The Influence of the English and Italian periods of George Eliot's life upon her works.

by

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Being a Thesis presented to the Department of English of the University of Manitoba for the Degree of Master of Arts.

University of Manitoba,

April, 1915.

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Introduction.

C. A. Ste Beuve, the celebrated French critic of the nineteenth century, describing a certain class of writers in his "portraits Litteraires", says:- "(Ils) ont besoin de naître en des circonstances propices, d'etre cultives par l'education et de murir au soleil; ils se developpent lentement, sciemment, se fecondent par l'etude et s'accouchent eux-memes avec art. Ils montent par degrés, parcourent les intervalles et ne s'elan-cent pas au but du premier bond; leur genie grandit avec le Temps et s'edifie comme un palais auquel on ajouterait chaque annee une assise; ils ont de longues heures de reflexion et de silence durant lesquelles ils s'arretent pour reviser leur plan et deliberer; aussi l'edifice, si jamais il setermine est-il d'une conception savante, noble, lucide, admirable, d'une har-monie qui d'abord saisit l'oeil, et d'une execution achevee."

To no other author is this so truly applicable as to George Eliot. Her genius, the result of constant application, laborious study, and deep thought, did not reach its maturity in a brief space of time, but was the production of an accum-ulation of varied influences. Her works are the outcome of a slow process in which the raw material of life's experiences, spiritual, intellectual, and physical, is absorbed, passed through a refining process in the mind of the author, and the resulting pure gold wrought into a chain each link of which corresponds to a single work. More than any author, of the nineteenth century, she was deeply susceptible to the slight-test influence, and her mind was, more or less, always swayed by whichever light shone brightest on the intellectual horizon. From the realm of social, political, and physical conditions, also, she received wonderful stimulation and illumination. Had she not been open to impressions from these varied sources she could never have attained to the great heights she ultimately reached in her portrayal of the intricacies of the human heart and the innermost thoughts of the human mind. We have noticed how a plant exposed to light from all directions successively, acting with a positive heliotropic movement, is inclined towards these directions in turn. So George Eliot, by reason of her extreme sensitiveness to active agencies from without, was drawn towards each as it presented itself and derived from it material which, being assimilated, was transformed into the very stuff of her novels. What these influences were, and how deep a part they play in the origin and development of her works can best be learned by a study of Geo., Eliot's life in relation to her works. "If it is true that the most interesting of Geo., Eliot's characters is her own, it may also be said that the most interesting of her books is her life." (Lord Acton. "Historical Essays & Studies.")

A. English Period. (1819-1860).

England in the first quarter of the nineteenth century was in a state of political and social transition, and religious

unrest. The late wars with France had seriously drained the public exchequer and the burden of the country's expenses naturally fell upon the shoulders of the people. The spirit of individualism had culminated in the French Revolution and England was horrified at the evils it had wrought. The egoism of the French leaders, the desire to serve the individual as a part from the state had served to rudely dispel the dream of England in which Liberty played so predominant a part. We see what a re-action such egoism produced in our great poet, Wordsworth, and many others felt this influence also. This depression in the ethical and social spirit of the nation did not long endure, however. With her characteristic optimism England set herself the task of securing better government and higher moral ideas, and the spirit of altruism rapidly spread. Not however by any appeal to force nor by the destructive method of France did she hope to accomplish these ends, but by the gradual education and uplifting of the masses, and by fostering altruism, the love of our neighbor as a fellowbeing and as forming part of the society to which we belong. George Eliot very capably reflects this tendency of the age carrying it into most of her life's work, and giving it a predominant part in the lessons taught by her novels.

In the sphere of religion also there had been changes innovations. The enthusiastic exertions of John Wesley had resulted in rousing many who, dissatisfied with the existing Established Church, readily became members of the growing Methodist religion. Within the Church of England itself a notable change had taken place, and the "religion of feeling" or Evangelicalism, was advocated as inducing deeper religious sentiment. These, as well as other religious disturbances, brought a new sense of responsibility to people of all ranks. These political and religious upheavals were beginning to be felt in even the most remote parts of the country where the terms Radical and Methodist stood in a vague sense for recent innovations in both these spheres. Warwickshire, the home of George Eliot, felt the stimulus of this transition from the old to the new, and at the time of George Eliot's birth was beginning to realize that these were no ephemeral changes but were probably come to remain. The manner in which they were received and the influence they exerted are largely portrayed in George Eliot's works dealing with these times. "George Eliot writes often and lovingly of the England of the days before the Reform Bill-----not because she likes it, or thinks it better than the England of the present, but with much the same feeling with which a woman looks at the hob-nailed boots of her boy who is gone-a boy who doubtless was often rude, and disobedient, and exasperating to the last degree, but who was her boy." (Sidney Lanier. "The English novel").

1. Childhood: Griff House. "Nov.22, 1819 - Mary Ann Evans was born at Arbury Farm, at five o'clock this morning." We learn that this was an entry made by Robert Evans, father of George Eliot, in his diary

of that date. Marian,as she preferred later to be called, was the third child born to Robert Evans and his second wife, Christianna Pearson. Her father was land agent to Sir Francis Newdigate, owner of the Arbury estate in Warwickshire. When Marian was but four months old the family moved to Griff House on the Arbury estate, and here George Eliot spent the first twenty-one years of her life. In tracing the dominating influences upon an author's works great importance is attached to the mental and spiritual atmospheres which surrounded the author during life. Undoubtedly these are important factors - but much might said also of the effect produced by the physical surroundings.

(1) The earliest possible recollection George Eliot can have had of her surroundings is that of Griff House, large and of red brick, ivy-covered, and with ample grounds in which the little girl and her brother Isaac might roam at ease. Back of the house were the barns, the originals of her well-known description in "Adam Bede", "the long cow-shed where generations of the milky mothers have stood patiently - the broad shouldered barns where the old-fashioned flail once made resonant music". Near at hand were the fish pond and the canal celebrated in verse by George Eliot as being the scenes of some of her happiest hours as a child. when she, in company with her brother would spend occasional holidays with rod and line. This pastime furnished interest in, at least, two of her works, one being "The Mill on the Floss." They tell of the day Marian was left in charge of the rod by her brother with a solemn injunction to watch for the barges, and, at the advent of one, to pull in the line.

"Proud of the task I watched with all my might
For one whole minute till my eyes grew wide
Till sky and earth took on a strange new light,
And seemed a dream - world floating on some tide.-
A fair pavilioned boat for me alone
Bearing me onward through the vast unknown.
But sudden came the barge's pitch black prow,
Nearer and angrier came my brother's cry,
And all my soul was quivering fear, when lo!
Upon the imperilled line, suspended high,
A silver perch! My guilt that wore the prey,
Now turned to merit, had a guerdon rich
Of hugs and kisses-----

"The little lass had luck", the gardener said,
And so I learned, luck was with glory wed."
("Brother and Sister")

The deep influence exerted by Nature upon the childish mind is perfectly set forth in the sonnets devoted to the early years spent in company with this best loved of brothers. They show a very accurate and characteristic experience of childhood.

Nature wore a benign aspect to her, the flowers seemed "all to speak with eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew". The years spent in close communion with Nature had a deep-rooted effect on all her after life. The capacity for loving wgich characterixed the woman and is such a prominent trait in so many of her female characters, was largely fostered by the early faith in the workings of a beneficient Nature. The cause of this existing good she did not question as a child: sufficient that she felt it to be there.

"Those hours were seed to all my after good:
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much----
Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,
Untroubled by the fear that it would cease". (Ibid)

If a special charm attaches to these familiar haunts it is because of their association with probably the happiest period of her life. For this reason the specific details of scenery form an outstanding peak in an otherwise generally unattractive low-lying land. "The scenery a monotonous succession of little ups and downs, is of the kind which owes its interest to its subordination to human society". ('George Eliot' by Leslie Stephen. chap.1) The best picture we can have of the country in the immediate vicinity of George Eliot's home is that drawn by her own pen in the introduction to "Felix Holt. Here she portrays a traveller taking a journey on the box-seat of a coach in 1830. Railways and steam ships were not yet known and our passenger can get a very accurate idea of the nature of the country through which he is pas-sing and its inhabitants. Traversing the central plain watered by the Avon and the Trent- he notices meadows in which "long lines of bushy willows" mark the water-courses, golden corn-ricks surrounding the Midland homesteads. He sees the cows driven from their pasture to the early milking by the farm hand whose canine assistant follows "with a heedless unofficial air as of a beadle in undress". To this unlearned peasant the coach typifies the mysterious "Gover'ment", a thing outside his concern. As the horses journey along at the rapid rate of ten miles an hour, they pass hedgerows equalling in height " the laborer's cottages dotted along the lanes, or clustered into a small hamlet, their little dingy windows telling, like thick-filmed eyes, of nothing but darkness within".

Then again were the "trim cheerful cottages" with gardens bright with geraniums, belonging to the wealthy farmers. There the rich productive land brought ease and plenty, the district was one of "prosperant optimists, sure that old England was the best of all possible countries the district of clean little market towns without manufactures, of fat livings, an aristocratic clergy and low poor rates. Gradually however the scenes changes, and towards evening the traveller would arrive in a village "dingy with coal-dust, noisy with the shaking of hand looms". Later he would pass into a "manufacturing town, the scene of riot and trade union meetings", only to enter later a rural district where men possessed of a large banking account were in the habit of saying they never meddled with politics themselves. Thus a traveller would pass from one phase of English life to another. Here an estate belonging to the squire whom the farmers of the district regarded reverently as belonging

to one of the old families, never dreaming of a change in the settled order of things. To such a district Harold Transome returns in " Felix Holt" and we see the dismay and general complicity of feelings which his Radicalism causes amongst his moreconservative neighbors.

