a journalist and editor for a number of newspapers and quickly became known as Georgia's leading "funny man." His first claim to true fame, however, came at the widely-circulated *Atlanta Constitution*, where he served along with Henry W. Grady as its associate editor.

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[209] Born the illegitimate son of Mary Harris and an Irish laborer, Joel felt his stigmatization acutely and numerous critics have pointed out the ways this fact manifests itself in his fiction. Paul Cousins, for example, points out his deep sympathy with marginalized and emotionally scarred characters (such as Brer Rabbit and Free Joe) and, R. Bruce Bickeley, Jr., argues that his creation of the affectionate Uncle Remus serves, in some ways, as a father figure he never felt he had.

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While Grady was becoming increasingly known and respected for his editorials advocating economic and political cooperation with the North and racial segregation, readers began to look forward to Harris' negro dialect sketches, which in their own way, supported Grady's "New South" agenda.[210]

The birth of Uncle Remus as the famous teller of animal folk tales emerged when Harris in 1877 read an article entitled "Folklore of the Southern Negroes" in *Lippincott's*, which, like *Scribner's-Century,* had begun opening its pages to the folkways and traditions of regional groups. Though Harris had often reveled in the animal tales told by blacks at Turner's plantation, he had never thought of publishing them. The successful response to his publication of "The Story of Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Fox as Told by Uncle Remus" in the *Constitution* on July 20, 1879, however, proved that he had discovered a fertile field. By 1880, Harris had published enough of his tales to put out a book version entitled *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings*, which sold 10,000 copies in four months, sales of which have never ceased.

Wishing to reach as wide an audience as possible for his next book, Harris agreed to publish material with Gilder, who in a letter dated March 10, 1881 had proposed to print "anything" the rising southern star could furnish.[211] Harris' first submission was the poem "A Song of the Mole" (21: 968; April 1881) followed by a cycle of tales entitled "A Rainy Day With Uncle Remus" published in three parts: "Morning" (22:241-249; June 1881),

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[210] In his editorial role for the *Atlanta Constitution*, Grady became nationally known for being the spokesperson for the South. His fame rested with his ability to articulate a program that called for Southern "home rule" and industrial development as well as full reconciliation with the North. Long viewing Southern economic dependency on the North as detrimental to "healthy growth" in the region (qtd. in Takaki 201), he called for Northern capital to build factories, which would be filled with efficient skilled black workers. Like Harris, he viewed whites as higher on the evolutionary scale than blacks and thus wanted to preserve the old paternalism of the plantation by merely superceding it with welfare capitalism.

[211] To Harris, Gilder wrote: "You are so much of an artist that we do not like to suggest anything as to the *form* of the short story supposed" (qtd. in Smith 59).

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"Afternoon" (22: 443-453; July '81), and "Night" (22: 608-616; August '81). In these tales, reminiscent of those appearing in his earlier book, a bespectacled, white-haired former plantation hand sits in his cabin spinning stories for the son of Miss Sally (the daughter of a plantation owner) and Mr. Huntingdon (a former Civil War officer for the Union army).[212] As before, this son of the North and South (in many respects a stand-in for *Century's* northern readers) listens intently to what the old man has to tell him, who, in turn, thoroughly enjoys the attention. As the author wished to once again demonstrate, the mutual affection of Uncle Remus and his young guest reflected the close relationship between the races that had remained following the war despite forces—as the author would later write elsewhere—that sought to antagonize one against the other.[213] Another purpose of these new tales was also clear. As the author had stated in the introduction to his first book, he wished to recreate life on the plantation as accurately as possible, especially the dialect and psychology of a representative field hand, who, Harris insisted, had "nothing but pleasant memories" of slavery.

What is novel about the *Century* pieces is Harris' exceptional care in attending to realistic detail, reflecting the author's participation in the Realist movement at the time.[214] In

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[212] Harris' first Remus sketches were mostly commentaries by a middle-aged black man from Atlanta on the failures of Reconstruction and the unfortunate rise of "slick" urban negroes, but, by 1877, Harris, in "Uncle Remus as a Rebel" had placed Uncle Remus on the plantation to stay. As David Blight writes, the first version of this story has Remus defending his master against an invading Union soldier, who he kills even though the man is fighting for his emancipation. Wishing to contribute to the project of North and South reconciliation that had gathered enormous momentum in the media following the abandonment of Reconstruction, Harris later revised this story so that the soldier, one John Huntingdon, is merely injured and Remus and the daughter of his mistress, Miss Sally, nurse him back to health. Ultimately, Sally and John marry with Remus remaining at their side as their trusted and devoted servant in perpetuity.

[213] In his introduction to *Uncle Remus: His Songs and Sayings*, Harris had defined the little boy as "the product of that practical reconstruction which has been going on to some extent since the war in spite of the politicians" (65).

[214] This literary school headed by William Dean Howells sought "authenticity" as a primary goal for fiction writing. In his most famous statement on the topic, Howells called for a "strict accounting" of Nature, with special attention accorded to "the simple, the natural, and the honest." The author should thus render his own

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a series of footnotes, for example, one learns of the author's keen interest in providing his readers a precision-like transcription of black dialect.[215] In addition, Harris had worked to increase his characters' individuality—documenting, for example, the daily habits of Remus and examples of the little boy's increasing precociousness—and had even provided a colorful addition to his small cast, the domestic servant Tildy. Furthermore, unlike the author's first book of tales, which generally provide little in the way of setting, this cycle captures the "rainy day" mood in a plantation cabin exquisitely. For example, the reader can practically hear the "drip-drip-drip" of rain water falling into a tin pan, just about visualize the flickering of Uncle Remus' shadow, which "as he leaned over the hearth, would tower and fill the cabin," and almost touch "the swaying and swinging cobwebs that curtained the rafters" (608).

Harris' obsession for authenticity in his fiction, paralleling the rage for accurate language use in so much postbellum American literature (one need only recall Mark Twain's famous introduction to *Huck Finn* in which he boasts of "pains-takingly" including in the book "four modified varieties" of dialect) calls for some explanation. On one hand, the author's attention to detail reflected a new faith in literature to capture reality objectively, theoretically helping readers to understand their world better and perhaps "master their circumstances" (Borus 13). On a more contextual level (which takes into consideration the material conditions of Harris fiction—i.e. that of a southerner appearing in the pages of a northern magazine), by seeming to reproduce plantation lifeways with almost science-like

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hand invisible and, instead, apply his energies to delineating ordinary scenes and people via accurate characterization and "fidelity" to "experience and probability of motive."

[215] In "Language in the Uncle Remus Tales" philologist Lee Pederson makes an interesting argument discounting Harris' claim that his black dialect is "genuine." Perhaps "phonetically genuine," Pederson argues that the language of Uncle Remus as he tells his tales is in fact a "carefully developed mode of poetic language ... composed to realize an explicit emotional effect" (294). Exhibiting a syntactic complexity greater even than the speech of Dr. Samuel Johnson and basking "in assonance, sonority and rhythm," Remus' "Ciceronian" sentences are possible only as written literature. (*Modern Philology* Feb. 1985: 292-298).

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fidelity, Harris could also better convince his readers of the accuracy of his fictional scenes. Assisted by realistic effects (as well as by the distinction his association to the school of Realism afforded) the author could, in essence, better "prove" that the affectionate relationship between the contented Uncle Remus and the loved and loving boy was really how things once were (and how things could be if each race understood its proper place). The promise of full authenticity resulting from his technique (and high-brow affiliation) also allowed the author to promote Remus' character as typical of *all* southern blacks—an opportunity he thoroughly exploited. Accordingly, one of the more conspicuous "facts" about Remus' life is that he rarely seems to be doing much of anything. Whenever the boy stops by, for example, the old slave is usually either dozing off (a fact he always denies) or smoking lazily. Perhaps most indicative of his seemingly cushy existence is that he *always* has time to relate his tales. Another frequently acknowledged "fact" of his existence, supporting yet another black stereotype, is that he persistently has food on his mind or in his mouth. Literally a slave to "appetite" (as opposed to exhibiting self-control), the old man, when not conniving to make the boy's meals his own, is frequently given to rhapsodizing over culinary delights.

The success of Harris' supposed accurate delineation of life "in the quarters" is captured in a letter from Mark Twain dated 10 August 1881, in response to his most recent appearance in *The Century*. In it, the famed humorist goes so far as to argue that the success of his work owes more to Harris' delineation of his title character than the animal tales themselves. As Twain writes,

> You can argue yourself into the delusion that the principle of life is in the stories themselves & not in their setting [but] Uncle Remus is most deftly drawn, & is a lovable & delightful creation; he, & the little boy, & their relations with each other, are bright fine literature, & worthy to live, for their

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> own sakes ... [the fables] are only alligator pears—one merely eats them for the sake of the salad-dressing. (qtd. in Bickely 41)

When one considers that most modern critics have themselves attested to the authenticity of Remus' animal tales, while pointing to the racist agenda of the frames, one would assume Twain's argument to be flawed. He was, in fact, half right, for both parts are essential to Harris' project and cannot be considered independently (just as one should not void out the additional frame of *Century Magazine* in which Harris' work appears).

According to leading Harris scholars such as Robert Bone, Louis Rubin, Jr., and Bernard Wolfe, the animal tales which Uncle Remus relates are authentic specimens of black culture, coded pieces that, on one hand, express a desire to overthrow "Mr. Man" and, on the other, teach lessons on how "to survive and flourish in a world in which society can be and often is predatory" (Rubin 167).[216] While there can be no gainsaying that the tales, as Bernard Wolfe writes, constitute the dominant culture's worst "nightmares" in which "the weak torture and drown the strong," when one frames them within a narration within a magazine, a transformation occurs that refracts their original content and intent. If the tales by themselves valorize potential violence and deserved revenge, told in the voice of what essentially is a white man in blackface in the pages of a magazine sympathetic to "new" southerners, these "alligator pears" indeed become mere dressing for a larger dish, diluting their potency in the mix.

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[216] Robert Bone, for example, argues that in them we see an "outlaw survival code" necessary for black existence (69), a point extended by Louis D. Rubin, Jr. who explains that "what the rabbit exemplifies is the capacity to survive and flourish in a world in which society can be and often is predatory" (167). Bernard Wolfe, in a famous essay, further emphasizes the bleak, yet authentic nature of Uncle Remus' tales, while adding that they speak of black rage against their oppressors. For him, they are "a nightmare in which whites are Negroes, the weak torture and drown the strong, mere blackness becomes black magic—and Negroes cavort with cosmic forces and the supernatural, zipping their skins off at will to prowl around the countryside terrorizing the whites, often in the guise of rabbits...." (39)

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As Uncle Remus in "A Rainy Day" conveys, in the topsy turvy world of Brer Rabbit and his associates, food and sex, self-preservation and aggression, are the central impulses driving everyday existence. In the opening tale, for example, Brer Fox learns that Miss Goose has come out of her house to batten her clothes. Desiring to capture and eat her, Brer Fox heads in Miss Goose's direction, not knowing that Brer Rabbit has thought to forewarn her of her coming fate. Insisting that Miss Goose will have to rely on her wits to escape danger, Brer Rabbit convinces her to place her clothes in a pile on her bed and to instruct Mr. Dog to hide nearby. When Brer Fox sees the bundle of clothes, he presumes it to be his dinner "en he grab it en run" (242). At that point, Mr. Dog comes out of hiding causing Brer Fox to drop the clothes and run away, only to become the laughing stock of the neighborhood for presumably wanting to steal Miss Goose's clothes. Far more devastating than losing his meal, as Remus suggests, is that "he come mighty nigh losin' his stannin' at Miss Meadows" (a reference to the women, who Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox are constantly trying to impress and, presumably, seduce).

The animal "appetites" are again on display in "Mr. Fox Catches Mr. Horse." In this tale Brer Rabbit tells Mr. Fox of a golden opportunity to win a meal having found a horse asleep nearby. Brer Rabbit convinces his "friend" that all he needs to do is tie his own tail to the horse's and hold him down. When Brer Fox does as he is told, however, the horse wakes up and breaks into a gallop dragging his accoutrement along with him. As Remus relates, while "de hoss 'gun ter kick wid his behime legs" and "fetch Brer Fox a lick in de stomach dat fa'rly make 'im squall," Rabbit maliciously offers mock encouragement: "Hol' 'im down, Brer Fox! Hol 'im down! You got 'im now, sho'! Hol' im down!" (244) So awful is this tale to the ears of the young boy, he worriedly asks Remus if the fox was killed in the prank. The

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old man, in a tone of nonchalance, replies: "He wa'n't 'zackly kilt, honey, but he wuz de nex' do' ter't" (244).

Such violence is typical for the vast majority of the tales Remus relates, but the common critical consensus that the tales thus reflect the hostility of life under slavery is misleading. In the frame of Harris/Remus, these deadly tales suggest a far different point, namely that if black behavior—viewed as inherently violent—is not contained, it will spill out into white society.[217]

The potentially nightmarish world of blacks being in power is perhaps best demonstrated in the follow-up cycle of animal stories, entitled "Nights With Uncle Remus," appearing nearly two years later. During this long interval, Harris travelled the southern countryside in a bid to both discover new tales and to authenticate ones that had been sent to him (including a ghost story from Twain). During this time, Harris also reached new conclusions about how to improve upon the presentation of his material. Continuing with the realistic detail that makes *Nights With Uncle Remus* the most aesthetically satisfying of his books, the author included several new characters including Tempy, the plantation cook, and Daddy Jack, a friend of Remus from the Sea Islands. He also decided that all of his black

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[217] Such a reading can be further supported by Remus' own proclivity for violence. Indeed, Harris' new tales suggest like never before that life in the old man's cabin is not that different from the world of Brer Rabbit and his cronies. Before telling the tale of "Mr. Fox and Mr. Horse," for example, Remus comments on the fact that the boy hasn't been able to visit in a long while owing to the fact that after getting sick his doctor prescribed that he stay indoors. Remus' thoughts on the medical profession and how he would mend matters are as follows: 'You done got yo' strenk back, en now youk'n rush down yer des like youuseter, en we kin jst yer en smoke, en tell tales, en study up 'musement same like we wuz gwin on 'fo' dem doctor mens got der clampers on you. 'Ef dey wuz Brere Fox,' the old man continue, 'w'ich dey er might nigh it, en I wuz ole Brer Rabbit, w'ich I aint 'sputin dat I got some er de symptoms, I lay I'd gin dem docoer mens one settin' up—I sho'ly would (243). Remus' barely concealed, animal-like aggression, which he himself admits to, is also demonstrated in his relationship with Tildy. Clearly not a fan of the servant girl (perhaps because he views her as a competitor for the boy's affection), Remus, at one point, catches her in a lie to bring the boy home with her. In anger, he bellows: Well, is anybody year de beat er dat! ... Look yer, gal! Don't you com foolin' 'longer me—now, don you do it. Kazxe ef you does, I'll taken'n' hit you a clip w'at'll put you ter bed 'fo' bed-time comes. Dat's w'at (244). Despite the threat of violence, Tildy responds to Remus' charges with feigned innocence that recalls the sly talk of the animals in the tales that follow.

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characters would tell their own tales and interact with one another in a manner that would at times become frightening exhibitions in and of themselves.

Perhaps the most unusual change of all is the fact that unlike his previous tales, these were to be set "before the war." What is particularly odd about this change is that the characters of Uncle Remus and the little boy remain the same people and the same age (though placing the setting back would mean the boy was no longer the son of a northerner and Miss Sally, but of Miss Sally and a man referred to as Mars' Jeems). Apparently, such interchangability suggests that Harris felt the post-war situation (as he wished to imagine it) was not much different from the "ole days" and moving his tales back in time would only grant them more authenticity. This move into the imagined past, as Eric Sundquist has argued (326-27), also lends an air of universality to his tales, catering to readers nostalgic for a simpler, less fractious age. While true, I would add that the move also shows the degree to which white southerners felt increasingly comfortable to write about their undisguised preference for "the ole days" in a leading northern-based magazine. Whatever the reasoning behind this move, its effect was to provide yet another layering of distance in which to more freely show black life as inherently nightmarish.

The symbolic violence latent in these tales is evident in many ways including the fact that Uncle Remus often has in his hand a razor-sharp knife. One night, for example, the little boy watches as "Uncle Remus busied himself in cutting and trimming some sole-leather for future use. His knife was so keen, and the leather fell away from it so smoothly and easily, that the little boy wanted to trim some himself" (344). Uncle Remus denies the boy's request arguing that children shouldn't always copy what they see other people doing. The warning implied in this lesson is reinforced by the castration story that follows, in which "Brer B'ar

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git his tail broke off smick-smack-smoove" (246) for mimicking the actions of his friends. The larger lesson, of course, is that a threat of white emasculation looms whenever a black is left unattended.

In the succeeding tale, Remus tells of how Brer Rabbit fooled Mr. Man into tying a string around a piece of meat and then replaced it with a rock, so he could keep the food for himself. Adding irony to the tale is that prior to its telling, Uncle Remus has just swapped the boy's dinner for some yams. Though unaware that he himself has been "suckered," the little boy does confront his friend about the immorality of Brer Rabbit's actions in the tale by asking: "Uncle Remus, wasn't that stealing?" The old man replies in terms that function self-referentially: "In dem days de creeturs bleedz ter look out fer deyse'f, mo' speshually dem w'at aint got hawn an huff. Brer Rabbit aint got no hawn an huff, en he bleedz ter be he own lawyer" (348). Suggesting that being weak allows a bending of the rules, this episode emphasizes the stark divide between black and white morality. It also provides another clear warning to the readers of *Scribner's-Century* that blacks must remain under constant surveillance, a point reiterated in the interactions of Daddy Jack and Tildy that follow.

Described as a "genuine African ...weazened [and] dwarfish [in] appearance" (611), Daddy Jack (or African Jack) was brought to the sea islands of Georgia on a slave-ship from Africa when he was just twenty. At the time of the Harris' tale, Jack is the "trusted foreman" of a plantation some distance away, which he is able to leave once a year to visit his good friend. In Remus' cabin, African Jack is pressed to tell his own tales in Gullah dialect, but it is his adventures pursuing Tildy, which often provide the greatest entertainment. In one instance, after repeated comments to the effect that Tildy is "mighty likely," his friend suggests that he act on his impulses. Rather than "speck de gal gwine ter drap right span in

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um," Remus advises that if "Man want gal, he des got ter grab 'er" (613). The advice, apparently, is heeded. Several hours after African Jack has left the cabin, Tildy bursts in and threatens the owner:

> Now, Unk' Remus, you oughtn't ter do me dat a-way, kaze I aint done nothin' ter youl. I'usz settin' up yon' in Aunt Tempy house, des now, runnin' on wid Riah, en yer come dat ole Affikin Jack en say you say he kin marry me ef he ketch me, en he try ter put he arm 'roun' me en kiss me.' (613)

Shortly after this speech is begun, Daddy Jack flies in. Intending to once again pounce on Tildy, he instead "fell upon Uncle Remus' shoe-bench, and then rolled off on the floor, where he lay clutching at the air, and talking so rapidly that nobody could understand a word he said" (613).