(2) To George Elliot this condition of affairs was reflected through her father, a staunch Tory, considering England to be the best possible of countries and holding all revolutionary tactics to be disloyal. From him she inherited her love of truth and sincerity, and also a certain self-distrust which remained with her all through life. Like Caleb Garth " while faithfully serving his employers (he) enjoyed great popularity among their tenants. He was gentle but of indomitable firmness; and while stern to the idle and unthrifty, he did not press heavily on those who might be behind hand with their rent, owing to ill-luck or misfortune, on quarter-days".

The gift ofepigrammatic speech and shrewd industry possessed by Mrs. Hackitt in "Amos Barton" were also traits of Mrs. Evans. Though extremely practical andof an orderly disposition, she was very affectionate. Of her love for her two youngest children George Eliot writes in " Brother and Sister" and we are told that when they went fishing their basket " held a store baked for us only".

The elder sister Chrissy seems to have differed greatly from Marian in temperament. We have a very good portrait of her in Celia Brooke, in " Middlemarch". The most important infldence upon George Eliot, within the home, was her brother Isaac. Though not at all unusual boy he becomes interesting to us through the affection lavished upon him by his sister. It was characteristic of the girl no less than the woman of later years, that she must have someone on whom she could expend her love and devotion. Her brother treated her kindly and accepted her homage in a very matter-of-fact way. Shejoined in all his boyish games, neglecting her own dolls and play things when her beloved brother was near, and felt very grateful for the affection he in t urn bestowed on her.

" His years with others must the sweeter be,
For those brief days he spent in loving me".
(" Brother and Sister")

In depicting Maggie and Tom Tulliver, George Eliot draws upon her own character and that of her brother. " The Mill on the Floss " is the most autobiagraphical of her works for here her own childish joys and sorrows are idealized and her brother shares them in a large part.

Aside from this family group there are the neighbors with whom she was familiar and who formed her earliest acquaintance with the outside world. The little girl listened to the conversations between farmers and her father with whom she sometimes drove, and thus became acquainted with the prototypes of those rustic characters made famous in her books.

With regard to the childhood of George Eliot, opinions differ - Mary H. Deakin in " The Early Life ofmGeorge Eliot" says " It was

a sweet, healthy, happy infancy. It made a difference throughout her whole life to herself and to her books that her childhood had been spent in pleasant country surroundings. The remembrance of those years was always there w ith its restfull, refreshing power, a priceless possession for a nature given to great intellectual effort and strong emotion". Holding an opinion quite different from this Lord Acton in his " Historical Essays and Studies" declares she "received her earliest and most enduring impressions in a region of social stability among, almost inert forces, away from the changing scenes that attend the making of history. Isolation, the recurring note of her existence set in early, for her urgent craving for love and praise was repelled by the relations around her, and her childhood was unhappy. " George Eliot herself speaks of t he effect of youthful surroundings in several places in her works. In " Theaphrastus Such", chap.2. she says, " I cherish my childish loves, - the memory of that warm little nest where my affections were fledged", and again, " Our Midland plains have never lost their familiar expression and conser-vative spirit for me." In Daniel Deronda she asserts " A human life should be well rooted in some spot of a native land, where it may get love of tender kinship for the face of the earth, for the labor men go forth to, for the sounds and accents that haunt it, for whatever will give that home a familiar unmistakable difference amidst the future widening of knowledge; a spot where the definiteness of early knowledge may be inwrought with affection, and kindly acquaintance with all neighbors even to the dogs and monkeys, may spread, not by sentimental effort and reflection, but as a sweet habit of the blood".

Perhaps the fault did not lie so much with her relatives as with George Eliot's own nature that her early life was so different from the usual years of childhood. Like Maggie Tulliner, she was a creature of moods, now revelling on the high waves of affection oblivious of sorrow while the warm rays of a brother's or a father's love surround her, and again feeling life is but a sad thing when that love is withdrawn or when she has incurred displeasure through childish wrongs. Then, like the "little wench " in " The Mill" she rushed to her usual refuge the old attic to lie sobbing on the floor. A mother's understanding love seems to have been singularly lacking in both cases, a love which, had it existed, might have explained away many of the childish doubts and questionings. But this " ugly duckling" seems to have been in explicable to the industrious housewife who, like Mrs. Tilliver was probably more concerned about the number of extra leaves to be placed in the dining-table, " besides reaching down more o' the dinner-service" when the family of aunts and uncles came to dine, than about the mental problems the little girl drew before her. The child seems to have been mor than usually sensitive and self-distrustful, and at the same time proud, and the family,not realizing the extra demand made upon them for affection and sympathy, failed to supply it.

(3) Her school days began when she was five, the first four years being spent in attendance at Miss Lathom's boardingschool a short distance from Griff. Here she suffered from cold and this affected her

health for life. Perhaps also we may attribute her subsequent depression in spirit, and consequently much of the sadness of her novels to this ill-health. She attended school at Nuneaton, and again, entered a school kept by two daughters of a Baptist minister. She remained here three years, making rapid progress in French and German. At the end of this period she returned home owing to her mother's ill-health, and not long after, her mother's death left her in complete charge of all the household duties. Though extremely busy she devoted a certain amount of attention to her studies, Italian German, and music in particular. Her zeal for knowledge led her to far greater an extent in her choice of subjects than might be expected. Her enjoyment in reading at this time had a strong influence upon her later works- these early literary delights are introduced into several of her novels, e. g. "The Linnet's Life", Aesop's Fables", and what might seem strange, Joe Miller's "Jest Book" formed her childhood's library while amongst the later books of which she makes mention in her novels are "Defoe's History of theDevil", Bunyans "Pilgrim's Progress", "Rasselas", and fragments of Lamb's "Essays". Perhaps the most important of the authors she read as a child is Scott, fot to his influence she attributed the first of her religious difficulties.

(4(In his novels Scott does not lay particular emphasis on the creed to which his characters belong andto the keen perception of George Elliot this was of importance. She wondered why it was that so many of his characters, though apparently of a high moral standard, should not belong to any one denomination. The seed fell on fertile soil, and soon there sprouted forth a number of petty doubts and questionings, which resulted at a later date, in the full harvest of Agnosticism.

While in her teens, her studies were chiefly on theological subjects and many of the books she read were hardly of a nature to strengthen her religious beliefs. The religion of her childhood had been"a quiet, unimpassioned thing, a simple teaching of rules of life with dim expected rewards and punishments to be proportioned to one's actions". Later the revived religion of which she learnt so much from Miss Lewis afforded simple means of expressing her pent up deep devotion. This in turn gave way before the influence of the Misses Franklin whose school she later attended. Here the doctrine of Calvanism was received and for a while satisfied her. Amongst the books she read at this period were "Tracts for the Times". and Isaac Taylor's " Ancient Christianity". The latter was but a pre-cursor of Charles Hennell"s "Origin of Christianity" which completed the destructive work of undermining her faith.

(5) At twenty-one Dorothea Brooke, full of aspirations, and longings, feels she has at last entered upon a path of definate progress towards a higher intellectual and spiritual life in marrying a scholar of forty whose life is devoted to the compositon of a key to all mythologies.

George Eliot at the same age is filled with much the same intensity of feeling, the same desire to do some definite good in the world, a great desire for sympathy and affection, and, underlying all, a spirit of unrest and unbelief in spiritual matters, open to the influence of any strong intellect with sufficient arguments to convince her.

2. (1) This new authority appeared in 1841 when George Eliot and her father moved to Coventry. Her brother had married and taken over his father's business leaving the latter free to live a more leisure life. At Coventry George Eliot met many new friends. At this time her mind was eagerly seeking knowledge and the truth. In a letter to an old governess, Miss Lewis, she writes " My whole soul has been engrossed in the most interesting of all enquiries for the last few days, and to what result my thoughts will lead I know not - possibly to one that will startle you; but my desire is to know the truth, my only fear to cling to error". This then is the frame of mind in which she was when she met the Brays, a family which very soon and very successfully instructed her in the principles of free-thinking. " The revolution was sudden but it was complete - - After that November no misgiving favorable to Christianity ever penetrated her mind or shook for an instant its settled unbelief ---- When George Eliot became a consummate expert in the pathology struggles of expiring faith. " (Lord Acton. " Historical Essays and Studies "). Upon entering cultivated society she was initiated into the mysteries of scepticism", and her youthful convictions " artlessly propped upon Young and Hannah Moore, yielded to the varied influences. As in her reading of Scott, she connected the fact that the Brays were good- living people with that of their unbelief, and in a very illogical way reasoned that their religion or lack of it, must be commendable. Mrs Bray she declares to be " the most religious person she knew".

This attitude of mind evoked strong disapproval from her father which led to a temporary breaking up of the home. A reconciliation was affected, however, and George Eliot was a perfect daughter for the next seven years till her father's death. She made many friends at this time amongst them being Robert Owen, Emerson, and Dr. Brabant, a personal friend of Strauss whose " Life of Jesus " George Eliot later translated. The work was uncongenial, in spite of her lack of faith, and she found endurance for the translation only in keeping an image of the crucified Savior before her.

(2) Mr. Evans died on May 31st, 1849, and his daughter left shortly after for Geneva. The long period of attendance on her father, though to her a labor of love, had severely taxed

her strength and she fell into despondent spirits. At Geneva she found the necessaty peace and quiet with thoughtful friends, M. and Mme. d'Albert, who gave her the affection for which her nature longed at all times and particularly at this period of sorrow. The idea of returning to England filled her with dismay. " It looks to me like a land of gloom. of "ennui", of platitude but in the midst of all it is the land of duty and affection; and the only ardent hope I have for my future life is to have given to me some womans's duty, some possibility of devoting myself where I may see a daily result of pure, calm blessedness in the life of another". (Letter to Mrs. Bray, Dec. 4th, 1849). The love of our fellow-creatures becomes the predominant note in her works, and the first germ of what is later so widely developed in her novels is found here.

This period of her life forms what might be called the divisional point between her girlhood and her maturity. She feels that the death of her father has removed the last existing bond that linked her to the past, which, though it did not satisfy the intellectual side of her nature, did, to a certain extent, fill her days with definate work in mimistering to her father. Now, like a child who feels itself capable of taking its initial step without a guiding hand, yet hesitates, so George Eliot experiencing all the longing of an unsatisfied girlhood, delays her first attempt at realizing her hopes of happiness in some " womans duty", and takes shelter in the love surrounding her in the d'Albert household. Like Romola, she feel that all to whom she was of assistance have gone, and her nature seems more lonely and depressed than ever. Conscious however, that she must not remain indefinitely with the d'Alberts, as Romola obeyed the voice of duty and returned to Florence, so George Eliot heard the same compelling voice, and left to seek her proper sphere in the new arrangement of things and to fulfil her duties.

(3) Maturity. London. - Upon her return to England in 1844 George Eliot spent some time with her friends the Brays, Here she met Mr. Chapman, the new editor of the"Westminster Review" for whom she wrote an article on the"Progress of Intellect" Her assistance was also of great help in arranging a new prospectus for the magazine, and finally in September, 1851, being offered the position of assistant- editor, she accepted, and moved to London, where she became an inmate of Mr. Chapman's home. In her new capacity as editor there began the arduous task of reviewing, reading " great, dreary articules", and in general performing the usual drudgery accompanying such a position. We ask ourselves what contribution this work might

make to the main output of her life, her novels. She, herself felt " the d issatis faction and despair of achieving anything worth the doing" under this regime, whose sole demand upon her ability lay in passing sentence upon the fruits of other's genius. Nevertheless, with her characteristic conscientiousness she gave of her best, and in her critical articles we may find many of the traits which later formed so great a part of the charm of her novels. " Here was the same love of common human life,the same interest in its humbler forms and expressions; the like penetrating analysis and the subtle portrayal of character; a psychological method of the same probing and comprehensive method. Her main philosophical ideas were indicated here, though not given that clear and incisive expression they afterwards received. "(G. W. Cooke. " George Eliot". chap. 2. page 38).

That she left Coventry for London was probably the best thing that could have happened to her. " She had learnt all there was to learn at Griff and Coventry and was athirst for more. Most of her materials she was to use in her novels was already gathered, but it needed ripening and mellowing by time and still more by distance, not until she got quite away from the persons she had studied could she get a right view of them and see where they differed from others and what were the characteristics to be emphasized. Probably if she had remained with the Brays she would have been forever inarticulate, for the writing of such reviews as might have come her way could by no means have been an articulation of the things she had to say. Almost certainly she would never have met Lewes, and without Lewes there had been no " Mill on the Floss", no " Middle-March", no one of all her works. " (Mary H.Deakin. "The Early Life of George Eliot ". chap 9. p.75).

In the pursuit of her duties as sub. editor she was necessarily brought into contact with many of the leading literary characters of the day some of whom were, J. S. Mill, Carlyle, Froude, Harriet Martineau, Francis Newman, and Herbe Spencer. By the last mentioned person, George H. Lewes was introduced to George Eliot.

The career of Lewes up to this time had been a very unusual and interesting one. The son of an actor, he had spent most of his time in deep study of a variety of subjects, medicine and philosophy engaging his attention to the greatest extent. The results of his literary work were as varied as the many phases of his Bohemian life, including among oth things a three-act tragedy, a novel, a history of philosophy, a "Life of Robespierre", and later in life when physiology attracted his attention, a "Physiology of Common Life". " Studies in Animal Life", and " Problems of Life and Mind",

At the time of his meeting with George Eliot, he had already been married, his wife later deserting him for a friend and co-editor of his, Theodore Hunt. Her husband forgave her and took her back but she again left, and, according to the law. Lewes could not marry again. Therefore when he and George Eliot recognised in each other a mutual attraction of mind and heart, realizing the impossibility of their marriage taking place, they decided to dispense with that legality. Therefore on July 20th, 1854, they left England together, proceeding to Weimar and Berlin.

The effect of this step on her career was of the greatest importance. To her friends and relatives it was inexplicable. She had early expressed her views with regard to the flaws in the existing system of marriage. She considered men and women less eager to please one another when the marriage ties were indissoluble, and again, she felt the pathos of incompatibility of character in wedded lives. After reading Jane Eyre she had given utterance to her dislike of a system which would chain " a man body and soul to a putrefying carcase." Her works afford numerous examples of unhappy marriages and in their depiction she shows how thoroughly she sympathized with those to whom marriage was made hideous by the crushing out of all nobler ambitions and aspirations. To cite but one example at present, we have the marriage of Rosamond Viney to Lydgate in " Middlemarch". Here it is the wife who is the impediment, a parasite, whose incessant demand for the luxuries of life (~~absorbs all~~) seeks to coin the vitality of her husband's intellect into the means for obtaining these luxuries. rather than devote it to a larger, better, end, advancing the interests of humanity in working out " the proof of an anatomical conception" and thus making " a link in the chain of discovery". He obtained what his wife desired, a successful practice, comfortable home, and a fair share of fame by writing an article on "Gout", a disease which has a good deal of wealth on its side". But he was not true to himself or his ideals ans died at fifty, a brokenhearted man.

George Eliot believed marriage to be the union or two souls for life " to strenghten each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain to one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting". ("Adam Bede" Bk. 6, chap. L 4.) That the union with Lewes fulfilled this office there can be little doubt. She supplied what stability might have been lacking through the "versatile, high-strung, somewhat wayward nature" of Lewes, and he acknowledges his indebtedness. In speaking of the introduction effected by Spencer, he said, " It was through him I learned to know Marian - to knowher was to love her - and since then my life has been a new birth. To her I owe all my prosperity and my happiness. God bless her! " The debt, if it might be so called did not all liewith

Lewes. He stood between her and the world, supplied the ever-present need for companionship and love, relieved her as much as possible from care and trouble, and above all, it was he who discovered her genius as a novelist.

The influence of this action on the part of George Eliot on her works is very good. We judge of a mans' character by his deeds. In her works George Eliot advocates a high moral standard, marriage is represented as sacred, and, as in "Romola" the marriage bonds are shown to be not easily sundered. How then explain the inconsistency between her written work and her life? In the perusal of her works there is no specific case that might be (~~points~~) considered and vindication of her own illegal union. Maggie Tulliver holds a higher moral conception than her creator when pleading with Stephen Guest. " There are things we must renounce in life; some of us must renounce love". Our duty to our fellow- creatures requires renunciation at times and Maggie's case is one of these instances - "Many things are difficult and dark to me, but I see one thing quite clearly - that I must not, cannot seek my own happiness by sacrificing others. Love is natural, but surely pity and faithfulness and memory are natural too. (" Mill on the Floss". Bk. 6, chap.11") Romola is also convinced by Savonarola of the sanctity and inviolability of marriage. Perhaps in this unfortunate slip of George Eliot's we can see the result of her study of Feuerbach's " Essence of Christianity" in which he says:- " Thatalone is a religious marriage which is true marriage, whichcorresponds to the essence of marriage - love". She was quite able to realize, however, that her illicit union was contrary to the laws of the country made for the betterment of humanity, and consequently she directly opposed what her writings declare to be the most essential social tie. However lenient we may be towards the woman to whom the love and sympathy obtained by this union was so essential, we cannot but censure her action when we consider what her strenght of character accompanied by a true sense of what we owe our fellow-beings by example, might have done. Destitute as she was of Christian faith she could obtain none of the moral support and comfort which it might bestow in her renunciation of the wrong. Her works teach us love of our neighbours as forming, with us, society and the state, yet her union with Lewes, as a practical part of her philosophy, is sufficient evidence of how little moral result may be expected from so insufficient a creed. Love of our fellow-men is admirable but not enough to cause a man to renounce always what is most pleasing to him even though it be wrong. There must be something higher, nobler to satisfy mankind, and this we find in Christianity which is founded on sacrifice. George Eliot acknowledges the duty of loving our neighbor as ourself but rejects what alone makes this possible, viz. to do so for the love of God, - hence her failure.