Aside from its slapstick hilarity (recalling the misadventures of Brer Terrapin who also lands on his back on occasion), African Jack's pursuit of Tildy has its dark undertones. Like the knife that Uncle Remus wields which suggest dormant violence, the actions of his friend serve to demonstrate how black men, when not *under* control are *out* of control, ready to commit violence or rape without provocation.[218]

The notion that blacks must be both watched and cared for paternalistically is perhaps best captured in Harris' widely acclaimed "Free Joe and the Rest of the World" (29: 117-124;

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[218] The nightmarish world of Uncle Remus' cabin is perhaps best captured by Tildy's rendition of "A Ghost Story." The tale, originally provided by Mark Twain, discusses how a nameless man becomes casually acquainted to a nameless gal, who one day "tuck sick en die" (618). The man proceeds to notify her parents, who arrive to perform a cursory funeral rite, which involves placing "two great big roun' shiny silver dollars on 'er eyes." Before they leave, the deceased parents tell the man to dig a grave for the woman, which he does, but not before claiming the dollars for himself. The man then places the dollars for safekeeping in a tinbox. One night as he is sleeping, he hears the coins rattling and then the words: "Gim me my money! Oh, who got my money?" At this point in the tale, Tildy turns to African Jack and screams "'You got my money!" causing the wizened old man to topple over to a room full of laughter. Though Aunt Tempy warns Tildy that for this act "He 'witch you, sho," the latter responds: "Ef he come witchin' 'roun' me, I lay, I break his back. I tell you dat, right pine-blank" (619). As this episode suggests, the vengeful world of Brer Rabbit and the world within Uncle Remus cabin are one.

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Nov. 1884).[219] Set in what appears to be the present, in the "little Georgian village of Hillsborough," the tale begins on a note of concern by describing Free Joe as "a black atom, drifting hither and thither, without an owner, blown about by all the winds of circumstance and given over to shiftlessness." The narrator's tone only darkens, for Free Joe

> was the embodiment of that vague and mysterious danger that seemed to be forever lurking on the outskirts of slavery, ready to sound a shrill and ghostly signal in the impenetrable swamps and steal forth under the midnight stars to murder, rapine, and pillage; a danger always threatening, and yet never assuming shape; intangible, and yet real; impossible, and yet not improbable. (117)

As the above passage shows, Harris plays on readers' fears by employing the flip side of Page's happy-go-lucky stereotype of the smiling, contented black to describe his protagonist.

The narrator next shifts his attention to the "brief, but tragical" course of events leading up to Joe's hapless condition. In this history, the reader is introduced to the type of person Harris blames for causing the Civil War: Major Compton, the faux aristocrat who both owns and traffics in slaves.[220] After corrupting the young men of the town with whisky and his black concubines, Compton next engages the local magistrate, Judge Alfred Wellington, in what would come to be known locally as "the great game of poker" [Figure 32]. Resembling Uncle Sam "with a flowing white beard and mild blue eyes that gave him the appearance of a benevolent patriarch" (118) the Judge, possessing hands that were "invincible," offers his opponent little chance of victory. Yet, the proud Major foolishly

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[219] In addition to "Free Joe" and his Uncle Remus tales, Gilder also published Harris' "Plantation Ballads" (May, 1882 and January, 1883), "At Teague Poteet's: A Story of the Hog Mountain Range" (June, 1883), "Trouble on Lost Mountain" (January, 1886), "Little Compton" (April, 1887), and "Azalia" (1887).

[220] It is significant to note that Joel Chandler Harris, born into a working-class family and working his way into middle-class respectability, had class allegiances far different than the well-born Allen and Page. Much of his fiction therefore is in sympathy with working-class Southerners such as his novella "At Teague Poteet's" (May 1883) in which the protagonist, an illegal whisky distiller, announces: "Them air Restercrats kin go wher' they dan please; I'm a gwine to stay right slam-bang in the United States" (139).

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refuses to back down and, by the end of the game, all of "his money, his horses, his wagons, and all his negroes, but one...." are lost.

Following the game, Major Compton calmly files the necessary papers to free Joe and proceeds to "blow out his brains" (119). What follows next is a symbolic replaying of Reconstruction in which the "benevolent patriarch" Wellington becomes Joe's guardian. Harris' views of this ideologically contested period are evident in his depiction of Joe at this time. As the author writes:

> For several years Free Joe had what may be called a jovial time. His wife Lucinda was well provided for, and he found it a comparatively easy matter to provide for himself; so that, taking all the circumstances into consideration, it is not matter for astonishment that he became somewhat shiftless. (119)

In consideration of the above passage, Free Joe's experience as a freed slave, upon the death of his guardian (read as the end of Reconstruction) is predictable. Almost immediately, a forlornness sets in as he comes to realize "that though he was free he was more helpless than any slave ... negroes who had friends because they had masters" (120). Without steady employment, friends, or conjugal outlets, Free Joe becomes the embodiment of northern and southern elites' grimmest nightmare: a masterless black man with great cause for vengeance and little to lose by engaging in criminal acts. "Shabby in the extreme" (121) his grimy invalidism perhaps assuages white fear that he might even have the power to revenge himself on society [Figure 33]. But just to be certain, Harris frees society of Free Joe with his death. Like the murder of Hay's Offitt, the demise of a truly free black, it seems likely, brought with it only relief to *Century's* readers.

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The 1890s: "Jump Back, Honey, Jump Back"

The final decade of the nineteenth century was an inauspicious one for African Americans, 255 of whom were lynched in 1892, up from twelve in 1872 (Wagner 49). As Eric Sundquist writes, the 1890s also marked the legal formalization of racial segregation. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) the Supreme Court culminated its "long assault" (Sundquist 237) on the Fourteenth Amendment. Originally granting blacks full rights as citizens, the bill had been steadily weakened by the *Slaughterhouse Cases* of 1873, *United States v. Reese* (1876), *United States v. Cruikshank* (1876), and *United States v. Harris* (1883).[221] This formal naturalization of the inherent difference of blacks and whites was paralleled in the pages of *The Century*. Whereas the magazine in the 1870s and 1880s had at times counterbalanced its coterie of southern apologist writers with the work of those who saw through their ideology (including James in *The Bostonians*, Twain in *Huckleberry Finn* and Cable in his Creole fiction), by the 1890s, it was clear that the editors' aspirations for sectional union were to be indistinguishable from Old South nostalgia and social policy.[222]

Clearly the most dramatic reflection of *Century's* rejection of northern idealism in favor of what essentially amounted to southern conservativism (a shift brilliantly discussed in Louis Menand's recent book *The Metaphysical Club*) was the decline of interest in the work of George Washington Cable. Condemning the South's rigid caste system and ill treatment of blacks, obliquely at first in his "Old" Creole tales and more directly in *The Grandissimes*

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[221] As a consequence of the Supreme Court's indifference to black rights, in 1890, Mississippi introduced the first poll tax and, in 1898, Louisiana instituted the "grandfather clause," both effective measures designed to suppress the black vote.

[222] A notable exception to *Century's* preference, in the 90s, for Southern apologists is the publication of Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. (Dec. '93-June '94). As with *Huckleberry Finn*, this work was published less because the work was ideally suited to the magazine, but because Twain's enormous popularity essentially demanded that the editors accept his work. Not surprisingly, this fairly radical "race" novel came under severe editorial scrutiny. In addition, despite the novel's stance that racial traits stem from nurture rather than nature, the illustrations are clearly "essentialist" in the Plantation Myth tradition.

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and *Dr. Sevier*, this once favored son had proved to be too shrill for a magazine increasingly committed to southern appeasement. In his place, *The Century* showcased a new batch of southern talent including Virginia Frazer Boyle, Richard Malcolm Johnston, Mary Johnston, J. A. Macon, Julia Pickering, F. Hopkinson Smith (famed for his *Colonel Carter of Cartersville*), Ruth McEnery Stuart, and numerous others, all of whom perpetuated the structural racism and class biases, hardly discouraged by Gilder and his associates. Also included in this neo-conservative pool was another New Orleans artist by the name of Grace King and the black poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, whose appearance in the magazine make for particularly interesting case studies in the study of ideology and the uses of sentimentality in the guise of Realism.

Born into a wealthy southern family prior to the War, Grace King experienced first-hand the trauma of the conflict as it effected her class of people and would never entirely forgive the North for the transformations it incited. As a girl of nine, she witnessed the usurpation of her ancestral home by Federal troops and, for many years thereafter, suffered with her once proud family great poverty and humiliation. Many commentators suggest that maltreatment by northern officers and the inability of southern men to protect King against the enemy serve as the impetus behind her many strong and independent women characters. It is worth pointing out, however, that these themes would have probably remained latent were it not for the arrival of the Cotton Centennial Exposition (1884-1886) to New Orleans, which brought with it important literary figures including Richard Watson Gilder, Charles Dudley Warner, and Julia Ward Howe.

During the two-year exposition, Howe initiated a literary discussion group known as "the Pan-Gnostics," which King began attending. At Howe's instigation King soon put her

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thoughts on paper for the first time in a paper entitled "The Heroines of Novels." At a dinner party around this time, King was also introduced to Gilder (Bush 7). From King, the editor of America's leading genteel magazine wished to know the reasons Cable was so disliked by his townspeople. "I hastened to enlighten him," King in her memoirs later wrote, to the effect that Cable proclaimed his preference for colored people over white and assumed the inevitable superiority—according to his theories—of the quadroons over the Creoles. He was a native of New Orleans and had been well treated by its people, and yet he stabbed the city in the back, as we felt, in a dastardly way to please the northern press. (qtd. in Bush 8) In response, Gilder challenged his new friend to write something "better."

Though the first story King submitted to *The Century* ("Monsier Motte") was rejected (but ultimately published in the *New Princeton Review*), Gilder was more enthusiastic upon receiving a series of relatively short, compact tales that would come to be known as the *Balcony Stories*. Mostly he was struck by the author's deft, realistic style and the distinctive manner in which she captured upper-class Creole life in present day New Orleans. On the other hand, he worried that the tone and subject matter might be "perhaps too strong meat ... for public ears" (Taylor 66). In addition to the cynicism attached to many of the pieces, Gilder probably also had reservations about the vitriol the author occasionally directed at men (recalling perhaps the problems he had had with Frances Hodgeson Burnett's decidedly feminist *Through One Administration* several years earlier).[223] To help remedy the problem, he asked that King write a preface to her stories which would explain that the tales were essentially told "by women for women" on summer nights on private balconies. As

[223] Defending against potentially volatile material (i.e. works that on the surface did not seem to fit into the pattern of "family reading") via prefaces or afterwords was not new. Gilder, for example, quickly commissioned T.S. Perry to review *and* explain the literary aspects of Huckleberry Finn shortly after installments had appeared in the magazine ("Huckleberry Finn" May 1885). This decision was clearly a result of the debate beginning to circulate concerning the effect of the book on America's youth.

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Helen Taylor points out, excluded as audience members were to be those generally not invited into this private sphere, namely men and "sleeping children" (66).

Most of the tales have as their main characters widows, spinsters, and orphans, and are concerned, as David Kirby writes, with the themes of "male fallibility, female strength in the face of despair, [and] the need for female solidarity in a world of unreliable men" (40). Important to the purposes of this essay are the additional points that all traffic in nostalgia for the past and often pledge racial, caste, as well as regional superiority.

The first balcony story to succeed the preface is "La Grande Demoiselle" (45: 323-327; Jan. 1893) which can be read as a direct repudiation of Cable's "Madame Délicieuse," which had appeared in the magazine in August of 1875 (an amazing twenty years later!). In Cable's politically and socially progressive tale, the author tells how the eponymous character secretly rebels against her Creole father Hercule Mossy de Villivicencio, who is running a gubernatorial campaign that promises voters "a blessed homecoming of those good old Bourbon morals and manners which Yankee notions had expatriated" (502). In a series of newspaper articles, the daughter mocks the party as "the Cray-Fish Eaters' Ticket" helping to contribute to its defeat. By the end of the tale, the father learns of his daugher's disloyalty, but harbors no ill will towards her and accepts that times have changed for the better. King in her essay, on the other hand, presents a fervently unreconstructed Creole belle, who has lived through the "atrocities" of the Civil War and Reconstruction never to forget them or forgive those responsible. Whereas Cable's point was to demonstrate the rightful passing of southern plantation ideology, King's paints this passage as tragic for all southerners, white *and* black (but especially for southern belles).

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The tale begins by discussing the antebellum existence of one Mademoiselle Idalie Sainte Foy Mortemart des Islets, the grandest of all the grand heiresses of New Orleans. Beautiful, rich, and able to trace her bloodlines to French royalty, this favorite of fortune lived on a plantation renown for its

> stately walls, acres of roses, miles of ranges, unmeasured fields of can, [and] colossal sugar-house [in] ease, idleness, extravagance, self-indulgence, pomp, pride, arrogance, in short the whole enumeration, the moral *sine qua non*, as some people considered it, of the wealthy slaveholder of aristocratic descent. (323)

After another page of accolades, King comes to her by now obvious conclusion: "That she was admired, raved about, loved even, goes without saying" (324).

With the War, however, came change. Hinting at her own dismay over the abandonment of her by her male protectors, King writes that Idalie's father died in the very first engagement. Especially horrific was the fact that when the city was overrun by Federal troops, the family manor was "selected to receive a contingent of troops—a colored company." As the "officers were always off duty when they should have been on, and on when they should have been off," the plantation soon caught fire. Playing on the fear of black males as rapists and thieves then gaining currency throughout white America, the author makes the point that the women were "seized in their beds" and carried out "in the arms of their enemies" (324), while others plundered for household belongings.

After essentially disappearing from public view for ten years, Idalie is spotted by Old Champigny described as a *noveaux pauvres* (in the context of this story, one who has made his money collaborating with northern Carpetbaggers). Intrigued by this woman "hidden by a green barege veil" (326), the old man eventually realizes that the woman is none other than *La Grande Demoiselle* who has been a teacher at a school for freedmen. So ignoble is this

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woman's fate ("it makes one blush to name it" the author writes, 326), the old man marries her out of charity, for the beneath the veil Idalie's face has been left "long, sallow, petrified."

In this tale clearly aimed at its women readers (as the preface suggests), King touches on a theme well-known to the literature of moral reform before the war: the fallen woman (Reynolds 361-363). Unlike the work of Sylvester Judd (in *Margaret*, 1845), George Foster (in *New York by Gas-Light*, 1850) and Hawthorne (in *The Scarlet Letter*), the violators of southern women in King's fiction are not male seducers, but (when not specifically black men) history itself. Also distinguishing her work are the choices its female protagonists face: they must either fend for themselves or become charity cases. As the author tries to show, the problem with the "New" South is that "naturally" superior women have lost their due place in society, supplanted by the crasser classes, and far worse, blacks.

The desire to return blacks to the state of subjugation is made manifest in the subsequent tale entitled a "Crippled Hope" (46: 374-380; July 1893). Stylistically influenced by Flaubert, thematically the tale recalls Harris' "Free Joe and the Rest of the World," only King focuses on the "tragedy" of a freed*woman*. The cripple of the story is "Little Mammy," an African slave who is never given a name. As King explains, her lame leg, the result of her mother dropping her on the floor as a baby, prevents her from being sold. Quickly, however, she proves her worth to the slave traders, for the superior nursing she provides the mother and children they are selling. Though her own greatest wish is for "some master whom she could have loved, some mistress whom she could have adored" (378), she remains a devoted sick nurse to slaves up until the war.

One night Federal soldiers, "whose accents reminded her of the negro-trader" (379), enter the slave hall and bid her to disembark. She was now free, but as King points out

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> she had not hoped for freedom. For days she crawled the streets of New Orleans hopeless and alone: An ownerless free negro! She knew no one whose duty it was to help her; no one knew her to help her. In the whole world ... there was not white child to call her mammy, no white lady or gentleman (it was the extent of her dreams) beholden to her as to a nurse. (379)

Eventually, Mammy leaves town and finds happiness. On the outskirts of New Orleans was a village filled with sick and ailing white women, "a kind of a refuge for soldier's wives and widows." As King writes, her protagonist "never traveled further" [Figure 34].

Throughout her remaining tales, King continued to speak of life after the Civil War as a poor substitute for the near paradise that had preceded it. Yet, despite the hardship, her white heroines bear their suffering with forbearance. In "Mimi's Marriage" (45: 493-97; Feb. 1893), for example, a beautiful belle accepts her fate that now she is now poor, she must marry a Yankee even though he is "a blond, and not good-looking, and small!"

In the "Old Lady's Restoration" (46:724-28; Sept. 1893), a former "first lady" is rumored to have been restored to her fortune. When her pre-War acquaintances come to congratulate her, they learn of their mistake, but are more shocked upon realizing that the woman seems to have adjusted well to "good five-cent bouillon," "cotton chemises," and her working-class neighbors. The illustrations accompanying the tale (juxtaposing "the past" with "the present"), however, make manifest the author's underlying sentiments [Figs. 35 and 36].

In all of these tales, King's point is to emphasize that what is lost cannot be regained; in adversity southern women's best option is to exhibit fortitude and resilience in the hopes of a better day. For her black and mulatto characters, the post Civil War era is also a fall from grace; without proper guardianship, they are prone to misdeeds or are ill at ease like the

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protagonist of "The Little Covent Girl," who drowns herself upon discovering that her mother is black.[224]

By the 1890s the racial fictions perpetrated by King and others of the Plantation Myth school had become reality in the minds of most white Americans, so much so that the black poet Paul Laurence Dunbar, in order to achieve prominence as an author, would be unable to break from the demands of portraying blacks as contented, loyal, and different from (and thus inferior to) whites. What is particularly interesting about Dunbar, however, is that at first he did not seem to want to break from the literary standards and expectations of genteel magazines, but carefully studied their pages for modeling his own writing. While it is generally known that the primary influences on Dunbar were the classics and Alfred Tennyson, less attention is given to the significant fact from the moment he decided to be a "writer," *The Century* was always at his side ("not missing a single issue" as one of his biographers writes).

While it is clear, as several critics confirm (Wagner 106), that Dunbar had read Irwin Russell, Thomas Nelson Page, and Joel Chandler Harris, most influential of the *Century* writers was the poet James Whitcomb Riley. A key figure in the Regionalist movement raging during the last quarter of the nineteenth century (of which the Plantation Myth school was a sub-genre), Indiana's poet laureate published over fifty poems in *The Century*. Harkening back to pre-industrial America and looking to the common folk as a source of

[224] This tale could be considered a rewriting of another Cable tale, "'Tite Poulette." In contrast to King's "tragic" mulatto theme, the discovery of black blood by Cable's protagonist does not prevent her from marrying the white man of her dreams.

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purity and inspiration, Riley's poems, flush with populist sentiment, sentimental love scenes, and colloquial speech,[225] were perhaps the most popular America has ever produced.