2. Union with G.H.Lewes---(1) The step once taken there was evidently no thought of drawing back. After the journey to Weimer and Berlin t hey took up their residence at Richmond where they remained for the next three years. For a short time George Eliot was engaged in essay-writing and review work-

These are important chiefly because they indicate a transition or developement in her character. Her letters give us one phase of her mind. A loving woman, " clinging eargerly to every woman's duty, warmly attached to her friends, often suffering and lonely, mistrustful of herself and of the future, in desperate need of sympathetic help, exceedingly conscientious in all things, and with a deep-rooted love for truth and honesty and whatever things are lovely". (Mary H.Deakin. " The early Life of Geirge Eliot." chap.12) In her critical work we encounter a more assertive tone, more self-reliant statements, an element hitherto foreign to her literary works. This we may probably consider as a consequence of the independent attit ude taken with regard to her relations with Lewes. She shakes off the fetters of reserve which have hitherto bound her and takes a bold stand for what she considers reformation in the interests of humanity. Literature, science, politics, are all dealt with impartiality by her critical mind. George Eliot was not at her best in the sphere of criticism. She was too severe to be just, too didactic, yet her work of this period was valuable in its contribution t o her later efforts. Her style was materially aided by the pratice obtained in her critical work as sub-editor of the "Westminster Review" and again in this later period of review-work.

Another important change, the beginning of which we find in this period, and the result of which we see in her novels, is her new attitude towards religion. She becomes less hostile to it, and is prepared to see the good it embodies. The early change in her religious convictions left her bitterly opposed to religion. This antagonistic mood is gradually abandoned and her treatment of the subject in her novels is generally tolerant.

(2) "Scenes of Clerical Life"- Her critical work did not satisfy Geirge Eliot's innate ability to create. It was not enough that she should criticize other people's works and pass sentence on them. She had already tried her hand at novel-writing but had accomplished only " an introductory chapter describing a Staffordshire village and the life of the neighboring farm-houses".(George Eliot Memorandum) In her journal July 20th, 1856, there is practically the first mention made of her hope that she might succeed in fiction- writing. " I am anxious to begin my fiction writing andso am not inclined to undertake an article that will give me much trouble, but at all events, I will finish my article on Young".

During their sojourn in Germany she happened upon the manuscript of her early attempt at fiction and read it to Lewes who approved it and encouraged her to undertake writing a novel. Nothing definite resulted however, till Sep. 1856, when upon the repeated assertion of Lewes " You must try and write a story" she seriously considered doing so. According to her own words the exact subject she should deal with was not clear to her till, as she says, " One morning as I was thinking what should be the subject of my first story, my thoughts merged themselves into a dreamy doze and I imagined myself writing a story of which the title was "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton" The thought

was communicated to Lewes who though he received it with the words, "oh, what a capital title!" was not entirely convinced that she would succeed. He doubted her ability to command pathos but was reassured on this point by her description of the death-bed scene in "Amos Barton", and told her "I think your pathos better than your fun".

After she had begun to write the idea came to her of writing a series of stories, consisting of sketches drawn from her own observation of the clergy, and calling them "Scenes from Clerical Life", the first of which would be "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton". Thus was her first piece of fiction begun. Her publisher, to whom the manuscript was sent by Lewes, replied favorably, yet guardedly, the work was good yet he could not definitely accept it till he saw more of the series. This tended to discourage the author. Later Blackwood agreed to publish it without seeing more, though not promising to publish the later tales of the series till he had seen them. The"Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton" was published in "Blackwood's Magazine" beginning January 1857, and the two succeeding tales, "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story", and "Janet's Repentance", in succeeding issues. The three were published in 1858 as "Scenes of Clerical Life". A fourth story was originally intended, but through pique caused by Blackwood's lack of sympathy with regard to the early part of "Janet's Repentance", George Eliot abandoned her intention. The "Scenes of Clerical Life" apart from their intrinsic value as interesting short stories with certain phases of English clerical life, have a two-fold attraction for students of George Eliot. In the first instance, they present a fresh, spontaneous depiction of scenes, incidents, and influences of George Eliot's early life, and also, they contain the nucleus of what is elaborated in her later novels and known as her "philosophy of life".

The scenes of this fruit of her genius are laid in the Midland country with which George Eliot had been familiar as a child. The characters are drawn from those with whom she associated, and also from remembered descriptions when she was a child, and they belong to very much the same class as did the Evans family. The second story of the series does, to a certain extent, deal with a rank of which she knew as a child only by hearsay, but the interest of the story lies chiefly in the pity excited by Mr. Gilfil's love affair - that of a man who is, to all appearances, but a kindly-hearted vicar without any particular claim to very great erudition. One feels the author is certain of her ground and has no fear of entering a region foreign to her acquaintance. This fact constitutes the very great charm of the scenes. The naturalness of the setting and the characters attracts our sympathy at once, and in all three stories the local color bestows a tone of sincerity that adds conviction to the story itself. We are taught to love the neighborhood of her early home in "Amos Barton"; we see the parish church at which she was bap-

tized, and its parsonage; we get a faint glimpse of the farmyard at Griff, through the kindness of Mrs. Hackitt in inviting Nicky there: we see the Chilvers Coton workhouse - still a square, gloomy building, with a forbidding wall fronting a dreary little street ------ We also get a slight knowledge of George Eliot's father and mother through the main characteristics of Mr. and Mrs. Hackit. The Rev. Amos Barton suggested to all those who had known him the Rev. John Gwyther who was also a middling man, and who rebuilt the church, and had a lovely wife like the sweet Milly, a wife whom he too had to leave buried in the old church-yard when he went to another parish. The grave is near the chief entrance of Chilvers Coton Church and is pointed out to visitors as"Milly's grave". To a priest not unlike poor Amos, Marian had looked in her stormy eager girlhood for teaching, and from the hands of Mrs. Evans had Mrs. Gwyther often received tender friendly help."(Deakin, Mary H., "The Early Life of George Eliot"). In her ability to paint the English country life such as to make it known and loved as long as her works endure George Eliot may be compared with Scott in his treatment of Scotch rural life, and with Thackery in his depiction of the higher strata of society in his day. This fidelity to nature in these episodes is due to her keen power of observation in her early days and to her extreme sensitiveness to exterior influences. Nature had a varied interest for her, even the dumb animals receiving a goodly share of attention. "Animals are such agreeable friends, they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms". The personal element enters into these descriptions of scenery remembered vividly from childhood and causes her to dwell upon them fondly as intimately associated with her recollections of what was perhaps the happiest period of her life.

The main incidents of "Amos Barton" were evidently taken from an event of which George Eliot heard when about twelve years old. The curate at that time was in somewhat the same circumstances as Amos, very poor, with seven small mouths to feed. A strange woman visited the parsonage and, doubtless, the same gossip prevailed as is shown in "Amos Barton". The wife, patient and enduring was overcome by the excessive burdens placed upon her shoulders as a poor curate's help mate, and she died shortly after. This simple event George Eliot has made memorable by centering it in her first work of fiction. Amos, indeed, is a "middling" clergyman, "in no respects an ideal or exceptional character". Nor were his virtues unusual, nor had he any "undetected crime within his breast - in fact he was "palpably and unmistakably commonplace". Nevertheless to her he was a most interesting type. These were the characters that appealed to her and engaged her attention always. Brought up amidst a class not at all remarkable for unusual genius, though she did prove to be an "ugly duckling", it was natural she should be at her best portraying it. We shall see that in her later novels in which she wanders far afield from her early surroundings for a subject, she is not so successful.

The pathos of such conditions as surrounded Amos and Milly, as well as the commonplace type to which Amos belonged, always made a special appeal to the sympathy of George Eliot. The absolute stupidity of the man under circumstances demanding the exertion of a little common-sense becomes very realistic and pathetic when portrayed by her pen. Her purpose in choosing such characters for her novels was "to rouse sympathy for figures who at first repel the more cultivated and intelligent". (Leslie Stephen.George Eliot." Chap. 4) She tells us "commonplace people, many of them, bear a conscience and have felt the sublime prompting to do the painful right, they have their unspoken sorrows, and their sacred joys; their hearts have perhaps gone out towards their first-born, and they have mourned over the irreclaimable dead. Nay, is there not a pathos in their very insignificance, in our comparison of their dim and narrow existence with the glorious possibilities of that human nature which they share?" ("Amos Barton", Chap.5).

George Eliot was acutely sympathetic towards those whose life is a daily human sacrifice offered upon the altar of duty and love. The gentle wife of Amos is one of these, and in her, renunciation, one of the tenets of George Eliot's philosophy, is embodied.

It is interesting to note that in most of her feminine characters, our author has, consciously or not, drawn a portrait of her self - In Milly we may recognize many of George Eliot's own characteristics. "Among strangers she was shy and tremulous as a girl of fifteen; she blushed crimson if anyone appealed to her opinion; yet that tall, graceful, substantial presence was so imposing in its mildness that men spoke to her with an agreeable sensation of timidity". Another very characteristic trait in her "sublime capacity for loving".

"Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" is also founded onfact. The Knebley Church of which Mr. Gilfil was vicar, was but a short distance from Chilvers Coton. Built in the reign of Edward third, it had fallen into ruin but was repaired by Sir Roger Newdigate, owner of the Arbury Estate, before the birth of George Eliot. She describes it vividly in her introductory chapter as "a wonderful little church, with a checkered pavement which had once rung to the iron tread of military monks, with coats of arms in clusters on the lofty roof, marble warriors and their wives without noses occupying a large proportion of the area, and the twelve apostles with their heads very much on one side, holding didactic scrip ribbons, painted in fresco on the walls". The weekly meeting of the farmers and their wives and families for worship in such a church was a familiar sight to her as a child and her description of their method of attendance is quite graphic. There is a slight touch of irony in the succeeding remark in which she speaks of their departure after service - "they made their way back again through the miry lanes, perhaps almost as much the better for their simple weekly tribute

to what they knew of good and right, as many a more wakeful and critical congregation of the present day".