Dunbar's *Century* poems are very much in the tradition of Riley, though almost all of them have blacks for their central characters and are written in African American vernacular.[226] Like Riley, Dunbar, for example, has his share of courtship poems. In "Lover's Lane" (56: 958; Oct. '98) a young lover hopes that a beautiful trail exists for him and his lady in heaven. Dunbar's paeans to domestic bliss such as "At Candle-Lightin' Time" (54: 156; May '97) also recall his mentor. In this particular poem we overhear the protagonist speak of "de happy hours dat foller ... when I come in f'om de co'n-fiel aftah wukin' ha'd all da" (156). In "Foolin' Wif de Seasons" (54: 960; Oct. '97) Dunbar privileges life on the farm to the cares and tribulations associated with the city, another common refrain in Regionalist writing. In it, the protagonist, a black rustic, asks: "Why don't foks quit movin' forrard? Ain't it better jest to stan',/An be satisfied wif livin' in de season dat's at han'?" (960)

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[225] The son of parents who had been Kentucky slaves (his father Joshua had escaped a plantation via the Underground Railroad and had fought as a Union soldier), Dunbar had been a model student (and the sole black one) in Dayton High School in Ohio and had even published two poems in the local newspaper at the age of 16. Unable to afford higher education, Dunbar had accepted a position as elevator boy, which though it only earned 4 dollars allowed him time to read his precious books and magazines. In June, 1892, a former teacher arranged that he recite some of his poems before the Western Writers Association which led him to publish his first book *Oak and Ivy*. Following a trip to the Chicago *World's Fair* (where he had found work in the Haitian pavilion), Dunbar learned that his first poems had been accepted by Century, which helped him find a publisher (and backers) for his next book *Majors and Minors* famously prefaced by William Dean Howells.

[226] It should be kept in mind that Dunbar like all *Century* writers were writing for a particular venue with a particular audience in mind and thus his use of dialect makes sense for the time. Interestingly, one of his dialect poems appears next to "The Dialect Store" (53: 958; April '97), a metacritical essay satirizing the fact that in order to appear in the magazines, American writers were essentially required to add a "dose" of dialect. In it, the author discusses the actual store where various dialects (from Swedish to Scotch to Yankee to German to French-Canadian) can be found. The largest department is the Negro department, a favorite of "Tawmas Nelson Page ... de fustes' one ter see how much folks was dyin' ter git a leetle di'lect..." Entirely sold out is the "Western dialect" department, for James Whitcomb Riley had "just engaged the whole output of the plant" (959).

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As the previous line suggests, what distinguishes Dunbar from Riley is the very fact that his characters are black. Indeed, rather than merely set the country and the city in opposition (symbolically the pleasant past from the chaotic present), Dunbar's poems take on an obvious racial dimension, a dimension made especially clear in the context of a magazine well-known for its Plantation Myth propaganda. Given the context of, say, E. W. Kemble's cartoon "The Possum Hunt" [Figure 37], "Foolin' Wif de Seasons" cannot merely be read as a poem about different points of view, but about different types of races, i.e. "lazy," "irrational," "foolish" blacks versus superior whites who "plot an' plan" (960).

While the sheer lyricism and rhythm of much of Dunbar's work in dialect alone should dispel notions of black inferiority, it remains difficult to defend the poetry on racially progressive terms. Though a strong case can be made that the poet does often present his black characters humanely and positively and that notes of protest against racism are occasionally sounded, the problem such a defense encounters is that Dunbar himself quite frequently promotes racial stereotypes associated with the Plantation Myth tradition. In "Candle Lightin' Time," for example, the black protagonist looks forward to finish working, not simply because it is against his true nature, but so he can play his Banjo. In "On the Road" (April '97) the black poet longs to get home to his lover, but is most concerned that it is getting dark (of which he is desperately afraid). His frequent association of blacks and possums in a comic vein is equally disconcerting to the modern reader. The central point of "Possum"(March '98), for example, is expressed by a black speaker who pities "White folks [who] t'ink dey know 'bout eatin'" when in fact: "dey ain't a tong dey knows of/Dat I reckon cain't be beat/When we set down at de table /To a unkun posum's meat!" (799)

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The notion that blacks not only talk and eat differently, but court differently is also made manifest in Dunbar's *Century* poems. In "A Coquette Conquered" (July '96) a black man named Sam tries to make overtures to his "gal," who rejects him until she finds out she has brought him a possum [Figure 38]. Another poem suggesting that, in love, blacks are concerned with baser concerns than the supposedly "pure" mating practices of white Victorians is "A Frolic" (Oct. '99). Recalling the more aggressive antics of Daddy Jack towards Tildy in "Night With Uncle Remus," a slave looks forward to the fact that his master is going to be away for a few days and duly warns "Miss Luck" that she will "be cotchedt an' kissed/'Fo' de night is done" (968). Even the exquisitely rendered "Negro Love Song" (April '95) takes on negative racial implications when read in the context of the plantation myth writings swarming *The Century* at this time. In this poem, a black man escorts his lover home and anticipates the pleasures he will soon encounter by echoing the refrain "Jump back, honey, jump back":

> Put my ahm aroun' huh wais',
> Jump back, honey, jump back.
> Raised huh lips an' tuck a tas'e,
> Jump back, honey, jump back. (960)

Despite the rhythmic elegance and exquisite sensuality of this poem, the known racial make-up of the author and its serial context even here transform art into sociology.

The cage that racist America in the Victorian era had built for itself as well as for its first black poet to reach a national audience is only now becoming apparent. As Gavin Jones writes, even so prescient a reader as William Dean Howells could not undo the shackles of race thinking when introducing Dunbar's second book of poems. In discussing his dialect poems, many of which had just appeared in *The Century,* the preeminent editor and novelist saved his greatest praise for the "range" they exhibited "between appetite and emotion"

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(xviii) that is to say their alleged "blackness." Dunbar, for his part, too was caged, "caught in a theory of literature and an institutional matrix tragically inadequate to his poetic resources (qtd. in Jones 206). In order to reach a wide audience, he had to continue producing dialect poems and utilizing black subjects (even as he preferred writing in a more classical style on an open range of broadly literary topics). Yet, no matter what pitch of greatness these poems achieved (and many of them *are* aesthetic masterpieces), they would inevitably be considered the work of a "black" artist. Eventually, Dunbar would find respite from the pressures of the public in publishing the brilliant naturalist novel *The Sport of the Gods*, but in doing so, he found, like George Washington Cable, that both his mainstream audience and the support of genteel publishers were, by and large, gone. By the turn of the century, the refrain "Jump back, honey, jump back" would refer not to black joy and release, but to the reactionary racial policy of a "new" America, to which *The Century* had clearly contributed over a thirty year period.

Conclusion(s)

In a speech frequently presented at literary events in the early 1890s entitled "The Development of Southern Literature," Richard Watson Gilder argued that the fiction of postbellum southern writers appearing in his magazine were in reaction to the unreality of an earlier literary epoch. In contrast to the "old wax-flowery, amateur provincial manner" of antebellum southern writers, writers such as English, Harris, and Page, Gilder posited, wrote with a "delicate and constant humor of the range and development of character, subtly portrayed; of the vivid setting of the landscape and manifest delight in nature." In addition to

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its alleged realism, Gilder also stressed the importance of the reconciliatory nature of this literature:

> We are all Americans; all now and for the first time truly fellow countrymen. It is well for the North, it is well for the nation to hear in poem and story all that the South burns to tell of her romance, her heroes, her landscape, yes, even of her lost cause—one of the greatest, most touching tragedies in the history of humanity...

As Gilder's words demonstrate, the work of the Plantation Myth school was not viewed as biased, but, to use a nineteenth century term then in regular use, "truthful." Interestingly, in aligning the Realist movement to the clearly sentimental Plantation School, Gilder makes a claim just beginning to be considered in American Realism studies today. As Kenneth W. Warren notes, Realism's foremost trait in the Victorian era of genteel publishing was less the rendering of accurate socio-cultural details than attending to the appropriate political aims of the elite. As the subsequent chapter will show in yet greater detail, "hard facts," ultimately, were those evidencing that white upper-class males had the wisdom and natural ability to lead, whereas "sentimentality" was, to a large extent, the refusal to accept this power arrangement.

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CHAPTER VII: READING THE WAR OF *THE CENTURY*, NOVEMBER 1884-NOVEMBER 1887

In the mushy influence of current times ... the real war will never get in the books.

Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days (1882)*

In March of 1893, having already written *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*, which failed commercially but received some significant critical attention,[227] Stephen Crane decided that his next novel would concern the Civil War, about which "nobody had really written" (Beer 25). Intent upon researching his subject matter, he borrowed from a friend several volumes of *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* containing the series "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." Ten days later he returned the volumes with the following note: "Thank you very much for letting me keep these so long. I have spent ten nights writing a story of the war on my own responsibility, but I am not sure that my facts are real and the books won't tell me what I want to know, so I must do it all over again, I guess" (Beer 32).[228] As his biographer Thomas Beer notes, this letter marked the birth of *The Red Badge of Courage*, considered to be the finest war novel of the nineteenth century by an American.

Crane's claim that *Century Magazine* failed to provide him with the necessary material for composing an "authentic" war tale is curious, when one considers that its war

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[227] Although William Dean Howells, the reigning critic of the day, praised the author of *Maggie* for "offering the best tough dialect which has yet found its way into print," the manuscript was rejected by several publishing housing including The Century Company on account of being "too honest." Crane eventually published the novel using a small sum of money he inherited from his aunt (qtd. in Davis 62).

[228] Linda Davis's recent biography, *Badge of Courage: The Life of Stephen Crane*, tells this anecdote somewhat differently. She claims that Crane read the Civil War issues of *The Century* while staying in the apartment of the artist Corwin Linson. Her account of Crane's response, however, is similar to Beer's version. After reading several volumes, Davis writes that the author "Finally ... tossed a magazine aside, and got to his feet. 'I wonder that *some* of these fellows don't tell how they *felt* in those scraps!' he said. 'They spout eternally of what they *did*, but they are emotionless as rocks!'" (63).

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accounts were written by Civil War veterans. In 1884 the editors had invited former soldiers and officers from both the Union and Confederate armies to record their reminiscences of major battles. As later recounted by associate editor Robert Underwood Johnson, the series

> included contributions from nearly all the surviving officers of high command on both sides of the struggle—Grant, Sherman, McClellan, Pope, Rosecrans, Franklin and many others on the Union side, with Beauregard, Joseph E. Johnston, Longstreet, Hill, Wheeler, Law, and other leaders of the Confederates on the other. (Johnson 190)

According to *Century's* editor-in-chief, Richard Watson Gilder, the purpose of these submissions was North and South reconciliation: "to gain respect for each other, which is the strongest bond of a united people" (October 1884: 944). In addition to allegedly attending to the social good of the nation, "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" proved to be a financial bonanza unparalleled in the history of American magazine publishing. Evidencing its popularity and economic success, *Century*'s war series continued to appear for three more years during which time magazine subscriptions more than doubled (from 122,000 to over 250,000), its middle-class readership ballooned to an estimated 500,000 men and women (though it can be presumed that a large proportion of new readers were adult males, for whom the series was especially designed to attract), and revenues increased by one million dollars, an unheard of sum for any publishing endeavor before 1884 (Mott 468).

Yet, the question remains: if the "facts" in *Century Magazine's* Civil War series were not quite "real," as Crane suggests, what were the American people actually reading so avidly? Benedict Anderson, in his influential *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* helps us on our way in the pursuit of this query by noting that since the final quarter of the nineteenth century, "a vast pedagogical industry works ceaselessly to oblige young Americans to remember/forget the hostilities of 1861-65 as a

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great 'civil' war between 'brothers' rather than between—as they briefly were—two sovereign nation-states" (201). Anderson asserts that citizens of modern nations, including our own, imagine themselves as part of cohesive, continuous communities ("we the People") that originate as "breaks" in history (such as the American Revolution) and thereafter proceed along a "march of progress." Importantly, the creation of such "imagined political communities" requires a particular type of narration called "History, or rather History emplotted in particular ways" that commemorates "great deeds" and "national leaders" all the while forgetting "violent racial, class and regional antagonisms" (197-198).[229]

The years during which *The Century* ran its famous Civil War series (November 1884-November 1887) were part of a decade marked by rapid urbanization, the growth of vast, impersonal corporations, violent labor unrest, record levels of non-Protestant immigration, political corruption, unresolved racial tensions, and other modern developments that caused many white Americans of the emerging middle and upper classes "great strains of anxiety and fear" (Levine 87). As Lawrence Levine explains, for Victorian Americans, the enormous degree of "structural change" brought about by these forces often resulted in a sense of "anarchic change, of looming chaos, of fragmentation, which seemed to imperil the very basis of traditional order" (87).

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[229] Anderson's book also makes the important point that the development of modern nations first required the rise of print technologies "which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways" (36). Arguing that the Protestant Revolution could only have occurred in an age of mechanical reproduction, the author cites the rise of the English novel and the newspaper in the eighteenth century as paramount in providing "the technical means for 're-presenting' the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation" (25). In America, which Anderson touches upon with less specificity, "structural blockages to cultural unification through print" (Zboray xvii) were not overcome until the postbellum "Age of the Monthly Magazine" (Gohdes 569) which saw the emergence of the first truly "national" periodicals. It was only after the war, for example, that improvements in printing, developments in photo-engraving, and enhanced methods of distribution allowed Americans on a mass scale to both read about and "see" their nation in printed form. Significantly, the serial format of the monthly magazine itself also helped readers to imagine the nation as both progressing and possessing a narrative frame. See Ronald J. Zboray, *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public.*

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"Confirmed in (their) belief in the timeliness and expediency of a non-political discussion of the leading events in the great conflict" (29: 788; March 1885), *Century*'s editors, Independent Republicans (Mugwumps) who had become disenchanted with the radical branch of their party during the previous decade, saw "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" as a response to the social extremism, materialism, and ethnic mongrelization seeming to threaten the nation. An early manifestation of the "end of ideology" national doctrine that political theorists more commonly attribute to America after the second World War (Pease 11), *Century*'s war accounts quite clearly "covered" the past by projecting an idealized national imaginary strategically devoid of the pressing threats then haunting the genteel elite, whose views the magazine represented.

Recently, David Blight, in a brilliant book-length study, has joined Anderson in attending to the ways in which Victorian Americans confronted the past for pragmatic ends in the present. In *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, Blight discusses how "the white supremacist vision ... locked arms with reconciliationists of many kinds" to rewrite the Civil War as a "sentimental remembrance" (2) defused of ideology. Yearning for "redemptive" sectional harmony, white Americans as late as 1915 (the semicentennial of the war's end) remembered and interpreted the war as exemplifying soldierly heroism rather than as finally deciding the meaning of equality (as Lincoln seems to have hoped for in the "Gettysburg Address").

With Anderson and Blight in mind, part of this chapter explores the profound need to remember/forget the Civil War as "reassuringly fraticidal" in the pages of a magazine, perhaps our first great pedagogical corporation, determined to project a harmonious, unbroken image of national continuity. This essay also gives attention to issues relating to

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masculinity and the discourse of "whiteness" in an age of enormous gender and status anxieties, which the above authors discuss tangentially, if at all. Confronting a modern epoch in which "the power of manhood ... to wield civic authority, to control strife and unrest, and to shape the future of the nation" (Bederman 14) was under siege, Victorian American men, as *Century*'s pages show, sought a reconstruction of power and identity based on the "natural" valor and nobility believed to be associated with their gender, class, and race. The chapter's most original contribution, however, is its emphasis on resistance to the editors' pragmatic aims within *Century's* very own pages raising awareness about the complex ways literary texts appearing in periodicals function ideologically.

To complement their project of southern redemption and national harmony in the war series, *Century*'s editors carefully selected fiction and essays from both northern and southern authors (all white and predominantly male), who they believed shared their vision. Most of their contributors, especially the southerners James Lane Allen, Joel Chandler Harris, and Thomas Nelson Page, in works such as "'Uncle Tom' in Kentucky" (Oct. 1887), "Meh Lady" (June 1886), "Azalia" (June 1887), and "Free Joe and the Rest of the World" (Nov. 1884), closely conformed to their wishes. But the inclusion of Realist writers such as George Washington Cable, William Dean Howells, and the ever complex Henry James and Mark Twain threatened, at times, to compromise *Century*'s goals. Indeed, works serialized in the magazine during its Civil War series such as Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885-1886), James' *The Bostonians* (1885-1886), Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Dec. 1884, Jan., Feb. 1885) and "The Private History of a Campaign that Failed" (Dec. 1885), and Cable's "The Freedman's Case in Equity" (Nov. 1884) and "The Silent South" (Aug. 1885), often point to egregious discrepancies between *Century's* ideals of moral and

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social order and the volatile conditions actually characterizing America in the mid-1880s. Inevitably accommodating the ideology of the magazine in which they appear to some degree, these writers more frequently critiqued the aggressive, evasive nationalism found in the magazine during the war series.

In examining the fiction of *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* in the context of "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War," this chapter seeks to achieve a number of goals. First, it shows how the most influential genteel magazine of the day attempted to produce a version of history motivated by the interests of the northern intellectual elite. This white male elite, in reaction to an eroding power base, sought to align themselves with the interests of white southern Democrats, who, in turn, longed for a return to a South largely under their control. Secondly, it shows how certain literary works called into service to reinforce the magazine's nationalistic goals, at times, reacted against this mission, demonstrating, as Janet Todd writes, that though "Literature inevitably colludes with ideology ... it does not simply affirm, and it can expose and criticize as well as repeat" (86). Finally, it emphasizes the fact that while reading serial fiction between the lines and across the page of a magazine like *The Century* can show disruption in the unity and coherence of the grand narrative intended by a periodical, such subversion has its limits. The final word, as we will now see, generally rests with the folks in charge, who, as Mark Seltzer writes, may in fact *require* a degree of resistance to successfully promote their value system.[230]

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[230] Beginning with Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," the academic literature on "ideology" is enormous, yet crucial for understanding how "dominant cultures" achieve their status and power. A superb overview of this literature is discussed in Terry Eagleton's *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991). Especially helpful in informing the present discussion of how *Century Magazine* attempted to legitimate the values and beliefs of its editors, and the genteel class to which they belonged, are the *Prison Notebooks* of Antonio Gramsci. Arguing that ideology is more a matter of consent, than coercion, Gramsci shows that in order to achieve hegemony (which is neither inherently negative or positive), a group, such as the American Victorian middle-class, must diffuse its views widely so that the majority of citizens come to equate their wants with the world view of those who wish to claim leadership (moral, political, and/or intellectual). Paramount in

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The War of *The Century*

If we turn to the accounts in *Century*'s "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" which Stephen Crane read, we find a war relayed in extraordinary specificity and framed by clear and assured analysis. Unlike the evocation of chaos and flux of sensory detail characterizing the battle scenes in *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Century's* accounts come across as controlled and matter-of-fact. In "The Battle of Bull Run" (29: 80-100; Oct. 1884) by the southern General Pierre Gaston Toutant Beauregard, for example, the businesslike tone and emphasis on precise detail literally command attention:

> Soon after the first conflict between the authorities of the Federal Union and those of the Confederated States had occurred in Charleston Harbor, by the bombardment of Fort Sumter,—which, beginning at 4:30 A.M. on the 12th of April, 1861, forced the surrender of that fortress within thirty hours thereafter into my hands,—I was called to Richmond, which by that time had become the Confederate seat of government, and directed to "assume command of the Confederate troops on the Alexandria line." Arriving at Manassass Junction, I took command on the 2d of June, forty-nine days after the evacuation of Fort Sumter by Major Anderson .... (80)

Aiding his fact-filled narrative, General Beauregard has under his charge an enormous arsenal of authenticating material. With the assistance of battle maps [Figure 39], engravings of encampments, battle sketches allegedly "studied from photographs taken in the field" (82), portraits of the "major" players, and telegrams and war orders transcribed verbatimly, Beauregard presents a scrupulously detailed rendition of who did what, where, when, and in precisely what manner. We learn, for example, the exact number of soldiers and artillery under his command (6,537 men and thirteen pieces of artillery) as well as the

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"defending and developing the theoretical or ideological 'front'," Gramsci writes, "is the press in general: publishing houses (which have an implicit and explicit programme and are attached to a particular tendency), political newspapers, periodicals of every kind, scientific, literary, philological, popular, etc., various periodicals down to parish bulletins" (Gramsci 389-90).