Cheveral Manor in the story is in reality, Arbury Hall the residence of Sir Roger Newdigate, and Sir Christopher Cheveral is Sir Roger himself. The incident of the "architectural metamorphosis" of the manor was based on the rebuilding of the Hall in Gothic style by Sir Roger. All this had taken place before George Eliot's birth but doubtless the result appealed to her childish fancy, and she had probably peopled the old Hall in her imagination, with somewhat the same personnages as those of the story.

Sir Roger and his wife, themselves, had adopted a cotter's daughter, Sally Shilton, whose musical talent they recognized. When her health caused her to abandon her course as a singer they still treated her with every kindness and she eventually married a Mr. Ebdill, vicar of "Shepperton". Throughout "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" we can trace the parallel between the two stories. The incident of Sally's adoption is made use of, and in addition, Sir Roger's heir is also introduced in a very romantic way as the disturbing third party in an otherwise ideal match. In real life he died when Sally was about twenty, and she lived a longer life than it pleased George Eliot to grant Caterina Sarti, of whom she was the original. A love story between Sally and Sir Roger's heir, Charles Parker is created by George Eliot out of this material. That these were characters in real life, prototypes of those of her "Scenes", the author admitted while declaring her intention of not repeating "the mistake". We can hardly agree with her in considering this procedure a "mistake" since it furnishes greater spontanity to her work than we find in any other of her novels.

There is a deeper power of penetration in this second story of the series, a greater psychological insight, but it is not as pleasing a tale as her first production. The characters are objects of pity rather than pathetic. Mr. Gilfil represents a type of the clergy with which George Eliot is not quite so familiar as with that to which Amos Barton belongs. Her portrayal of the Vicar is sympathetic and full of pity but there is not the pathos we find on "Amos Barton", nor is it as natural to her to portray characters of the class dealt with in "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story", as to portray those in "Amos Barton". She is not sufficiently at ease in her new rôle as novelist to undertake the depiction of a class as different from that of her first attempt.

Moreover, she undertakes in this second story a more difficult subject than in her first, and cannot be said to be at her best in its presentment. The passions of Christiana's foreign nature, her momentary desire to kill, are well drawn but do not excite sympathy. An interesting point in this connection is the deep psychological insight of the author

with regard to Tina's character-portrayal at this moment of temptation. To the frightened girl who is horrified at her own evil thought and inclination, Mr. Gilfil says, "We mean to do wicked things that we never could do, just as we mean to do good and clever things that we never could do. Our thoughts are often worse than we are, just as they are often better than we are. And God sees us as we are altogether, not in separate feelings or actions, as our fellowmen see us". (Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" Chap. 19).

This portrayal of love and passionate impulse marks a step forward in the career of George Eliot as a novelist. This is the first instance we have in her works, of misplaced love, a theme she deals with at greater length in later novels. Mr. Gilfil's true love is unavailing, while Tina in turn, pines away through unrequited misplaced love. In all her later works George Eliot presents a study of the sentiment of love in a similar manner - The bestowal of affection, usually on the part of a woman, upon an unworthy character was a subject of great interest to her.

Through the character of Anthony Wybrow she presents, for the first time, her belief in the Hebrew formula, "that they who sow the wind, shall reap the whirlwind". (Cross, W.L. "The Development of the English Novel" Chap. 7) This idea is not worked out with the detail and precision that she bestows on it in her later works, but is in more or less of an embryological state here.

The minor characters in both these stories are very realistic and evidently drawn from life. Mrs. Hackit possesses several of the qualities of Mrs. Evans who is also the prototype of Mrs. Poyser in "Adam Bede". The quick tongue and epigrammatic speech of Mrs. Hackit were as characteristic of Mrs. Evans as were her innate benevolence and goodness.

The conversations recorded as taking place in the housekeeper's room at Cheveral Manor, doubtless contain the substance of what the servants at Arbury Hall said about the adoption of Sally Shilton, and are very humorous and realistic.

Thus there is an autobiographic element current in these two narratives; "the first and simplest," "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton", is by far the best (of the series). The poorest is the second, "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" "Janet's Repentance" with its fine central figure of the unhappy wedded wife is strong, sincere, appealing, and much of the local color is admirable. But the narrative falls below the beautiful, quiet chronicle of the days of Amos, an exquisite portrayal of an average man who yet stands for humanity's best". (Burton Masters of the English Novel").

"Janet's Repentance" the third of the series has for its subject the mistreatment of a good woman by her drunken husband, Dempster, her resort to liquor that it might dull her sensibility to suffering, her husband's persecution of an Evangelical minister, Tryan, the death of her husband, and her ultimate reclamation by Tryan from a life of inert passivity induced by the influence of intoxicants.

Once more George Eliot had her subject and scene ready at hand. "In the Weddington churchyard lies the body of the inebriate Dempster, who ruled at the Red Lion. His dark career, the riot he instigated against the Evangelical Tryan, and the patient suffering of his wife are all well-known traditions about Nuneaton". (Cross, W. L., "The Development of the English Novel". Chap 7) George Eliot excels in her portrayal of Dempster, her faculty for realistic description having a wide scope in the presentation of so thorough a "villain".

Mr. Tryan's character and the rôle he plays are the result of a persecuting riot, under somewhat the same circumstances shown in "Janet's Repentance", which George Eliot witnessed while a child at boarding-school. At this school her governess, Miss Lewis, an ardent Evangelical Churchwoman, had great influence over her and this also may have had some part in her choice of a third story. Though at the time of writing the "Scenes" she abandoned those early religious beliefs their memory remained distinctly - Evangelicalism as she knew it is portrayed here but chiefly in its humanitarian aspect rather than in the depiction of its devotional spirit and religious purpose. It is rather Evangelicalism viewed from the "melioist" standpoint of George Eliot.

Janet Dempster is the most psychological of her characters thus far, her others being more or less drawn from exterior observation, but Janet is the expression of much that George Eliot felt and experienced herself. Her own sufferings and soul struggles had been of a different kind from those of her earlier characters. The misery of self-dissatisfaction was known to her in all its intensity, likewise the longing after something higher and better in life than she had yet known, and "it is the treatment of these two emotions that does most to make Janet live". (Mary H. Dealin. "The Early Life of George Eliot". Chap 13, p. 135).

The relation which Janet Dempster and her husband bear to one another is interesting because it is a relation which George Eliot treats of quite often. She is unable to refrain from introducing her own feelings into her feminine characters - Janet's need of guidance and affection is but a reflection of her own need throughout life of a character stronger than her own to protect and love her. Dorothia Brooke, Gwendolyn Harcourt, Romola, and Maggie Tulliver, all have this characteristic in common with their portrayer.

Apart from the interest which early surroundings and personal sentiment attach to this first work there was another important source from which George Eliot drew for its accomplishment. Of the author of "Cranford" and "Ruth" she wrote in 1853, "Mrs. Gaskell seems to me to be constantly misled by a love of sharp contrasts, - of "dramatic" effects. She is not contented with the subdued coloring - the half tints of real life ---- But how pretty and graphic are the touches of description", (Letter to Mrs. Peter Taylor. 1st Feb. 1853). It was Mrs. Gaskell however, who furnished her with a model in the "externals of her art and in the choice of her subject"; (Cross, V. L., "The Development of the English Novel" Chap. 7, page 230) e. g. Mary Barton is the Milly Barton in "Amos", Maggie Brown becomes Maggie Tulliver. More important a similarity is the fact that both novelists wrote of the rural life of England in the period before the Reform Bill. To Dickens, also, she owed the art of close observation and description, but unlike Dickens she records her observations in a kindly constructive manner. Her model seeks to bring about reforms in poor laws and schools by a destructive, satirical method.

The "Scenes" were written at a time when George Eliot had cast aside all faith in a personal God, and advocated a "religion of humanity". As I have already said, she had been brought up in the Church of England, had accepted its teaching in a quiescent manner while young; she had later passed through a period of deep religious fervor under the influence of Miss Lewis, and while acting as her father's housekeeper after her mother's death, she found great consolation in dwelling in a severe religious state of mind. This was a period of simplicity in dress and coiffure, expressions of deep religious sentiment in letters to her governess, and a distaste for music as a "useless accomplishment". This tendency ran the full gamut and there was the inevitable reaction. It was not sufficiently sincere or humble to produce the desired end, viz., total satisfaction of her spiritual longings. A certain pride would not permit her reading adverse criticisms of her works, and in like manner, in her attitude towards religion even in her sincerest Evangelical period, there was a pride which depended too much upon her own power of endurance and faith, and too little on the mercy and power of God. Where she seems most sincere in her letters expressing religious fervor there is an undertone of self-satisfaction at having attained so great perfection in religious fervor. In the words of one of her favorite authors, "what avails it thee to discourse deeply of the Trinity if thou be void of humility and therefore displeasing to the Trinity". ("Imitation of Christ" Thomas à Kempis. Bk. 1, chap. 1), or again "Some, wanting in caution, have ruined themselves by reason of the grace of devotion; because they were desirous of doing more than they could, not weighing well the measure of their own littleness, but following rather the inclinations of the heart than the dictates of reason.

And because they presumptously undertook greater things than were pleasing to God, therefore they quickly lost grace. (Ibid. Chap. 7, Bk. 3).