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statistics of his enemy. We also read—seemingly play-by-play—descriptions of military strategies and the extent to which they succeed or fail.

Accompanying the General's relentlessly thorough (so it seems) documentation of Confederate resistance to the first large Union offensive of the war are philosophical asides and imperious declarations which serve as a kind of modern-day sport's commentary. For example, after describing how a newly formed northern regiment was routed despite "all material advantages, including superior numbers...." (85), the author explains that

> The Federal attack ... failed for two reasons: their forces were not handled with concert of masses ... and the individual action of the Confederate troops was superior, notwithstanding inferiority in numbers, arms, and equipments, and for a very palpable reason. That one army was fighting for union and the other for disunion is a political expression; the actual fact on the battle-field, in the face of cannon and musket, was that the Federal troops came as invaders, and the Southern troops stood as defenders of their homes, and further than this we need not go. (85)

In order to fulfill *Century's* agenda of reconciling regional differences, the editors deemed it necessary to raise the defeated South onto equal terms with the northern victor. One way of achieving this objective was not only to let the South have its say, but also to allow its spokespersons to wax eloquently and proudly. Clearly, this is one of the effects of showpiecing General Beauregard's gallant war narrative. Appropriate to this aim, the narrative concludes with the suggestion that the South was less an inferior opponent in the war than a player who, in fact, caused its own defeat:

> The South did not fall crushed by the mere weight of the North; but it was nibbled away at all sides and ends because its executive head never gathered and wielded its great strength under the ready advantages that greatly reduced or neutralized its adversary's naked physical courage, and that the passive defensive policy may make a long agony, but can never win a war. (86)

In General Beauregard's "Battle of Bull Run," we have, I believe, what the novelist/editor William Dean Howells calls in an essay on literary Realism: "a heaping up of

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facts merely, which maps life rather than pictures it" (*Harper's Magazine*, 973; May 1886). Behind the maps, statistics, and bombast, there seems to be little probing beyond the external facts of the war. Lacking in Beauregard's narrative, for example, are the gruesome details of war beyond statistics of the dead such as actual depiction of carnage and the psychological misgivings of those involved. Any mention of ignoble acts or of the political issues at stake is also avoided.[231] As Crane so readily noticed, in its windy rhetoric, emphasis on statistics, and illustrations of majestic men and illustrious battles, Beauregard's submission, like the majority of *Century's* over three hundred and fifty war accounts, serve less to capture the essence of lived experience and to portray the conflict *as* a conflict, than to fabricate history in glowing terms.

An idealized portrait of the war and its actors is especially apparent in the account of Shiloh by the son of Confederate General Sidney Johnston, who was mortally wounded during this campaign. Typical of Victorian hagiography, the account begins with a highly romantic description of the General's physiognomy. Below his portrait we read that as a young man Johnston had a "commanding and attractive" appearance distinguished by chiseled features, "light-brown hair clustered over a noble forehead," eyes "blue as the sky," and "regular and white" teeth (Feb. 1885: 614) [Figure 40]. We also learn that he was "six feet and an inch in height" and "straight as an arrow, with broad, square shoulders and a massive chest" (614). Particularly striking about this description is the extravagant manner in which it privileges "whiteness" (even emphasizing the whiteness of his teeth!)—specifically robust Anglo-Saxonism—as an ideal standard of beauty and grandeur. From the start, this biography reveals a deep psychic need to rehabilitate southern white manhood.

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[231] As David Blight points out, "*Century* particularly resisted publishing anything about prison experience until after its war series ... had already run [its] successful course" (183).

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What further distinguishes this account of Johnston is its excessive sentimentality, which today reads as unintended camp. For example, after a series of military failures leading to "the obloquy of a whole nation" (619), the reader learns how Johnston successfully asserts his manhood in a surprise attack upon Union forces at Shiloh. Catching one of General Grant's regiments "in costumes better fitted to the bedchamber than to the battle-field" (623), Johnston pursues his advantage with a "coolness, confidence and determination ... which few men have equaled." Enhancing his romantic, selfless image, Johnston is described as being so engrossed in commanding his men that he fails to notice a leg wound caused by enemy fire. Within hours of being shot, the General dies literally "with his boots on" (in fact *because* he left them on too long before getting proper medical attention). As his son assures the reader, Johnston is entirely blameless for his soldiers' subsequent defeat, for

> In spite of opposition and prediction of failure, Johnston firmly and decidedly ordered and led the attack in the execution of his general plan, and, notwithstanding the faulty arrangement of the troops, was eminently successful up to the moment of his fall. (621)

In *Race and Reunion*, David Blight discusses the heralding of soldierly valor, as displayed in Johnston's account, during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Citing Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.'s exemplary Memorial Day Speech, "Soldier's Faith," Blight points out that many Civil War writings and speeches at the time were aimed at convincing Americans to dedicate themselves to high ideals and meaningful pursuits. According to Holmes, young men, in particular, should give up the "temptations of wallowing ease" and dedicate themselves to purposeful lives filled with soldierly virtues. As Blight writes, "Holmes offered his young auditors a secular creed that dared them to take risks, court danger, and embrace the strenuous life"

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(209). For such genteel spokespersons, Blight comments, advocating manly ideals was largely a response to the "greed of commercial cultures" seeming to overrun America at the time (209).

According to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in the *Epistemology of the Closet*, also underlying the "culture of character" which Blight discusses was a gender and identity crisis affecting large numbers of Victorian men on both sides of the Atlantic. For these individuals modernity in its many manifestations was the source of unusual "definitional stress" (146) evidenced by the remarkable number of sentimental representations of male figures in literature (such as Melville's Billy Budd and Wilde's Dorian Gray), a position traditionally reserved for women.[232] As Sedgwick writes

> What their persistence and proliferation dramatize is something new: a change of gears, occupying the period from the 1880s throughout the First World War, by which the exemplary instance of the sentimental ceases to be a woman per se, but instead becomes the body of a man who ... physically dramatizes, *embodies* for an audience that both desires and cathartically identifies with him, a struggle of masculine identity with emotions or physical stigmata stereotyped as feminine (146).

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[232] Since the appearance of Sedgwick's influential book, numerous cultural historians including Gail Bederman, Mark Carnes, Athena Devlin, Michael Kimmel, Clifford Putney, and E. Anthony Rotundo have investigated what appears to have been a gender "crisis" for American men of the Gilded Age. In *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States 1880-1917*, Bederman notes that beginning around 1820, the American middle class began to differentiate itself by "stressing its gentility and respectability," qualities highly dependent on gender differences (12). Accordingly, "true women" were to be pious, pure guardians of virtue and domesticity, whereas "true men" (charged with overseeing "the weaker sex" and engaging in public affairs) were to exhibit stoicism, gentility, and self-restraint. According to Bederman, by the 1890s, a new economic and social order had begun to emerge in which "new" women, an immigrant labor force, and the rise of the corporation challenged Victorian conceptions of manhood, leading to a society wide call for more aggressive qualities in men. As the pages of *Century* show, Sedgwick is probably more accurate in bringing America's "masculinity crisis" back a decade, albeit for a reason both Sedgwick and Bederman overlook: the emasculated status of southern white men following the Civil War and Reconstruction. Whereas southern mal aristocrats had long been viewed as effeminate by northern Republicans, as their own status began to waver, northern men sought to make southern codes of behavior appealing. For more on the reconstruction of southern masculinity, see Nina Silber's *The Romance of Reunion*, 39-65.

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Possessing exceptional beauty, courage, and nobility, loving dearly his comrades and region, and, like Little Eva in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, leaving the world prematurely as a kind of martyr, General Albert Sidney Johnston embodies a mix of manhood and vulnerability of the kind Sedgwick describes. In the context of a remembered/forgotten Civil War and the subsequent disempowerment of southern whites during Reconstruction, Johnston's biography quite clearly employs a heavy dose of sentimentality and anti-sentimentality (which, as Sedgwick suggests, are inextricably linked) largely to reinstate the authority and status of white men of the South. Equally clear, this is in exchange for the promise that former Confederates will uphold the feminine virtues of compassion and love for white northern men, with whom they hope to share the benefits of continued white supremacy [Figure 41].[233]

Not all of *Century's* accounts, however, are as awash in sentiment and glory as Johnston's biography. Balancing the Confederate account at Shiloh, for example, is a version of the battle by General Ulysses S. Grant (29: 593-614; Feb. 1885), considered by many critics to be a leading contributor to the school of American Realism in writing. Far more sober in tone than Johnston's biographer, Grant takes careful aim at setting the record straight about what he calls "one of the more persistently misunderstood [engagements] during the entire Rebellion" (593). He explains, for example, that his decision to camp out at Pittsburgh Landing "unintrenched" was based on sound principles and the claim that Confederates initially "surprised and captured [Union troops] in their camps is without foundation whatsoever." As he explains, "If it had been true ... there would not have been an all-day struggle with the loss of thousands killed and wounded on the Confederate side" (593). He also suggests that he saw little evidence demonstrating the exceptional leadership

[233] Gilder, letter to W.C.P. Breckinridge, 24 June 1885, in *Letters*, 131.

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of the famed Johnston: "Nothing occurred in his brief command of an army to prove or disprove the high estimate that had been placed upon his military ability" (593). Most significantly, he points out that southerners' frequent appeals to possible outcomes and conjecture make for shabby evidence. "There is little doubt that we would have been disgracefully beaten *if* all the shells and bullets fired by us had passed harmlessly over the enemy, and *if* all of theirs had taken effect" (609). Yet, even as Grant's prose offers a refreshing dose of relative candor and subdued realism, he too cannot help proffering the occasional bromide and waxing over the theme of reconciliation. As he concludes his contribution in terms that hint of future American imperialism: "The troops on both sides were American, and united they need not fear any foreign foe...." (609).

Apparently, Stephen Crane, in reading *Century's* war series, saw through the bombast and historical white-washing marking so many installments. Early in *Red Badge*, for example, the protagonist, Henry Fleming, overhears an officer place an order for cigars. Wondering "what a box of cigars had to do with war" (12), the private surmises that his superiors are more concerned with their own creature comforts than the cause itself. The novel's opening chapter is even more critical of the misrepresentations often accompanying top-down history. In it, Crane describes how an African-American teamster, who had been entertaining a troop of men with his dance, loses his audience, "to a certain tall soldier who was drawing a loud and elaborate plan of a very brilliant campaign" (3). Could this certain tall soldier's account be a *Century* battle account in disguise? Clearly, the possibility is available, particularly if one thinks of the dearth of references in nearly all of *Century*'s battle

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accounts to any African Americans, over whom the war was ostensibly fought.[234] While recent readings of the text warmly dispute both the role of the black teamster and the political ramifications of Crane's novel generally, the important point, I believe, is to read *Red Badge* as an extended parody of any official, orderly account of the Civil War.[235] Indeed, Crane's novel serves as a corrective to any form of documentary literature that dispenses with historical and psychological reality in order to elevate "certain tall men" while making "less illustrious" others invisible.

The Gildered *Century*

A white-washing of America, past and present, however, was precisely what editor Gilder wanted for his magazine (jocularly called the "white company" by the poetry critic E. C. Stedman).[236] What he sought was a self-described "ideality"—high ideals in both art and morality and an idealized vision of America generally—by which his magazine could help to stabilize and guide American society in a period of stress and change. Like Howells (in a review of Doestoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*), Gilder believed that aspiring writers should "concern themselves with the more smiling aspects of life, which are the more American" (*Harper's Monthly*, 641; Sept. 1886). On the subject of Realism, for example, he

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[234] It is telling to note that Mark Twain had requested that the *Century* publish the autobiographical slave narrative of Mary Duncan, "an impoverished and ailing Tennessee woman"—a request they turned down (Anderson 387).

[235] In *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism: From the Revolution to World War II*, John Carlos Rowe suggests several alternative readings to Crane's displaced "negro teamster." On one hand, Rowe argues, the episode might be read to show how little the war has changed the "social psychology of racism" for Northerners, who still view blacks as inferiors, whose role is to serve and/or entertain whites. Seeing little progressiveness in Crane, Rowe favors the argument that the dancing teamster is merely a "fictional device" used "to emphasize the entertainment value of the "tall soldier's report". Amy Kaplan in "The Spectacle of War in Crane's Revision of History" sees Crane's novel as both participating in and rejecting the redemptive aspects of modern warfare. While admitting that Henry Fleming's tale serves to parody false notions of heroism in battle, Kaplan argues that, in making war "an exotic spectacle" (270), in which soldiering has value only if there are witnesses, Crane presages an reinvigorated militarism fed on "spectatorial lust" (294).

[236] In a letter to Robert Underwood Johnson, Stedman wrote "The Century Co.—the 'white company', as I call it" in reference to the legionary cautiousness of *Century*'s editorial staff (Johnson 81).

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wrote in an 1887 issue of the *New Princeton Review*: "Since all art is a selection, there is no *real* real in literature; and the world will have its own opinion of the taste and art of a writer who is swamped by the commonplace, or who betrays an engrossing love for the unlovely." That a taste for the "unlovely" implied disrespect for civilization is clear from his conclusion: "it is the ideal side of art and of life that makes the other worthwhile, and raises mankind ever higher among the beasts. It is the ideal side of our nature that stands in greatest need of culture; and surely none the less in a realistic age like this" (qtd. in Smith 123).

Gilder's desire to represent only the positive aspects of American life is apparent in the bowdlerizing of literary works that appeared in *The Century*. Not wanting to "stir up a violent stench in the language,"[237] the editor insisted that in all material accepted for publication, there could be no profanity, nothing sacrilegious, and no "undignified English," or slang.[238] Portraying a character under the influence of alcohol, sweating, or even blowing his nose was also prohibited. Particularly stringent, as Arthur John notes, was the rule against sexually explicit material, "for at the core of Gilder's genteel value system was a reverence for family life and the concept of woman as an exalted creature" (John 72).

The editor's desire to censor America for his readers is evident in many ways, most famously, in his response to the page-proofs of Howells' *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, which was running in *The Century* throughout the fall of 1884 and into the winter of 1885. Coming across the character Bromfield Corey, who expresses his astonishment that laborers do not

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[237] In *Letters of Richard Watson Gilder*, ed. Rosamund Gilder (NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1916): 401.

[238] Apparently, the only exception to the rules pertaining to "undignified English" was the use of dialect by rural, lower-class (and often racialized) characters. In genteel magazines, the use of dialect, what Richard Brodhead appropriately names "ethnically deformed speech" (136), was, in part, a subconscious effort by Victorians to both privilege and define Anglo-Saxon civility and propriety by their binary opposite. Essentially, the occasional use of clearly undignified speech in the form of dialect was used to valorize "correct" language usage and thus served a "dignified" purpose.

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vent their dissatisfaction with an unjust economic system by dynamiting the urban mansions of the wealthy, Gilder immediately sent Howells the following dispatch:

> I hope you will not think us super-sensitive when we call your attention to page 867 of your April installment.... It is the very word, *dynamite*, that is now so dangerous, for any of us to use, except in condemnation. None but a crank would misinterpret your allusion, but it is the crank who does the deed. The other day it was found that dynamite had been built into all the hearths in a new house!—there is no telling where this sort of thing is going to break out—it is an unknown and horribly inflammable quantity, and we don't want, if we can help it, to be associated with the subject, except in opposing it. (qtd. in Lynn 280)

As Kenneth Lynn writes, the former editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* understood well the constraints of publishing in a genteel magazine and readily altered Corey's comment to read: "If I were a poor man, with a sick child pining in some garret or cellar at the North End, I should break into one of them, and camp out on the grand piano" (29: 867; April 1885). Rather than permit a realistic warning about what could happen if the elite did not fairly consider the point of view of "the dangerous classes," Gilder essentially preferred to skirt the issue of serious labor unrest along fantastical lines.

To Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn,* a quarter of which was included in *Century*'s pages, Gilder also made major changes. Included in the magazine were Chapters XVII and XVIII (titled "An Adventure of Huckleberry Finn: With An Account of the Famous Grangerford-Shepherdson Fued": 29: 268-279; Dec. 1884), brief extracts from Chapters VIII and XIV (titled "Jim's Investments, and King Sollermun": 29: 456-459; Jan.1885) and Chapters XIX through Chapter XXVIII (titled "Royalty on the Mississippi: As Chronicled by Huckleberry Finn": 29: 544-568; Feb. 1885). For all of these chapters, as Arthur L. Scott documents, deletions and changes were made. For example, in the "Grangerford-Shepherdson" episode, Gilder "euphemizes Huck's 'to be in a sweat about' to 'worrying

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about' and later to 'in such a hurry'" (Scott 358). In view of the morality codes of the 1880s, Gilder also excised the word "naked" from the description of the King's appearance in the "The Royal Nonesuch" episode, as well as Huck's account of himself and Jim on the raft as being "always naked, day and night."

Despite Gilder's chaste "ideality" and eager editorial scissors, it is notable how America's harsher aspects bubble to the surface of *The Century* nonetheless. Tremors of the Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and the Haymarket Riots to come (in 1886), for example, reverberate throughout Howells' classic novel of class anxiety. In addition to calling attention to violent labor unrest and claiming for it some justification (as delineated in the "dynamite" scene), the author of *Silas* stresses the theme of social *dis*-ease further by paying extensive attention to the *nouveau-riche* Laphams, who attempt to breach Boston high society. In line with Gilder's prescription to preserve America by exercising good character, the only "up-rising" in the novel, however, is that of the protagonist. A battle-scarred Colonel for the Union Army, Silas, at the end of the work, chooses principle over profit by refusing to sell shares of a stock he knows are worthless.

It is to Mark Twain that we must return to discover a more complex brand of subversion, hidden beneath a veneer of editorial acquiescence. Just how well-veiled and deeply challenging Twain's work can be is epitomized in a misreading by Donald E. Pease, generally one of American studies most prescient critics, of a passage in *The Century*. "Following the war," Pease unfairly argues,

> Twain reduced political beliefs to the status of tall tales, occasions for pleasure in taking someone in rather than taking someone's life. Those who took lives rather than jokes, like the Shepherdsons and Grangerfords, were what Twain's humor put behind us.

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> Not just Twain but most Americans needed to believe that the Civil War had put an end to ideology, if only so that they never again would need to confront the troubling questions leading the nation to war. (11)

While Pease's assessment of the desire of "most Americans" to elide the political context and atrocities of the Civil War fits in well with the claims I have been making about the overriding intent of *Century's* war accounts, his view of Twain's fiction is unwarranted. Indeed, reading Twain's work in the context of *Century Magazine* strongly suggests that the author had a critique of the magazine's political erasure(s) very much in mind when he offered his excerpts from *Huck Finn* for publication. If we turn to the Grangerford-Shepardson section in its original context, for example, we fail to find what Pease claims to be a reduction of "political beliefs to the status of tall tales," and encounter, instead, the use of humor to critique sharply misdirected hero-worship, sanguine militarism, and the erasure of political motivations for instigating carnage.

This section, which follows the destruction of the raft and the subsequent separation of Huck from Jim on the Kentucky shore, relates Huck's encounter with the Grangerford family, with whom he stays under the name of George Jackson. In the South for the first time, Huck learns that his adopted family is part of a large, proud posse, that has long engaged in hostilities with the equally imperious and self-important Shepardson clan. When Huck asks his new young friend Buck Grangerford about the source of the vicious feud, Buck explains that "it started thirty years ago," though no one knows anymore "what the row was about in the first place." Clearly, a reference to the Civil War (which did seem to "begin" with the Compromise of 1850 some thirty years prior to the publication of *Huckleberry Finn*), Twain portrays the Grangerford-Shepardson feud as a ludicrous bloodbath, made especially senseless by the fact that it appears to be fought for no reason

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whatsoever. When read in the context of *Century's* Civil War series, Buck's seemingly ingenuous remark takes on new meaning as a barb directed at actual military accounts which seem to have "forgotten" the source of conflict and document violent strife almost genially.

Indeed, of all of *Century's* accounts, none can match the sense of horror and futility expressed by Huck after viewing the cold-blooded murder of his young friend at the end of the episode. Hidden in a tree, Huck helplessly watches as Buck and "a slim young chap about nineteen years old" try to outrun a gang of Shepardsons:

> All of a sudden, bang! bang! bang! bang! goes three or four guns—the men had slipped around through the woods and come in from behind without their horses! The boys jumped for the river—both of them hurt—and as they swum down the current the men run along the bank shooting at them and singing out, "Kill them, kill them!" It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't agoing to tell all that happened—it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night, to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them—lots of times I dream about them. (278)

In addition to critiquing glorified violence in any form, as the above passage illustrates, Twain also focuses his attention onto misdirected hero-worship, specifically the idolatry of the southern aristocrat as epitomized by *Century's* account of General Sidney Albert Johnston. Remarkably, in the very same magazine that so avidly seeks the support of southern Democrats in leading the nation and directing social policy, Twain distances himself from an unpalatable alliance. In fact, rather than valorizing the conservative chivalry associated with the Planter-Aristocrat-Soldier, Twain, through the voice of Huck (and buttressed by a satirical illustration by E.W. Kemble), mocks his dress, features, and legendary airs without mercy:

> Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was a gentleman all over; and so was his family. He was well born, as the saying is, and that's worth as much in a man as it is in a horse, so the widow Douglas said, and nobody ever denied that she was of the first aristocracy in our town; and pa he always said it, too, though he warn't no more quality than a mud-cat, himself. Col.

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> Grangerford was very tall and very slim ... he was clean-shaved every morning, all over his thin face, and he had the thinnest kind of lips, and the thinnest kind of nostrils, and a high nose, and heavy eyebrows, and the blackest kind of eyes ... His forehead was high, and his hair was black and straight, and hung to his shoulders. His hands was long and thin, and every day of his life he put on a clean shirt and a full suit from head to foot made out of linen so white it hurt your eyes to look at it .... (273) [Figure 42].

That Twain has little sympathy for the myth of the southern gentleman is particularly evident when this "nobleman" chastises Buck for shooting at a Shepardson while under cover, rather than killing him from where he could be seen. "I don't like that shooting from behind a bush," he grumbles. "Why didn't you step into the road, my boy?" (275) By exposing Col. Grangerford's absurd notions of manhood, Twain once again gallantly affronts any propagandistic account, such as those appearing in *The Century*, that valorizes militarism and seeks to establish the battlefield as a proving ground for masculinity.

Glaring discrepancies battling the magazine's preferred themes of order, gallantry, and North/South reconciliation also appear in Twain's "The Private History of a Campaign that Failed" (31: 193-204; Dec. 1885), his own contribution to *Century's* Civil War series. This work is a blatant anti-war tract by a self-confessed coward, an account made acceptable for publication in *The Century* by its somewhat apologetic tone and a steady dose of humor—tactics, I believe, which intentionally lured contemporary censors (and critics today) away from fully comprehending its serious intent.

Unlike its counterparts flooding *The Century*, Twain's war account, while enormously comical, is shocking in its candor and dead-pan point of view. The narrator begins with the confession that his is a minor tale lacking glamour, but one that deserves being told nonetheless: "You have heard from a great many people who did something in the war; is it not fair and right that you listen a little moment to one who started to do something

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in it, but didn't." Neither a "loud" nor "boastful" account, Twain's tale essentially concerns a common soldier in not atypical circumstances, representative of the less than heroic experiences of the "thousands who entered the war, got just a taste of it, and then stepped out again, permanently."

Joining a small band of Confederates, the arbitrary result of being insulted by his river boat co-pilot from New York, who claimed he came of "bad stock" because his father had owned slaves (a fact the author laments), Twain, at first, is excited that he will experience some adventure. It is a feeling that quickly dissipates. In contrast to the valiant "gods" described in *Century*, Twain's party is a rag-tag group of petty incompetents. Leading the motley crew is Tom Lyman, who—like the quixotic, untried Tom Sawyer his name intentionally recalls—is a "young fellow of a good deal of spirit, but with no military experience" (194). Also in the band is Peterson Dunlap, described as "young, ignorant, good-natured, well-meaning, trivial, full of romance, and given to reading chivalric novels and singing forlorn love-ditties" (194). In an obvious satire of the elaborate names of some of the southern officers included in *Century's* war series (most notably General Pierre Gaston Toutant Beauregard), Twain notes that Dunlap is unhappy with the "plebian sound" of his name and tries to "ennoble it" with a French spelling: D'Un Lap. As the narrator humorously explains

> He said he had found, by consulting some ancient French chronicles, that the name was rightly and originally written d'Un Lap; and said that if it were translated into English it would mean Peterson: *Lap*, Latin or Greek, pierre, that is to say Peter; *d'*, of or from; *un*, a or one; hence, d'Un Lap, of or from a stone or a Peter; that is to say, one who is the son of a stone, the son of a Peter—Peterson. (194)

Equally hilarious, in line with D'Un Lap's deep concern for stately names, the band, fifteen members in all, decides to call itself the Marion Rangers.

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In another mock assault against *Century*'s celebrated War Series, this time parodying the seemingly smooth operations conducted by military leaders of the North and South, Twain notes that even the simplest problems plague the "Rangers." One immediate dilemma is that, owing to their lack of experience, they are at first unable to ride the mules and horses allotted for their use. Though his band, after many humorous attempts to "tame" the animals, eventually learns to ride, Twain sneers that they never learn "very well" (196). Another difficulty is that "nobody would cook" owing to the fact that "it was considered a degradation" (197) and so the men often found themselves close to starving. Their marches, too, were anything but "well-oiled." Begun in "horseplay and laughing," their military movements inevitably leave the men "soiled, heel-blistered, fagged ... and all of us ... in a sour and rapsy humor and privately down on the war" (195).

In further contrast to the seemingly exaggerated courage of troops documented elsewhere in the magazine, Twain broadcasts the cowardice of his men without shame. For example, when the Rangers learn that Union forces are advancing in their direction, the paramount question at hand is not how to defend against the enemy, but which way to retreat! Yet, even turning back is fraught with difficulties. Taking only guns and ammunition with them on their way to the relative safety of Mason's farm, the men slide down a rocky hillside, losing both their balance and their supplies. When they arrive at Mason's stile, their misadventures continue as "several dogs came bounding over the fence, with great riot and noise, and each of them took a soldier by the slack of his trousers and began to back away with them" (199).

Augmenting the force of his thoughtful satire, Twain laces his account with images that further mock the illustrious appeal of *Century's* war series. In place of the portraits of

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distinguished men in gilded uniforms, for example, the author includes illustrations of bewildered ragamuffins in compromising positions. Also effective as satire are the drawings of important "battle sites" and the heroic sounding names his men give them. Included is a ridiculous-looking battle map of Marion County under which is written "The Seat of War" [Figure 43]. Adding additional punch, the "Engagement at Mason's Farm" [Figure 44] is drawn not by a professional engineer, but in what appears to be Twain's own hand—an "illustrious" war map including the first and second positions of the dogs which attacked the men!

It is not till the end of the piece, however, that Twain's apparent purpose in writing his account unveils itself. After many false alarms, the Rangers, in hiding as always, at last come to meet the enemy. Hearing the muffled sound of hoof beats, Twain and his companions fire at what seem to be the outline of a man on horseback causing the intruder's death. At first, Twain experiences an immediate rush of euphoria. Upon taking a closer look at his fallen foe, however, his feelings quickly change. In one of the few graphic scenes depicting blood that appear in *Century's* war accounts, Twain describes his victim as "lying on his back, with his arms abroad; his mouth was open and his chest heaving with long gasps, and his white shirt-front was all splashed with blood." Realizing with horror, that he had committed "the equivalent of cold-blooded murder," Twain draws the conclusion that "the war was intended for men, and he for a child's nurse" (204).

Once again, such apparent lack of manliness and courage is inconsistent with the general tenor of *The Century* at the time. Twain excuses his "childishness" by admitting that had he stayed on "under the heartening influence of trained leaders" and long enough for "the invaluable experience of actual collision in the field (to) turn (him) from a rabbit into a

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soldier" (204), his campaign would have ended differently. But such noble sentiments and wishful thinking are clearly posturing for an audience (and editorship), who, apparently, preferred to read of matters as they were not.

Also critical of *Century's* overzealous designs to achieve a northern alliance with a not yet fully reconstructed South (though presumably supportive of the magazine's conservative stance on the "Woman Question" and reformist causes generally) was Henry James. A long-time contributor to the magazine beginning with the anti-feminist comic tale "Crawford's Consistency" (August, 1876), James' early periodical fiction prove him to be sharply critical of the changing roles and improved status of American women, a concern which appears to have culminated in *The Bostonians*. First appearing as a *Century* serial (February 1885-February 1886), this controversial work appears to be almost exclusively concerned with satirizing New England's agitating women during the previous decade. In a letter to his American publisher dated 8 April 1883, James describes the book as follows:

> The scene of the story is laid in Boston and its neighborhood; it relates an episode connected with the so-called 'woman's movement.' The characters who figure in it are for the most part persons of the radical reforming type, who are especially interested in the emancipation of women, giving them the suffrage, releasing them from bondage, co-educating them with men, etc.[239]

Whereas much ink has been spilled over the conservatism of James, who, like the editors of *The Century*, sought to keep women "feminine" in the traditional domestic sense as well as tasteful consumers (though not producers) of high culture, far less attention has been paid to the fact that *The Bostonians* symbolically reenacts the Civil War and comments on its outcome. As Herbert F. Smith and Michael Peinovich first noted, in order to fit in with the theme of North and South reconciliation, James transformed the novel's male protagonist,

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[239] *The Notebooks of Henry James*, ed. Matthiessen and Murdock (1947), pp. 46-7.

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Basil Ransom, from a Westerner into a slaveholder's son from Mississippi.[240] It was this important change that allowed James to describe a heated conflict between a southerner and his northern "opponent," Oliver Chancellor, a wealthy supporter of women's rights, both of whom seek the attention and attachment of the young, beautiful public darling, Verena Tarrant.

Suggestive of *Century's* own guarded conservatism in regards to women's rights (interestingly, a magazine founded on the strength of its female contributors in the 1870s, whose domination ended when the editors began promoting the realist works of Howells, James, and Twain), Basil Ransom is portrayed as a handsome lawyer of deeply anti-feminist tendencies. He seeks to win Verena, for example, not for her obvious talents as a spokesperson for reformist causes, but for his own purposes, namely to bring her back into the domestic sphere as his wife. As he later explains to his beloved: "My plan is to keep you at home, and have a better time with you there than ever." That Basil is a political and social ultra-conservative is made even clearer, when we learn from the narrator that he has been submitting reactionary essays to publications such as the fictional *Rational Review*. Though the topics of these essays are never mentioned, one can presume that they are about a past social order, much like the social desires of *Century Magazine*.

Significantly, given the serial's context within the war series, the reactionary southerner first makes inroads in winning the allegiance of Verena at Harvard's Memorial Hall, dedicated to fallen Civil War veterans. Affected by his quasi-religious surroundings, "a vast refectory ... hung about with portraits and lighted by stained windows," Basil displays a conciliatory attitude towards the enemy he once fought, "forgetting now the whole question

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[240] Smith, F. Herbert and Peinovich Michael, "The Bostonians: Creation and Revision," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* (May 1969 vol. 73, no. 5): 298-308.

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of sides and parties" (30: 695; Sept. 1885). Mimicking, if not parodying, the amnesia produced by *Century*'s obsession with what Nina Silber calls the "romance of reunion" (title), this gesture marks the beginning of Basil's triumph over Olive Chancellor, which he seals when Verena abandons public speaking and the cause of women for marriage.

That James wishes to leave ambiguous the consequences of a southern victory which involves marrying (and silencing) a former agitator for human rights is made clear in the manner in which the novel ends: "But though she [Verena] was glad, he [Basil] presently discovered that, beneath her hood, she was in tears. It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last she was destined to shed" (31: 600; Feb. 1886). As Verena's nervous tears suggest, a northern/southern alliance, which compromises the values of the North (whose agitating women, it is worth recalling, had been enormously instrumental in promoting the abolitionist movement and, in turn, the Civil War itself) is a reunion worth questioning. It is a question the notoriously "distanced" author in what he called his most "objective" work, leaves up to the reader.[241]

Far more to the taste of the editors (who often joked that only James and Frank L. Tooker, his copy editor, were reading *The Bostonians*) was Thomas Nelson Page's enormously popular "Meh Lady: A Story of the War" (32: 187-206; June 1886), written not just by invitation, but according to guidelines set by *Century's* associate editor Robert Underwood Johnson (Tooker 227). According to his memoir, having read "Lessing's 'Minna von Barnheim,' in which a Prussian hero wooed a Saxon heroine in the interest of a united

[241] After receiving enormous backlash from the reading public for his decidedly anti-feminist serial, James carefully edited the book version of the novel in an attempt to distinguish the narrator's point of view (presumed by many of his readers to be his) from the actions and views of his characters. For example, after Basil has expressed his firm "conviction that civilization itself would be in danger if it should fall into the power of a herd of vociferating women," James attached the following parenthetical aside: "(but I am but the reporter of his angry *formulae).*"

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Germany," Johnson communicated to Page that an updated version of Lessing's nationalistic tale would be an ideal contribution for the magazine at the time. Page responded to the request with what Paul H. Buck in 1928 called "one of brightest ornaments of reconciliation" (186)—a tale seeping in pathos and displaying nostalgic yearnings for the South as it was prior to the war, which simultaneously projects an ideal future America. As envisioned by Page (and presumably the editors who supported his efforts), such a nation would be inhabited by loyal, obedient white women and "noble" white men, who would paternalistically overlord former slaves through mutual love and respect for "natural" racial hierarchy.

In pursuance of this cultural project, "Meh Lady," like so many Plantation Myth tales whose conventions were firmly established by Page's own "Marse Chan" (appearing in *The Century* in 1884), is a narrative framed in the voice of a well-educated, white southerner, but ultimately told by a former plantation slave still serving his cherished white "family." As depicted in an accompanying illustration, which visually reinforces a separate and certainly not equal status amongst whites and blacks, a dapper southern gentleman comes upon an aged, ragged black man named Billy whittling wood on an embankment below. Talking down to Billy (both literally and figuratively), the narrator shouts "Hello! Uncle, what are you doing?" to which Billy respectfully responds, "Gittin fishin'-poles for de boys, suh, ... We's 'spectin' 'em soon" (187) [Figure 45]. Discovering a captive audience in the narrator, Billy explains that the poles are for the children of "his" Lady and her husband and embarks upon a long and wistful tale.

In *Whispered Consolations: Law and Narrative in African American Life*, Jon-Christian Suggs makes the important point that beginning in the antebellum period,

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American society sought not simply to deny blacks citizenship, but the right to have an identity. Seeking justification in establishing African Americans' status as property, lawmakers and politicians (and writers/intellectuals generally) via a broad range of cultural forms sought to deny blacks the "two primary elements of romantic individualism: *authenticity*—the ability to act in one's own behalf *sans* hierarchy ... and *irony*—the reflexive capacity for unmediated knowledge of the self" (Suggs 94). While casting "romantic" individualism as a province of the Caucasian race, American Victorians, Suggs writes, simultaneously promulgated the idea that the black "self" must be inherently and unredeemably trivial and infantile. Projecting blacks as unable to desire beyond appetite or to think in complex terms, whites sought to position themselves as rightful overlords of a "naturally" servile race, a desire that became increasing urgent by the 1880s as whites sought to replace the former slave order with legal segregation.

The two sides of the romantic coin, so to speak, are clearly presented in "Meh Lady." On one hand, the tale anoints the "master" white race with luster and grandiosity, attributing to it legendary deeds and extreme individuality. Page, in contrast, depicts New South blacks like Billy in essentially non-authentic terms, mere props (a small step up from their former status as property) still requiring, as his title suggests, masters and mistresses. Rather than actors on the world's stage, freed slaves are presented as spectators, who yield their private selves and personal desires in favor of documenting the lives and dreams of those who supposedly matter most.

Speaking in "Negro dialect," a marker of limited intellect and "Otherness" generally, Billy recalls the days when the estate was in full splendor and 'Meh Lady' ("de 'light o' dis plantation") and her brother ('Marse Phil') freely roamed its grounds. He particularly

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remembers his mistress' deep admiration for Phil, whose gallantry, good nature, and handsome features are part of Page's efforts to mythologize, and thereby rehabilitate, southern white masculinity (just as the author seeks to recreate the myth of true southern womanhood in Meh Lady).