Thus we find George Eliot, in 1841, undergoing a change of religious convictions. She takes pleasure in artistic tendencies, is more general in her choice of subjects for reading, and this latter tendency is what finally brought about the unsettled state of mind which provided good ground for the teaching of the Brays. The culmination was reached in the reading of Hennell's "Enquiry concerning the Origin of Christianity" and "Christian dogma was forever dethroned from her soul." Though a creature of deep impulses and affection her religion had not been enough to satisfy the cravings of her nature. It was natural that in her transitional mood she should adopt a philosophy of life which provided an outlet her affection. This she found in love for humanity in her sympathy with the sufferings and sorrows, as well as with the joys, of humanity. This change was not instantaneous; there was bitter opposition to Christianity at first, interspersed with periods of regret for her querulous attitude towards the world at large. She expressed her belief that this is a "world of bliss and beauty" and declared that as she grew older she became happier. This, doubtless, is true. Her love and sympathy for mankind increased as she advanced in years and brought a certain peace with them.

At the time she wrote the "Scenes" the spirit of hostility which she at first felt towards the Christian religion, had largely disappeared and she was able to draw impartial pictures of the English clergy. That she succeeded in certain; Amos Barton, Mr. Gilfil, and Mr. Tryan are portrayed with a fidelity that would do credit to one of the cloth. The first two are indeed considered not so much in the light of their special calling and teaching, as from the standpoint of two very human clergymen who have both had their joys and sorrows. Mr. Tryan is approached in a different manner. He represents what is best in the Evangelical movement as George Eliot saw it and she portrays it gratefully for what it meant to her in the past. Yet it seems impossible for her to depict the more spiritual side of the movement, and we feel that it is merely subsidiary to the religion which George Eliot holds in mind as most important - that of humanity. Under the circumstances Tryan might as well have belonged to the Calvanistic or any other mode of thought for his value in the author's sight was that he had left behind him as a memorial "Janet Dempster, rescued from self-despair, strengthened with divine hopes, and now looking back on years of purity and helpful labor". "(Janet's Repentance" Chap. 28).

In this early work we also see her first illustration of what is known as the "law of consequences". Dempster in "Janet's Repentance" is but an echo of the great moral catastrophe presented by Tito in "Romola", but the Nemesis which

pursues him is none the less sure. "Nemesis is lame, but she is of colossal stature, like the gods, and sometimes, while her sword is not yet unsheathed, she stretches out her huge left hand and grasps her victim. The mighty hand is invisible, but the victim totters under the dire clutch". (Ibid. Chap. 13). This indeed is the key note to her later works and, to a great extent, her creed.

The work as a whole presents a very complete summary of the philosophy of George Eliot at this time; her love and sympathy for suffering humanity are shown in "Amos Barton" and "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story", and the relation between the individual and the great system of which he is a part, "What were our little Tina and her troubles in this mighty torrent, rushing from one awful unknown to another? Lighter than the smallest centre of quivering life in the water-drop. " ("Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" Chap. 5).

(2) "Adam Bede" - The "Scenes of Clerical Life" were finished on Oct. 9th, 1857, and on the 22d of the same month her next story was begun. In a letter to John Blackwood, Oct. 17, 1857, she writes:- "My new story haunts me a good deal, and I shall set about it without delay. It will be a country story - full of the breath of cows and the scent of hay". On Oct. 22d, the following entry is made in her journal:- "Began my new novel "Adam Bede". The work was written for the most part in Germany, where she and Lewes spent most time, and from her diary we learn that she "wrote the last word of "Adam Bede" and sent it to Mr. Langford", Nov. 16, 1858.

There was less effort required in the writing of this work than in that of any other of her novels. She seems to have taken a genuine pleasure in the composition of a work so closely connected with all her early life. In a letter to Mme. Bodichon she speaks of the work as coming from her "heart of hearts". "There was no scholarship to be kept blameless, no problem to solve, and no very complex characters to draw, with all their warring and antagonistic impulses; still more, it was because there was no picture to paint of a character made largely out of a portrait of her own personality". (Mary H. Dealin. "The Early Life of George Eliot" Chap. 15). At this period she can write with great ease of those early surroundings so dear to her, whereas to undertake a contemporaneous subject would require a very great mental strain. "At present my mind works with most freedom and the keenest sense of poetry in my remote past, and there are many strata to be worked through before I can begin to use, artistically, any material I may gather in the present". (Letters to Mme. Bodichon. Aug. 11, 1859). In her first work she succeeded in showing the beauty and pathos in the individual, but in "Adam Bede" it is the common people forming part of society with which she treats. The villagers with whom she deals all have important functions to fulfil in the development of the story. Each character is carefully portrayed and with greater success than even the admirable pen-portraits of the "Scenes". Her hand is surer because of the success of her first work and the

sympathy which greeted it, and so "Adam Bede" appears, more extensive in subject and more accurate and sympathetic in detail.

A fault which marks all her later novels makes it first appearance in "Adam Bede", and consists of the detailed attention paid to non-essentials. This tendency so aptly called by Clayton Hamilton, "the photographic method", calls for too great a strain on the part of the reader, and trusts too little to his faculty of observation. In her later novels the fault becomes more noticeable resulting in long didactic utterances so detrimental to the interest of the tale. She seems to fear that the reader may miss the exact point, the moral lesson to be drawn, or the underlying humor of an epigrammatic saying, and therefore, very conscientiously proceeds to explain in detail. In her method of teaching she differs greatly from a contemporary poet, Browning, who is satisfied with a brief word, a hint, and lets the reader draw the conclusion.

Out of this evil a certain good results, however. The fault is the outgrowth of detailed attention to whatever occupation she is engaged in. The period subsequent to her mother's death saw George Eliot immersed in the culinary arts of boiling jelly, attending to the butter-making, etc., and to all these tasks she attended most assiduously, though much of it must have been unattractive to her. Her desire to master every phase of household science led to one important result which perhaps counterbalances any too didactic traits. The inimitable description of Mrs. Poyser as an exemplary housewife whose dairy was an object of delight to all beholders, might have never been had George Eliot not studied carefully all the intricacies of the art of butter-making, as a girl.

We are told by the author that the germ of "Adam Bede" was an anecdote told her by her aunt Samuel Evans, a Methodist preacher - an anecdote from her own experience:- "how she had visited a condemned criminal - a very ignorant girl who had murdered her child and refused to confess; how she had stayed with her praying through the night, and how the poor creature at last broke out into tears and confessed her crime. My aunt afterwards went with her in the cart to the place of execution". ("Life and Letters of George Eliot" Vol. I, page 280). Though the narrative remained in her mind for some time, she mentioned it to Lewes only in 1856, when the "Scenes" were begun. With quick instinct he saw the possibility of a splendid story in the anecdote and told her so. "I afterwards began to think of blending this and some other recollections of my aunt in one story with some points in my father's early life and character (Ibid: p. 280) the difficulty lay in giving the girl an important role and in connecting it with that played by the hero. "The character of Dinah grew out of my recollections of my aunt, but Dinah is not at all like my aunt, who is a very small, black-eyed woman, ----- very vehement in her style of preaching".

"The character of Adam, and one or two incidents connected with him were suggested by my father's early life, but Adam is not my father any more than Dinah is my aunt". (Ibid. p. 281) When she began to write, she had not the full plan of her story clearly before her. "When I began to write it, the only elements I had determined on, besides the character of Dinah, were the character of Adam, his relation to Arthur Donnithorne, and their mutual relations to Hetty, i.e. to the girl who commits child-murder - the scene in the prison being, of course, the climax to which I worked". (Ibid. P.281). The ultimate relation of Dinah to Adam was suggested by Lewes who felt readers would be deeply interested in her. Acting as George Eliot does upon his suggestion, was not the happiest thing she might have done, from the standpoint of good literary style, for it provides an anticlimax which detracts attention from the main point of the story. Another suggestion made by Lewes was that Adam would become more active in the drama by being brought into direct collision with Arthur. "The fight came to me as a necessity one night at the Munich opera, when I was listening to "Wilhelm Tell". (Ibid. p. 282).

That she drew direct portraits of her father and aunt in the characters of Adam and Dinah Morris, she denies in a letter to a friend, Oct. 7, 1859. "It is not possible you should see as I do how entirely her individuality differed from Dinah's. How curious it seems to me that people should think Dinah's sermons, prayers, and speeches were copied - when they were written with hot tears, as they surged up in my own mind". She also discredits the statement that the setting of "Adam Bede" was that of any particular district she had known. "As to my indebtedness to facts of local and personal history of a small kind, connected with Staffordshire and Derbyshire, you may imagine of what kind that is when I tell you that I never remained in either of those countries more than a few days together. ---- The details which I knew as facts and have made use of for my pictures, were gathered from such imperfect illusions and narrative as I heard from my father in his occasional talk about old times". (Ibid). In spite of this statement there are many points of similarity between the characters, the description of Adam being recognized at once by many old friends of Robert Evans as a very accurate one of the land-agent himself. His love of truth and keen pleasure in his work, were two characteristics of Robert Evans as of Adam Bede. In depicting Adam she has not attempted to draw a "marvellous man", a genius, though he is not "an ordinary character among workmen", "yet", she continues, "such as he are reared here and there in every generation of our peasant artisans - with an inheritance of affections nurtured by a simple family life of common need and common industry, and an inheritance of faculties trained in skilful, courageous labour --- Their lives have no discernible echo beyond the neighborhood where they dwell, but you are almost sure to find there some good piece of work, some building, some application of mineral produce, some improvement in farm-

ing practice, some reform of parish abuses, with which their names are associated by one or two generations after them". ("Adam Bede". Chap. 19). This is true of her father whose unusual ability along several of these specific lines was recognized by the owners of large estates who sought his opinion in such matters.

It might be claimed then that the story is a result of these varied sources, none perhaps being used in its entirety. "It is a delightful picture of country life, and for idyllic loveliness is scarcely equalled, never surpassed in English literature". (J. W. Cooke. "George Eliot" Chap. 13) The minute observation and description of a typical Sunday on the farm is very realistic. "You might have known it was Sunday if you had only worked up in the farm yard. The cocks and hens seemed to know it, and made only crooning subdued noises; the very bull-dog looked less savage, as if he would have been satisfied with a smaller bite than usual. The sunshine seemed to call all things to rest and not to labor, it was asleep itself on the moss-grown cow-shed, --- on Alick, the shepherd, in his new smock-frock taking an uneasy siesta, half-sitting, half-standing, on the granary steps". ("Adam Bede". Chap. 16).

The introduction to Mrs. Poyser's cooling dairy and its description is another "chef-d'oeuvre". "It was a scene to sicken for with a sort of calenture in hot and dusty streets - such coolness, such purity, such fresh fragrance of new-pressed cheese, of firm butter, of wooden vessels perpetually bathed in pure water; such soft coloring of red earthenware and creamy surfaces, brown wood and polished tin, gray limestone and rich orange-red rust on the iron weights and hooks and hinges". ("Adam Bede". Chap. 7, p. 64). Mrs. Poyser herself is a more or less accurate description of George Eliot's mother whose kindness of heart was surpassed only by her excellent housekeeping abilities and her rather sharp tongue.

It has been said that George Eliot derived more pleasure from the writing of "Adam Bede" than from any other of her works. This perhaps accounts for the somewhat unusual ending of the book. In both this story and "Silas Marner", where she loses herself in the pleasure of writing of such happy familiar surroundings, the ending is quite different from her usual manner. One does not feel, upon closing the book, the sense of sadness accompanying the perusal of her other works.

There is also an absence here of any contradiction between the higher impulses of man and his surroundings, such as we find in Janet Dempster, or Maggie Tulliver, or Romola. Adam and Dinah are satisfied with their lots throughout, Hetty, alone, is discontented, but it is not the discontent of a noble mind amidst ignoble surroundings.

The Nemesis of this tale is not as severe as that of others of her works. Had "Adam Bede" been written fifteen years later, it is said, Adam would never have been permitted to fall in love a second time and marry. The sword of Nemesis would have involved him in the havoc wrought by the evil consequences of the sin of Hetty and Arthur Donnithorne. Here it is tempered with mercy, though its possibilities are clearly defined. Adams tells Arthur "I've seen pretty clear, ever since I could cast up a sum, as you can never do what's wrong without breeding sin and trouble more than you can ever see", and again when Adam exclaims against Arthur for his wrong to Hetty, Mr. Irwine declares "There is no sort of wrong deed of which a man can bear the punishment alone; you can't isolate yourself and say that the evil which is in you shall not spread. Men's lives are as thoroughly blended with each other as the air they breathe; evil spreadsas necessarily as disease". ("Adam Bede". Chap. 41).

Though a professed Agnostic at this time, her work is more essentially Christian in this and the succeeding book than in even her earlier novel. There the antagonistic spirit still existed. Now, however, she has overcome this attitude, and, though not able herself to derive comfort from any of the existing religions, can yet gaze with sympathy upon those to whom the sacrifice on the Cross means so much. She has not returned to "dogmatic Christianity, -- but sees in it the highest expression of the religious sentiment, that has yet found its place in the history of mankind"; she can sympathize "with any faith in which human sorrow and human longing for purity have expressed themselves". (letter to M. d'Albert, Dec. 6th, 1859). The prayer of Dinah is full of Christian aspirations and expresses the longings of the Christian soul.

Methodism as a form of Christianity meets with very sympathetic treatment. "To some," she says, "it may mean low-pitched gables up dingy streets, sleek grocers, sponging preachers, and hypocritical jargon-elements which are regarded as an exhaustive analysis of Methodism in many fashionable quarters." ("Adam Bede" Chap. 3). Methodism as George Eliot viewed it and as she found it exemplified in her aunt, Mrs. Samuel Evans, was not of the "modern type which reads quarterly reviews and attends in chapels with pillared porticoes; but of a very old-fashioned kind; its adherants "believed in present miracles in instantaneous conversions, in revelations, by dreams and visions: they drew lots, and sought for Divine guidance by opening the Bible at hazard; having a literal way of interpreting the Scriptures which is not at all sanctioned by approved commentators, and it is impossible for me to represent their diction as correct, or their instruction as liberal". ("Adam Bede". Chap. 3). She adds however, "Still, if I have read religious history aright, - faith, hope and charity have not always been found in a direct ratio with a sensibility to the three concords; and it is possible, thank Heaven, to have very erroneous theories and very sublime feelings". (Ibid)

As an illustration of this faith in the miraculous, she tells of the prayers for inspiration uttered by the preacher, and what Dinah considers is the direct answer from God in the words she finds before her on opening her Bible. "She (Dinah) felt a great longing to go now and pour into Hetty's ear all the words of tender warning and appeal that rushed into her mind;--- She hesitated; she was not certain yet of a Divine direction --- was not satisfied without a more unmistakable guidance than those inward voices. There was light enough for her, if she opened her Bible, to discern the text sufficiently to know what it would say to her. ----- It was a small thick Bible, worn quite around the edges. Dinah laid it sideways on the window ledge, where the light was strongest, and then opened it with her forefinger. The first words she looked at were those at the top of the left-hand page: "And they all wept more, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him". ---- She hesitated no longer, but, opening her own door gently, went and tapped at Hetty's". ("Adam Bede" Chap. 15, p. 164).

(3) "The Mill on the Floss" - In her journal George Eliot makes the following entry on Jan. 15, 1859:- "I corrected the last sheets of "Adam Bede", and on Feb. 1st, the book was published. In a letter to John Blackwood, March 30, 1859, she says, "About my new story which will be a novel as long as "Adam Bede" and a sort of companion picture of provincial life we must talk when I have the pleasure of seeing you. It will be a book which will require time and labor". The success of "Adam Bede" with the populace as well as with literary circles, was very great and afforded the encouragement necessary for George Eliot to begin to write her third work of fiction. The first mention of actual work being begun is dated April 29, 1859, when her diary records "Finished a story - "The Lifted Veil" - which I began one morning at Richmond as a resource when my head was too stupid for more important work. Resumed my new novel of which I am going to rewrite the first chapters. I shall call it provisionally "The Tullivers" for the sake of a title "quelconque", or perhaps "St. Ogg's on the Floss". (Cross, G. W., "Life and Letters of George Eliot". Vol. 1, Chap. 9) Later references in letters to Blackwood tell of indecision as to the proper title for the work, George Eliot herself favoring "Sister Maggie", and Blackwood declaring his preference for "The Mill on the Floss". The decision inclined to the publisher's choice, and "The Mill on the Floss" was the title of her third literary production, which appeared at the beginning of April, 1860.

"There is in this tragic story a wonderfully subtle revelation of a young nature which is morbid, ambitious, quick of intellect and strong of will, and which has no hand firm enough to serve as guide". (Halleck, A. P. "History of English Literature" Chap. 10) We do not often find authors directly revealing their own character development and life-history to any great extent in their works. "David Copperfield" is generally supposed to be based upon the rather pathetic incidents of Dicken's childhood, but there is no deep psychological study of the child and youth involved. "The Mill on

the Floss", on the contrary, as a typical novel of character subordinates the story element, the mere narration of events, to the portrayal of the character of Maggie Tulliver, whose prototype is George Eliot or Marian Evans. The autobiographical element predominates here in spite of the author's declaration previously, in connection with "Adam Bede" that she would draw no more portraits. That tendency she acknowledged had been followed in the "Scenes". "In the "Scenes of Clerical Life" she had made use of the stories current in the early domestic circle; in"Adam Bede" she had drawn a portrait of that circle itself; and now she took herself for a heroine, and the first two volumes become virtually, a spiritual autobiography". (Leslie Stephen. "George Eliot". Chap. 6). Here we might add that the title is not quite so appropriate as "Sister Maggie" would be, for the pivot upon which the interest centres in Maggie Tulliver herself. George Eliot evidently realized this and hesitated long before agreeing to Mr. Blackwood's suggestion.

The scenic descriptions have been identified by many as those of the district surrounding George Eliot's early home. The town of St. Ogg's is, in reality, Gainsborough in the county of Lincolnshire, but otherwise it is from her home-district that the descriptions are taken. In this respect her own opinion of the story bears out the statement that her early surroundings were made the background for Maggie's history. - "To my feeling there is more thought and a profounder veracity in "The Mill on the Floss" than in "Adam", but "Adam" is more complete and better balanced. My love of the childhood scenes made me linger over them, so that I could not develop as fully as I wished the concluding book in which the tragedy occurred and which I had looked forward to with attention and premeditation from the beginning". (Letter to M. d'Albert, Jan. 22, 1861).