Recalling *Century's* hagiography of General Sidney Johnston, Billy remembers Marse Phil growing into a "tall" and "stately" aristocrat, who, at the outbreak of the war, rushes to defend his people without hesitation. Also reminiscent of Johnston, Billy depicts Phil as a resolute and valiant soldier. He explains, for example, how though "he git two or th'ee balls th'oo he clo'es an' he cap," Phil remains at the front "'bleeged to stay to keep de Yankeys back." Phil's heroism is unyielding up until his final moment, when he is mortally wounded leading a battery across an oatfield. As Billy boasts with deep satisfaction (emphasizing the extent to which his identity remains the property of his master), a Confederate General was heard to exclaim "that he'd ruther been Marse Phil fightn' he bat'ry dat day den 'a' been President de Confederate States" (190).

The resolve and fortitude of Marse Phil is equal only to that of his sister, who upon hearing of his injury, has Billy drive her and her mother through enemy lines to retrieve her brother. Billy, in his account of the dangerous recovery operation, firmly establishes Meh Lady, like Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind,* as a woman of indomitable will and deep loyalty to family and region. As he relates, "Dee [army officials] sor o' reason wid her, but she jes walk on by wid her head up, an' tell me to foller her, an' dat I did, mon! ... De whol army couldn' 'a 'keep her fum Marse Phil den" (191). Armed with valor (a trait Billy, as subaltern, can not call his own), Meh Lady and her entourage arrive just in time to hear Phil's final words before proceeding to bring him back home in a coffin.

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If the tale closed with the sentimental scene of Phil lying on his deathbed looking "like a boy sleepin' dyah so young, in he little gray jacket wid he s'o'de 'cross he breas'," it would not be so different from most Plantation Myth tales which, in sentimentally focusing on the body of a dead or dying white male, lament the passing of an era of white supremacy and press for the continued subordination of blacks. It is the second part of Page's story, however, which fully links it to *Century's* theme of North and South reconciliation, with the twist (depicted ironically in *The Bostonians*) of what appears to be northern capitulation to southern demands, rather than vice versa.

The first step in this process of "southernizing" the North is the appearance of a Union Captain named Wilton at Meh Lady's estate, arriving just in time to protect her property from the ransacking of Yankee soldiers. Wilton's favor is not forgotten. When he himself is dangerously injured in a skirmish with Confederate soldiers and left on the battlefield to die, Meh Lady again initiates a rescue operation by asking a doctor to bring the wounded captive to her. In her brother's former room, after "she nuss him same like he wuz Marse Phil hisse'f" (194), Wilton regains his health, but not without falling in love with his beautiful nurse. Mey Lady must, however, decline his proposal of marriage, unable, at the time, to side with the enemy.

Following the war, after the estate has fallen onto hard times, the stilted northerner returns. This time, after only slight demurring, Meh Lady acquiesces and a great celebratory wedding ensues. A southern capitulation to northern desire, however, is but a mirage. As Billy's final description of the wedding night make clear, Wilton, brought back to life on Meh Lady's brother's bed, is in fact the reincarnation of Marse Phil and his conservative beliefs:

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> An' dat night ..., I wuz settin' in de do' wid meh pipe, an' I heah 'em settin' dyah on de front steps, dee voices soun'in' low like bees, an' de moon sort o' meltin' over de yard, an' I sort o' got to studyin', an' hit 'pear like de plantation 'live once mo', an' de ain' no mo' scufflin', an' de ole times done come back ag'in .... (204)

As the above passage depicting the resuscitation of Billy's fond memories shows, Wilton's marriage to a southerner essentially augurs the birth of a new nation, one which bears an uncanny resemblance to "de ole times." Obsessed with showing the devotion of blacks for their former masters and the loyalty of southern women to the "Lost Cause" and aristocratic men (Wilton, it turns out, is the son of a Virginian and distant cousin to Meh Lady), Page paints the New South as a harmonious family in which status determined by race, as well as by gender and class, remains firmly intact.

Not incidently, Page's "Meh Lady" was part of a long line of Plantation Myth fiction promoted in the magazine since the early 1870s. First appearing mostly in the "bric-a-brac" sections at the back of the magazine, by the mid-1880s, material glamorizing the Lost Cause and southern agrarian ideals was flooding the magazine. Alongside works such as James Lane Allen's "Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom' At Home in Kentucky" (34: 852-867; Oct. 1887)—which defends the Old South as generative of good character across racial, gender, and class lines—were also a string of essays and editorials which further sought to deflect attention from, or outright misinterpret, the worsening plight of African Americans in the South. In January of 1885, *The Century*, for example, printed a letter from a "Southern Democrat" that, like the fiction of Page and Allen, openly praises the region for its earlier institution of slavery:

> There is not a thinking man of the North who will not admit that American slavery seems to have been a provision of Providence for the advancement of a large part of the Negro race. This is a phase of the slavery question worth the attention of reflecting minds. The Negroes came to this country

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> barbarians. They were savages; but they were not savages when freedom found them out. (Jan. 1885: 471)

Later that year, in "How Shall We Help the Negro" (30: 273-280; June 1885), a Protestant Bishop from Kentucky elaborates on the position that white paternalism over blacks continue. Warning "against the degradation of the race by the free commingling of the tribe which is highest with that which is lowest" (citing as evidence the case of "Mr. Frederick Douglass [who] seems not to have gained but rather to have lost influence with his people by his recent matrimonial alliance with a white woman" (274)), Bishop Dudley argues that southern blacks are best served by looking up to the "personal endeavors of individuals of the higher race ... exhibiting before their wondering eyes in daily life the principles of truth and justice, purity and charity, honest and courage" (275).

Rather than challenge such reactionary views, Gilder repeatedly insisted on the "need for patience and tolerance in judging the movements of southern opinion.... It is clear that the cause of the Negro may safely be left to such champions as those who have now risen up on Southern soil to defend his rights" (30: 967; Oct. 1885). On other occasions, Gilder goes so far as to threaten those who would "revive or trade upon the dead issues of the war ("Soldier and Citizen" 30:950; Oct. 1887). As he writes in "Let Us Have Peace," "This is the time not for the demagogue, not for the reckless agitator, but for the philanthropist and statesman. In our day the politician who wears the 'bloody shirt' will be buried with it" (29: 638; Feb. 1885).

The southerner George Washingon Cable, author of some of the most profound "black rights" fiction in his day, including *The Grandissimes* (Nov. 1879-Sept. 1880) and *Dr. Sevier*, was a solitary voice in *Century's* stable of literary luminaries to virulently decry the "separate but equal" policy being imposed in the New South. In "The Freedman's Case in

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Equity" (29: 409-419; April 1885), for example, Cable calls attention to the South's determination to legalize segregation and directly challenges Gilder's "hands-off" policy:

> The late Southern slave has within two decades risen from slavery to freedom, from freedom to citizenship, passed on into political ascendancy, and fallen again from that eminence. The amended Constitution holds him up in his new political rights as well as a mere constitution can. On the other hand, certain enactments of Congress, trying to reach further, have lately been made void by the highest court of the nation. And another thing has happened. The popular mind in the old free States, weary of strife at arm's length, bewildered by its complications, vexed by many a blunder, eager to turn to the cure of other evils, and even tinctured by that race feeling whose grosser excesses it would so gladly see suppressed, has retreated from its uncomfortable dictational attitude and thrown the whole matter over to the States of the South. (409)

"Is the freedman a free man?" Cable comes to ask. "No. And it is time for the South to meet the challenge." Brave words from a southerner, words that he would pay for by ultimately having to move to the North because of threats against himself and his family.[242]

Epitomizing his need to preserve sectional harmony at all costs, Gilder invited Henry W. Grady, nationally revered editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, to write a rebuttal to Cable on behalf of the South (Williamson 101). In Grady's lengthy letter entitled, "In Plain Black and White," the author threatens Cable to mind his own business and to let the South decide what is best for itself: "Let it be understood in the beginning, then, that the South will never adopt Mr. Cable's suggestion of the social intermingling of the races. It can never be driven into accepting it. Neither race wants it. And with the South the matter may be left" (29: 418; April 1885). As Joel Williamson writes in a bout of seering understatement, "it was probably unfortunate for the cause of meaningful debate the editors of *Century* invited ... the

[242] Cable's livelihood, too, was affected by his social activism. With the submission of *John March, Southernor* in 1893 to *The Century*, Gilder accused the author of abandoning art for the sake of race propaganda and refused to publish the work as written. Though the novel eventually appeared in *Scribner's Magazine,* Cable's name all but disappeared from future issues of the magazine he once helped bring to fame.

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apostle of the New South and a commentator certain to increase the circulation of the magazine, to write the 'official' reply to Cable" (101).

Shortly before his views were to be published in book form as *The Negro Question*, Cable proceeded to ask Gilder in the name of fair play to allow a response by his protégé: the African American lawyer, essayist, and fiction writer Charles Chesnutt. Predictably, the eminently safe editor (who would later reject Chesnutt's boldly realistic race fiction on account of its "brutality" and "lack of humor") denied the request. In explanation, Gilder responded: "Mr. Chesnutt's paper—'The Negro's Answer to the Negro Question'— is a timely political paper. So timely and so political—in fact so partisan—that we cannot handle it. It should appear at once somewhere" (qtd. in Smith 71). That "somewhere" was *The North American Review*, the foremost intellectual publication in the nation, but with a readership that paled in comparison to *The Century*. Rather than reach a national audience of over 500,000 readers, Chestnutt's brilliant response would remain essentially unread until the academic revival of his work approximately one hundred years later.

As Gilder's response to Cable's request demonstrates, *Century Magazine,* throughout the 1880s, persisted with its claim that race prejudice was a bygone issue for both the North and the South. In its desire to deflect focus from divisive controversy, the magazine ultimately refused finally to even listen to the problems that so clearly existed. Perhaps the best indication of Gilder's failure to transcend the safety of his genteel idealism and to utilize his pulpit as the nation's most powerful editor to deride one of America's most lamentable evils is the cartoon that follows Grady's "In Plain Black and White." It is entitled "Changing the Subject."

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As we have seen, *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine,* during the period November 1884-November 1887, sought to present to America a homogenous, harmonious image of itself. Thus, in its wildly popular Civil War accounts, the truth of battle was subordinated to an elaborate ruse. Instead of historical and psychological facts, its readers were fed tales of brotherhood, heroism, and gallantry. In its pages, *The Century* also attempted to promote traditional values by exalting the virtue of women, by banning vice, and by downplaying class and racial strife. Though Cable, Howells, James, and Twain, each in his own way, registered discomfort with the growing conservatism of the "New" North, their counter-statements were no match for what C. Vann Woodward describes as "the wave of southern racism [that] came in as a swell upon a mounting tide of national sentiment" (74). Despite Gilder's contention that his magazine "from the beginning [of the series] ... tried to establish the principle of freedom of discussion and not suppression of facts and opinions on burning questions" (393), the real battlefields, to paraphrase Whitman, were essentially parried for another day.

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CONCLUSION: TOWARDS THE END OF *THE CENTURY*

In the beginning of William Dean Howells' masterpiece of American Realism, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890), the novel's protagonist Basil Archer has agreed to leave Boston, where he has been working as a clerk in an insurance office, to come with his family to New York City, where he will edit the literary magazine *Every Other Week*. *Every Other Week*, as its name suggests, is a bimonthly magazine hatched from the mind of Fulkerson, a live-wire journalist and syndicator. Having had great success supplying literature to newspapers across the nation for simultaneous publication, Fulkerson has received backing from a millionaire land speculator named Dryfoos to apply a similar principle to a magazine. His plan is for a periodical "which should pay authors and artists a low price outright for their work, and give them a chance of the profits in the way of a percentage" (17). The fortnightly is to be filled with original short stories, sketches of travel, essays concerning life in New York, "little dramatic studies," "bits" of biography and history, and, of course, copious and lavish illustrations. For, as Fulkerson laughingly acknowledges to his editor, only a "lunatic would start a thing in the twilight of the nineteenth century without illustrations" (13). With Fulkerson's savvy market sense, Basil Archer's sound journalistic skills, and a Dryfoos account, the debut of the illustrated periodical is an immediate success selling over 100,000 issues nationwide. And, like the wheat in Frank Norris' *The Octopus*, *Every Other Week* continues to thrive even at the novel's conclusion, when New York City sits in chaos and fear owing to a transportation strike that has turned violent.

As the above synopsis suggests, Howells in his novel depicts an era when the "mania of magazine-starting" (Mott 5) is at its zenith. By utilizing marketing techniques developed by *Century Magazine*, magazines like *Every Other Week*, in the 1890s, indeed experienced

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enormous success. Yet, Howells also suggests that the era marks a low-point. The "bits" of gossip and numerous images that infiltrate the popular magazines are aimed at profit, rather than journalistic substance. Rather than pursue high cultural and social ideals, success is measured in subscriptions. In place of genteel cultural custodians, slick managers like Fulkerson and philistine businessmen like Dryfoos will determine who reads and looks at what.

Though *The Century* clearly paved the way for mass distribution magazines at the turn of the century, their success would prove its demise. Unwilling to publish lighter fare, eschew high-toned didacticism, or include a larger variety of standpoints, Gilder's magazine began to have an increasingly difficult time competing for the minds and eyes of America. After successfully leading America according to elite, WASP values for over two decades, the magazine, by the mid-1890s, had lost its dominance as cultural arbiter due to forces seemingly beyond its control.

As Richard Ohmann in *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* writes, the financial panic of 1893 further sealed the doom of *The Century* and the other leading monthlies. In the midst of the recession, many middle-class American readers began to feel the pinch of spending .35 per issue ($4.00 per year) for a magazine that was becoming increasingly irrelevant to their own lives. They would, apparently, spend less for more modern fare. As Ohmann writes:

> In the middle of the panic of 1893, S.S. McClure brought out his new monthly at an unprecedented 15 cents. John Brisben Walker, editor of the old *Cosmopolitan*, quickly dropped his price to 12/12 cents. And in October, with much hoopla, Frank Munsey cut the price of his faltering monthly from a quarter to a dime. Its circulation went from 40,000 that month to 200,000 the following February to 500,000 in April, and to a circulation that Munsey called the largest in the world by 1898. (25)

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As subscription numbers for modern, mass distribution magazines went through the roof, *The Century* numbers dwindled steadily. Though it sustained a readership of about 50,000 into the twentieth century (it formally ended its publication run in 1912) the magazine's cultural preminence had clearly waned. Facing cut-throat competition from magazines such as *Munsey's, McClure's*, and *Cosmopolitan*, which offered lighter literary fare at a far cheaper price, *The Century* found that it could no longer compete. Once "a national factor of no little importance," the magazine would disappear into the bins of history, even as its enormous influence on the American literary canon and American society generally remains indisputable.

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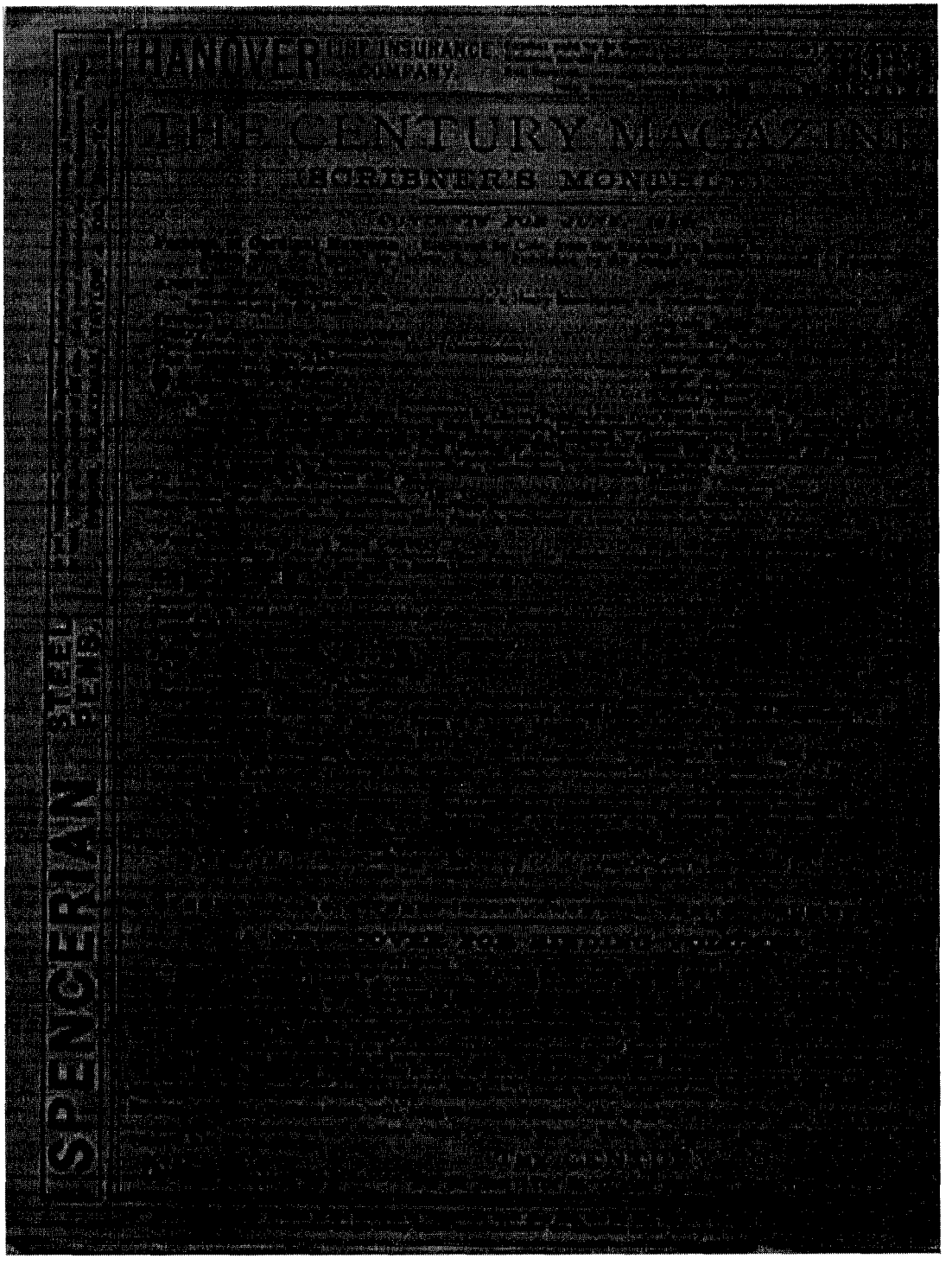


Figure 1: In the June 1882 issue, one sees advertisements for steel pens and fire insurance literally surrounding the table of contents.

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LIVING AMERICAN ARTISTS.



ASHER BROWN DURAND.

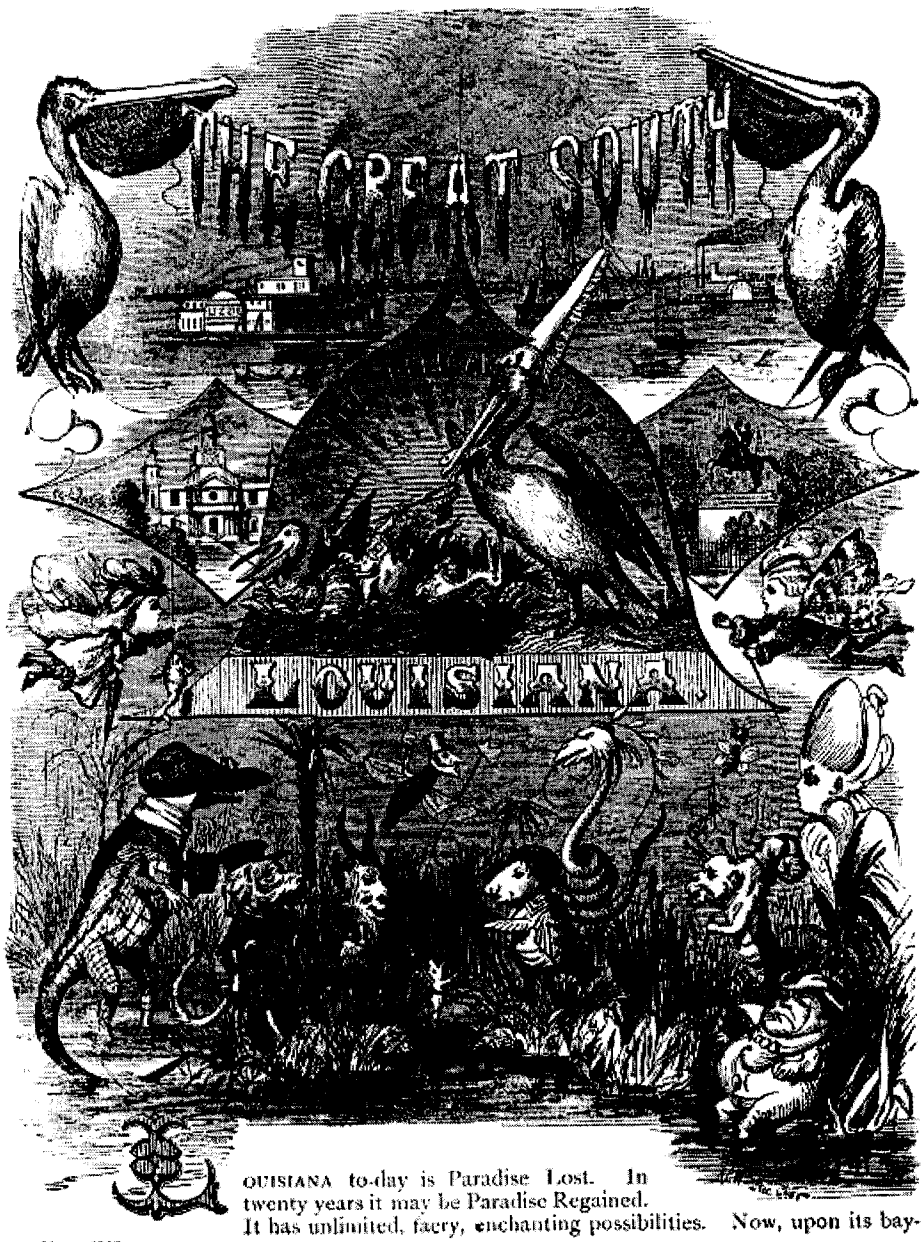
ASHER BROWN DURAND, EX-PRESIDENT N. A. D.

Figure 2: "Asher Brown Durand"

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SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY.

VOL. VII. NOVEMBER, 1873. No. 1.



OUISIANA to-day is Paradise Lost. In twenty years it may be Paradise Regained. It has unlimited, faery, enchanting possibilities. Now, upon its bay-

Figure 3: "The Great South"

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SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY

VOL. II. MAY, 1871. No. 1.

THE WONDERS OF THE YELLOWSTONE

meeting wi several gentlemen who expresse like curiosity, we determined to make th journey in the months of August and Septem ber.

The Yellowstone and Columbia, the firs flowing into the Missouri and the last into th Pacific, divided from each other by the Rock Mountains, have their sources within a fe miles of each other. Both rise in the moun tains which separate Idaho from the new Ter ritory of Wyoming, but the headwaters of th Yellowstone are only accessible from Montana The mountains surrounding the basin fron

Figure 4: Ferdinand V. Hayden's "The Wonders of Yellowstone."

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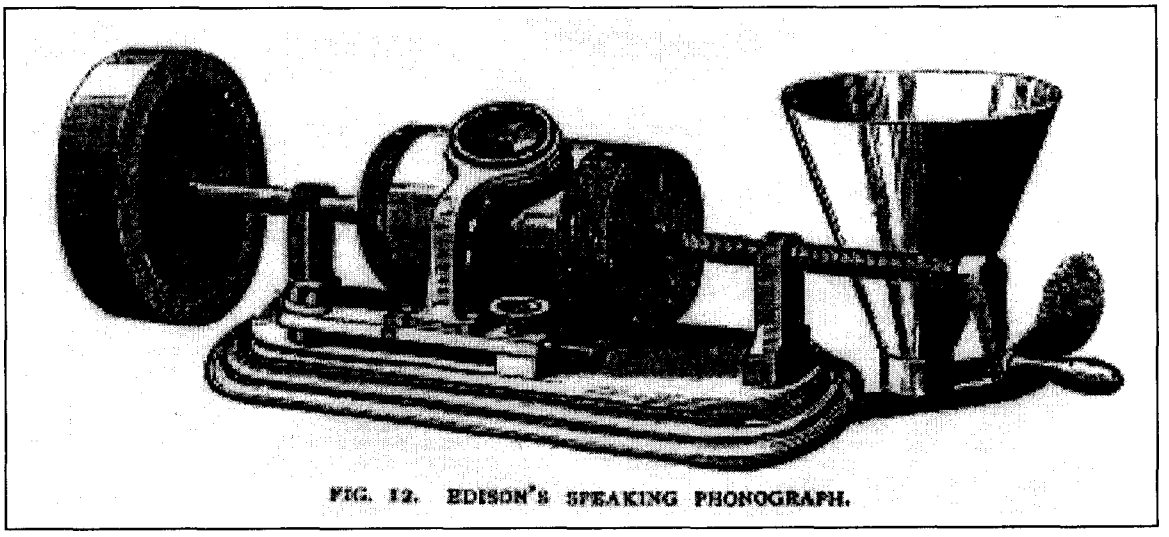
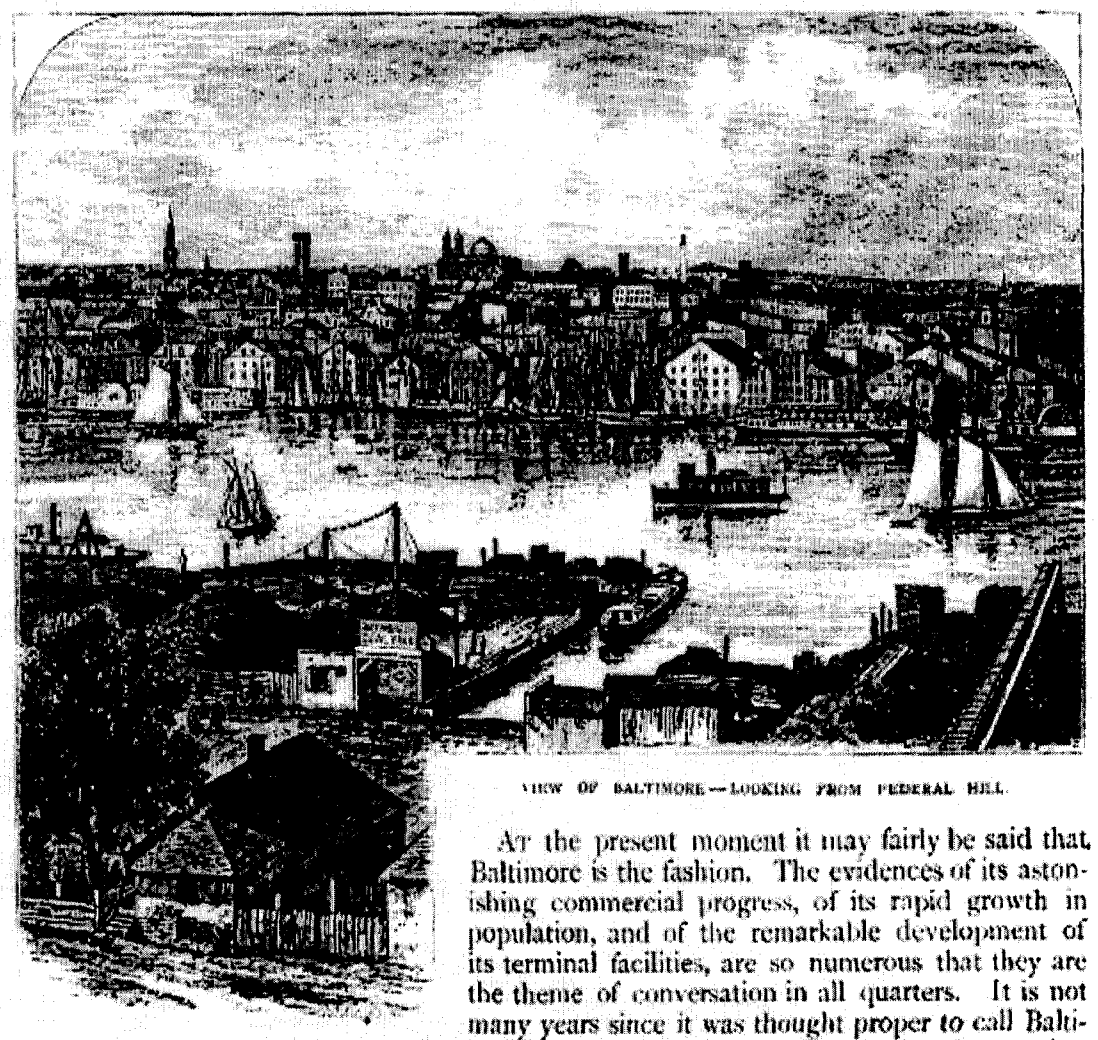


Figure 5: Edison's "Speaking Phonograph," one of thousands of American scientific inventions showcased in *Scribner's-Century*

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THE LIVERPOOL OF AMERICA.



VIEW OF BALTIMORE—LOOKING FROM FEDERAL HILL.

AT the present moment it may fairly be said that Baltimore is the fashion. The evidences of its astonishing commercial progress, of its rapid growth in population, and of the remarkable development of its terminal facilities, are so numerous that they are the theme of conversation in all quarters. It is not many years since it was thought proper to call Baltimore slow, and to accuse her citizens of old | cony of Barnum's Hotel (the pleasant inn

Figure 6: "The Liverpool of America"

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Figure 7: The opening illustration for Newton Crane's "Fairmont Park." Note the view of Philadelphia from the soothing vantage point of a wooded embankment, a symbolic construction seeking to preserve pastoral values in the modern world.

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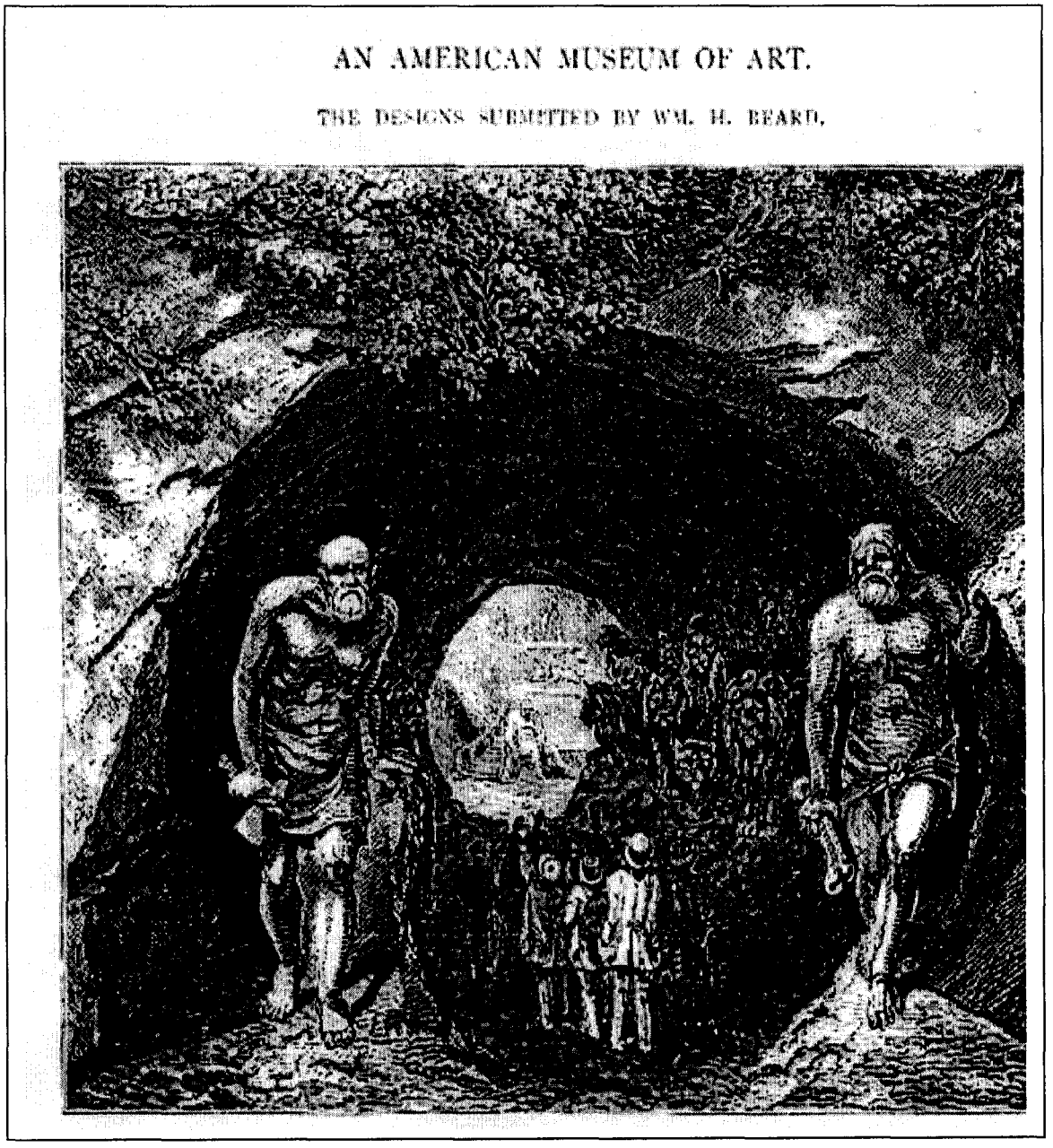


Figure 8: William Beard's illustration of Ignorance and Superstition guarding the main entrance to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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CANDOR.

"Vell, to dell you de troot, de coat fits you schplendid, but de pants is yust a drifle too long."

Figure 9: "Candor"

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Figure 10: An Irish tramp in search of sinecure.

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Figure 11: "Type of the Yellow Race" from "Savage Man"



Figure 12: "Type of the White Race" from "Savage Man"

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Figure 13: Fing Wing mimicking Miss Malony.



Figure 14: Miss Malony leaves in a huff.

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Figure 15: "Hark! Hark! The Dogs Do Bark!"



Figure 16: "Some In Rags, and some in Tags."

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THAT LASS O' LOWRIE'S.

BY FANNY HODGSON BURNETT.



Figure 17:
The Working Girl meets the Adventure Feminist

THAT LASS O' LOWRIE'S.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.



"SHE STEPPED INTO THE GALLERY BEFORE HE COULD PROTEST."

Figure 18: Joan, the "manly woman," leading the rescue of the collapsed Riggan mine.

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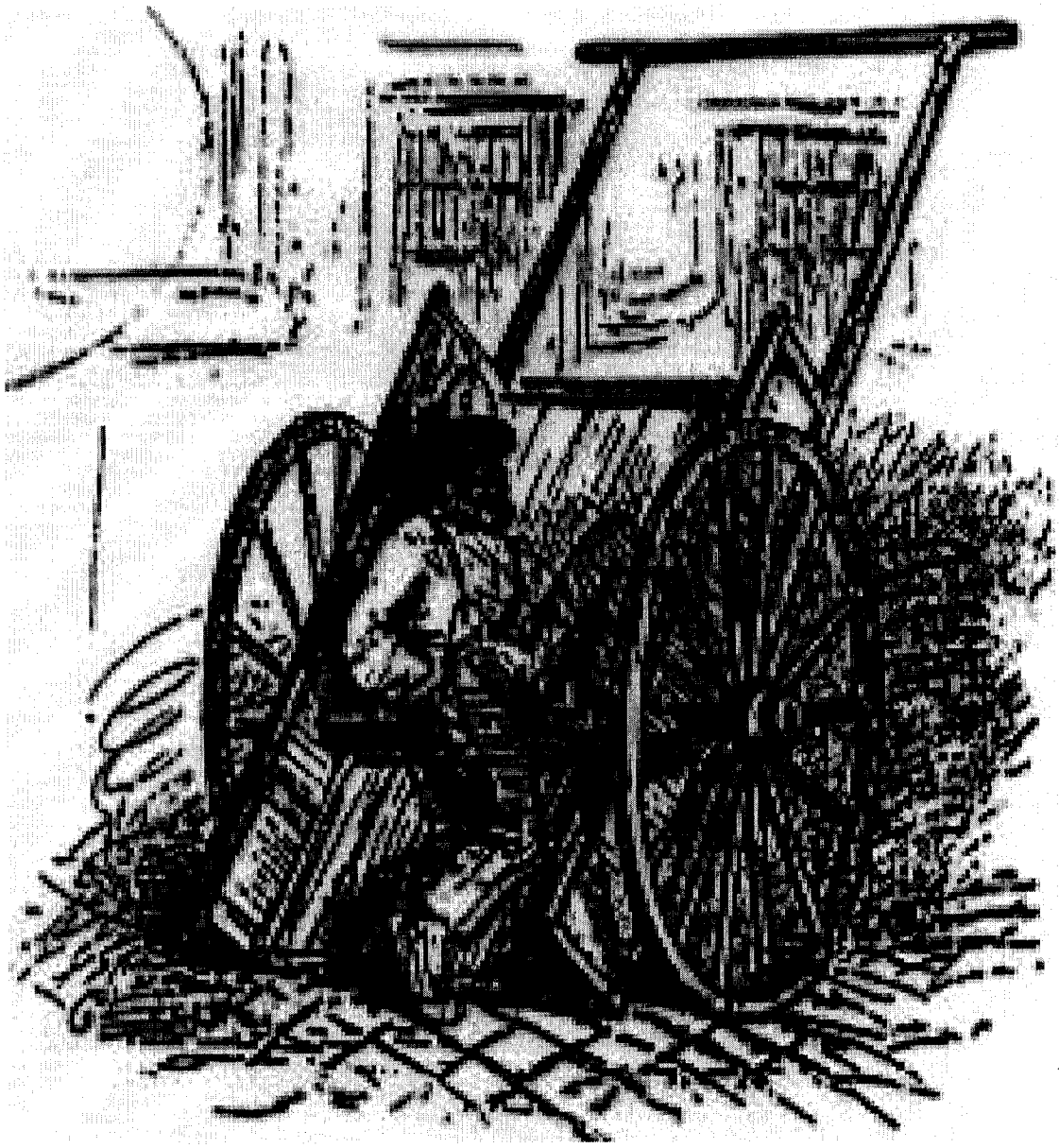


Figure 19: "Waiting for a Job"

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Figure 20: "And while they chatter like monkeys, even about politics, they gesticulate violently."

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Figure 21: "Southern Types—The Wolf and the Lamb in Politics"

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Figure 22: Colonel Vick, of Vicksburg, Mississippi.

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Figure 23: "A Pair of Georgia 'Crackers'"

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Figure 24: "Peeping Through"

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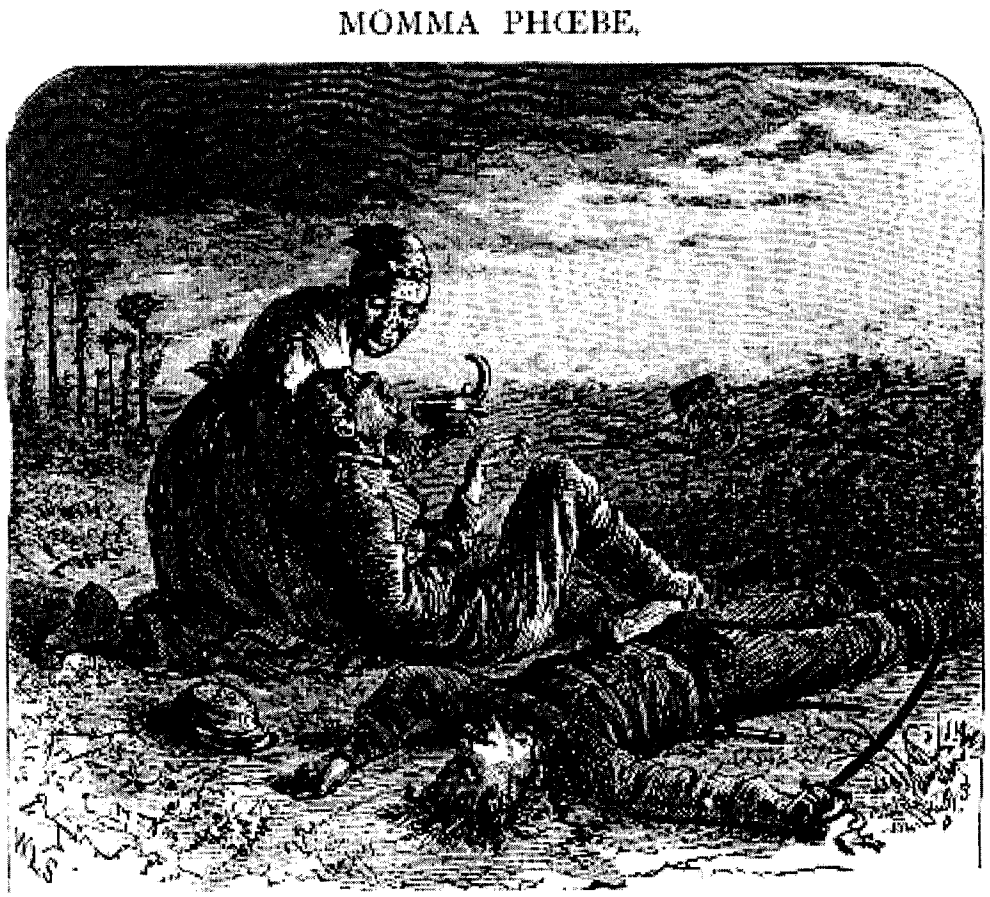


Figure 25: Mommy Phoebe tends to her "dahlin' men-child'en."

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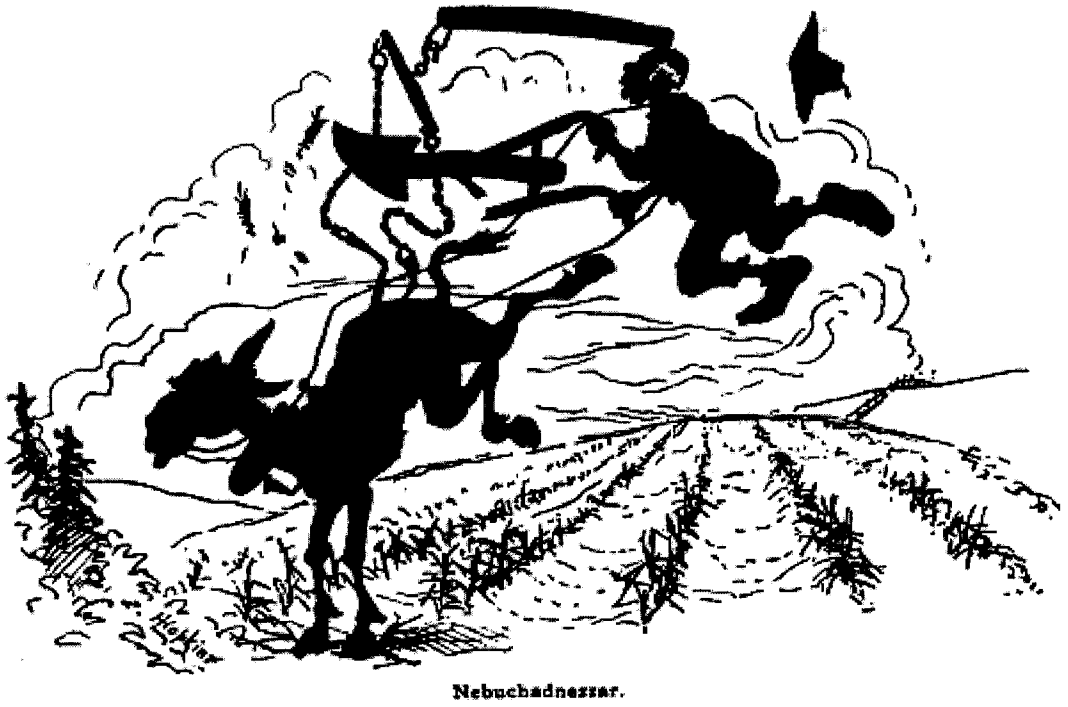


Figure 26: "Nebuchadnezzar"

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Figure 27: "The Preacher"

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Figure 28: "Old Fiddling Josey"



Figure 29: "Georgy Sam"

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Figure 30: "Uncle Tom at Home"



Figure 31: The Faithful Slave Rescuing His Young Master.

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THE GREAT GAME OF POKER.

Figure 32: "The Great Game of Poker"



FREE JOE AT THE POPLAR.

Figure 33: "Free Joe at the Poplar"

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Figure 34: "Little Mammy"

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THE PAST.

Figure 35:
"The Past"



THE PRESENT.

Figure 36: "The Present"

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BRIC-À-BRAC.



THE 'POSSUM HUNT.

Figure 37: "The 'Possum Hunt."

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DRAWN BY PETER NEWELL.

Aphorisms.

Figure 38: *"A Coquette Conquered."* Note the position of the animal on the suitor's groin area suggesting Victorian lust (and disgust) of black male sexuality.

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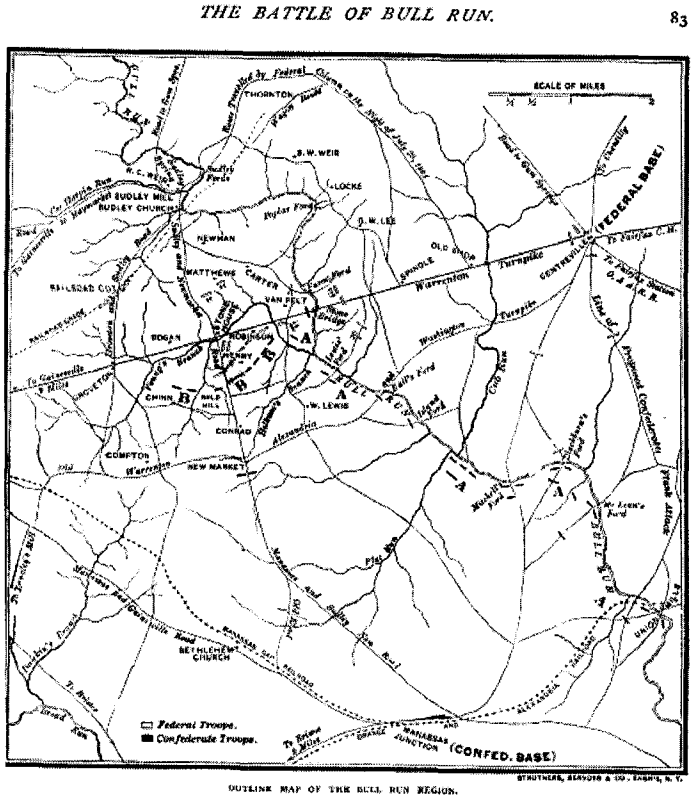


Figure 39: Topographical map of "The Battle of Bull Run"



Figure 40: "General Sidney Johnston"

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Figure 41: This illustration depicts a scene from Joel Chandler Harris' "Azalia." After a dangerous search across enemy lines, the loyal slave Prince finds the corpse of his young Confederate master lovingly embraced in the arms of a Yankee soldier. Apparently, Prince's master was killed bringing water to his fallen enemy—a visual representation of *Century*'s theme of reconciliation (and, concomitantly, the exclusion of African Americans from white America's love affair) as well as Sedgwick's arguments concerning the sentimental display of dead or dying male bodies and homo-social bonding.

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COLONEL GRANGERFORD.

Figure 42: "Colonel Grangerford"

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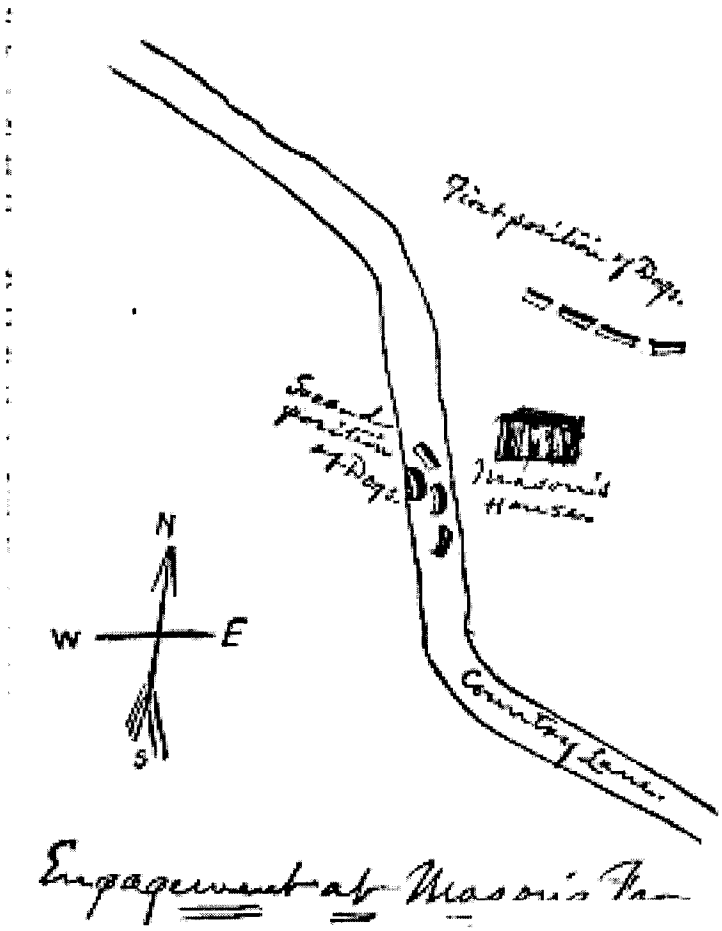


Figure 44: "Engagement at Mason's Farm"

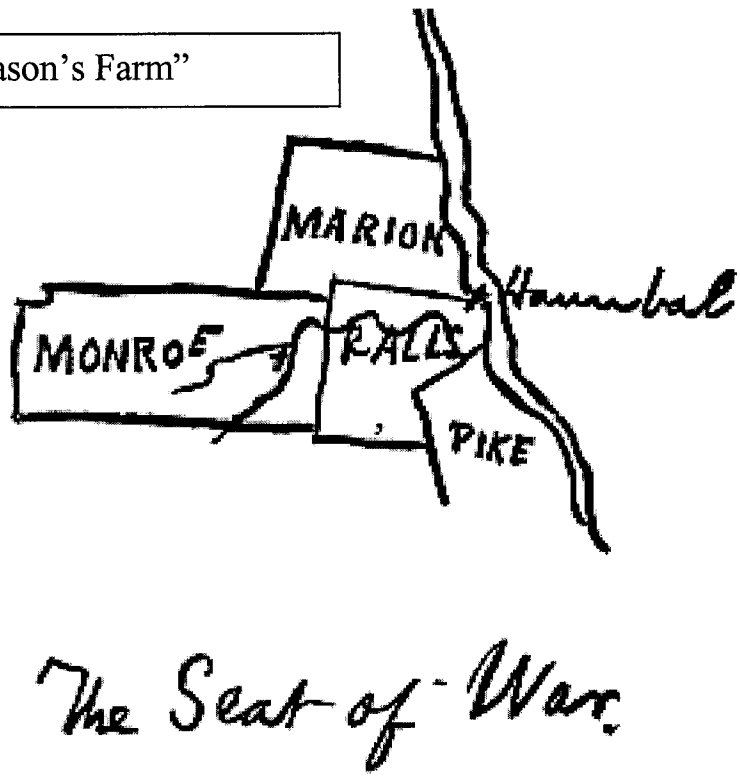
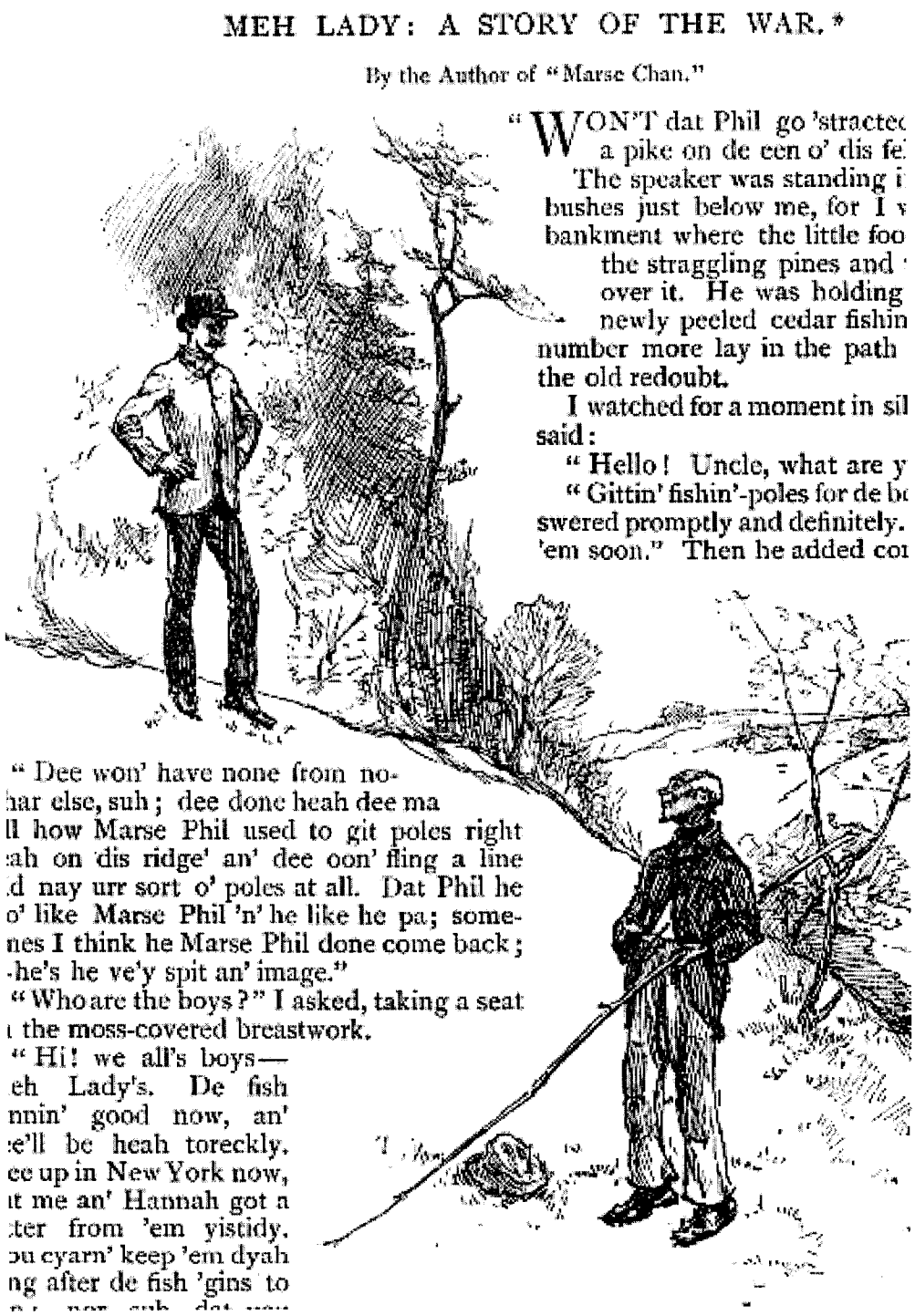


Figure 43: "The Seat of War"

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MEH LADY: A STORY OF THE WAR.*

By the Author of "Marse Chan."

"WON'T dat Phil go 'stracte
a pike on de een o' dis fe
The speaker was standing i
bushes just below me, for I v
bankment where the little foo
the straggling pines and
over it. He was holding
newly peeled cedar fishin
number more lay in the path
the old redoubt.

I watched for a moment in sil
said:

"Hello! Uncle, what are y

"Gittin' fishin'-poles for de b
swered promptly and definitely.
'em soon." Then he added co

"Dee won' have none from no-
har else, suh; dee done heah dee ma
ll how Marse Phil used to git poles right
ah on dis ridge' an' dee oon' fling a line
d nay urr sort o' poles at all. Dat Phil he
o' like Marse Phil 'n' he like he pa; some-
nes I think he Marse Phil done come back;
he's he ve'y spit an' image."

"Who are the boys?" I asked, taking a seat
the moss-covered breastwork.

"Hi! we all's boys—
eh Lady's. De fish
nnin' good now, an'
e'll be heah toreckly.
ee up in New York now,
it me an' Hannah got a
ter from 'em yistidy.
ou cyarn' keep 'em dyah
ng after de fish 'gins to

Figure 45: The southern sojourner speaks with Billy.

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