That her own character is portrayed in Maggie Tulliver is at once evident to all who have read of the early life of George Eliot. Her surroundings were hardly such as to encourage the fostering of a genius, and in the struggle between the aspirations of Maggie's nature,- even as a child,- and the more mundane natures and surroundings which circumvent her we have a personal pen-picture of George Eliot herself. "The Mill" is written in red blood and underneath the story of the passionate loving Maggie we may feel the heart-beats of a personal experience dictating with such realistic precision the struggles and sufferings of George Eliot's own childhood and youth. "Finite capabilities forever struggling with infinite possibilities, passionate desire for earthly happiness and equally passionate desire for moral perfection, transcendant aspiration, ignoble failure, and there you have Maggie Tulliver, the realest woman of all fiction. Maggie Tulliver is the embodiment of youth and youthful idealism". (University Magazine, Dec., 1907).

While she was still young, George Eliot's father seemed to realize that Marian was possessed of unusual ability and

decided she should have as competent tuition as his financial conditions would allow.. He took great pride in the "little wenchie" cute sayings and unusual ability and seems to have stood between her and the more unsympathetic creatures surrounding her. Maggie Tulliver, also, found a haven during the stormy periods of visits from maternal aunts and heart-breaking childish quarrels with a young brother, in the love of a dear father, who, though unable to quite understand his little girl, found his greatest comfort in her, and was always ready with "father will take your part". Though otherwise the struggling genius had little of the necessary warmth of sympathy and affection, still it endeavored to rear its head above the barren ground of petty country incidents and narrow-minded relatives.

The similarity of their religious experiences is also indicative. "From what you know of her, you will not be surprised that she threw some exaggerations and wilfulness, some pride and impetuousity, even into her self-renunciation; her own life was still a drama for her, in which she demanded of herself that her part should be played with intensity. And so it came to pass that she often lost the spirit of humility by being excessive in the outward act; she often strove after too high a flight and came down with her poor little half-fledged wings dabbled in the mud". ("The Mill on the Floss" Bk. 4, Chap. 3). This was also George Eliot's own experience. Her passionate yearning nature was not satisfied with a passive acceptance of tradition, and the adherance to established custom which constituted the religion of her father. The religion meant going to church on proper occasions, being baptized, because otherwise one could not be buried; and taking care that there should be "proper pall-bearers and well-cured hams at one's funeral". (Leslie Stephen, "George Eliot" Chap. 6). The unsettled yearnings of Maggie's soul as she grows into womanhood are closely identified with the religious changes which George Eliot underwent during her school-days at Nuneaton, and later when acting as her father's house-keeper, till the final secession occurred at Coventry. The spiritual barrenness amidst which both grew up could hardly be expected to satisfy the demands of these unusual children. In "The Mill", George Eliot refers to the book which taught Maggie the great lesson of self-renunciation, and it was this book which, together with her Bible, remained her constant companions through life, the sole relics of her period of Christian belief. Not, however, that they convinced her of the beauty and truth of Christ's teaching or that she derived any satisfaction from them as such, but she found in them a means of attaining to what became, later, her creed - love of humanity. "And if he (man) should be of great virtue and very fervent devotion, yet is there much wanting, to wit, one thing, which is most necessary to him. What is that? That having left all, he leave himself and go wholly out of himself, and retain nothing of himself". ("Imitation of Christ" quoted in "The Mill on the Floss" Chap. 3, Bk. 4).

George Eliot's brother, Isaac Evans, recognized in "The Mill on the Floss" the very great resemblance between several of its important characters and members of the Evans family. Aside from the religious difficulties of Maggie, so like those of his own sister, there were minor points supporting that main likeness. In her love for her brother Maggie again resembles her prototype. The need of lavishing affection on some one was a part of George Eliot's character and in her early life her brother Isaac was made the recipient - an honor which he evidently did not appreciate at that time, taking her affection and caresses much as a matter of course. The fishing expeditions spoken of in "The Mill" formed one of George Eliot's delights as a child. All the childish pleasures gained greater intensity by the presence of this best-loved of brothers. Years later brother and sister went their separate ways as did Maggie and Tom but the memory of those early years must have been as a benediction to both. "Life did change for Tom and Maggie, and yet they were not wrong in believing that the thoughts and loves of these first years would always make part of their lives. We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it - if it were not the earth where the same flowers come up again every spring that we used to gather with our tiny fingers as we sat lisping to ourselves on the grass - the same hips and haws on the autumn hedgerows - the same red-breasts that we used to call "God's birds", because they did no harm to the precious crops. What novelty is worth that sweet monotony where everything is known, and loved because it is known?" (Ibid., Chap. 5).

Others of the family are introduced under various names. Mrs. Tulliver is evidently a somewhat obscure likeness of Mrs. Evans - not so much in her character as in her relationship to the Dodson family, or in reality, the Pearson family. In Mrs. Pullet and Mrs. Glegg, two of George Eliot's aunts have won fame though at the expense of their eccentricities, e. g., Aunt Pullet, who, tearful and casting a gloom wherever she goes, instructs Mrs. Tulliver, "Sister, if you should never see that bonnet again till I'm dead and gone, you'll remember that I showed it to you this day". ("The Mill on the Floss", Chap. 9, Bk. 1.) We cannot avoid feeling sympathy for Mr. Tulliver (Mr. Evans) who must listen to the admirable qualities of the Dodson family being lauded year in and year out by his wife and her sisters. The proverbial worm has been known to turn, and Mr. Tulliver at last retorts at the family dinner held in order that Tom's education may be discussed. "Sister Glegg", becoming quarrelsome, informs her brother-in-law, "There's your betters, Mr. Tulliver, as are dead and in their graves, treated me with a different sort o' respect to what you do", to which he replies, "If you talk o' that, my family's as good as yours - and better, for it hasn't got a damned ill-tempered woman in it". (Ibid., Chap. 7). It is known that Mr. Evans could on occasion reply fittingly to such reproaches as that directed by "Sister Glegg", and George Eliot probably had this in mind when writing the above scene.

Her realistic portrayal is enhanced by the successful use of dialect in this work, also. In "Adam Bede" she considered it needed toning down and wrote Blackwood to that effect, but here she uses it happily. Bob Jakin, Luke, Mrs. Jerome and others are faithful in their use of the districts dialect and the reader thus gains a better knowledge of the people of the neighborhood. In an unfavorable criticism of "The Mill" Mr. Ruskin touches upon the very point which makes the story of interest to all, - its realism. "The Mill on the Floss" is perhaps the most striking example extant of cutaneous disease. There is not a single person in the book of the slightest importance to anybody in the world but themselves, or whose qualities deserved so much as a line of printer's type in their description. There is no girl alive, fairly clever, half-educated, and unluckily related, whose life has not at least as much in it as Maggie, to be described and pitied. Tom is a clumsy and cruel lout with the making better things in him, ---- while the rest of the characters are simply the sweepings of a Pentonville omnibus."(Mr. Ruskin, quoted in "Victorian Novelists" by James Oliphant). Opposed to this criticism, Mr. Swinburne says:- "The Mill on the Floss" is on the whole, the highest, the purest, and the fullest example of her magnificent and matchless powers. The first two-thirds of the book suffice to compose perhaps the very noblest of tragic as well as of humorous prose idylls in the language, comprising as they likewise do, one of the sweetest as well as saddest, and tenderest as well as subtlest, examples of dramatic analysis. They go nearer to prove a higher claim on the part of their author than that of George Sand herself to the crowning crown of praise, of "large brained woman and large-hearted man". (Quoted in "Victorian Novelists, by James Oliphant). In corroboration of this statement, Chas. S. Olcott, in "George Eliot, Scenes and people in her Novels", declares "after the publication of "The Mill on the Floss" one great charm disappeared from her work, for this is the last of the novels in which the memories of early life are a vital factor. But although it is the last of its class, it excels all the others in its strong personal attractiveness". (Olcott, Chas. S. "George Eliot, Scenes and People in her Novels", Chap. 4).

Aside from its autobiographical interest, "The Mill" presents a moral teaching which constitutes one phase of a problem which presents itself in several of George Eliot's novels, viz., the question of renunciation. In view of the fact that she herself contracted an illegal union with Lewes it is rather unexpected to find her advocating so strict a moral relation between the sexes as we do in her works. "The finest chapters in"The Mill" are those in which George Eliot argues against herself, and demonstrates with all the force of genius and conscience that true happiness lies in the pursuance of a course the very reverse of that which she had followed". (S. Law Wilson, "The Theology of Modern Literature"). Maggie Tulliver is placed in a somewhat equivocal position to that in which George Eliot found herself before her union with Lewes. There were hindrances to both unions, and in the

case of George Eliot they were more emphatic than in that of Maggie Tulliver. Stephen Guest insists that he is breaking no positive engagement himself, saying, "If Lucy's affections had been withdrawn from me and given to someone else, I should have felt no right to assert a claim on her. If you are not absolutely pledged to Philip, we are neither of us bound". But Maggie replies, "You don't believe that, it is not your real feeling. You feel, as I do, that the real tie lies in the feelings and expectations we have raised in other minds. Else all pledged might be broken, when there was no outward penalty. There would be no such thing as faithfulness. ---- It seems right to me sometimes that we should follow our strongest feelings, but then, such feelings continually come across the ties that all our former life has made for us - the ties that have made others dependent on us; but I see one thing quite clearly - that I must not, cannot seek my own happiness by sacrificing others. Love is natural: but surely pity and faithfulness and memory are natural too. And they would live in me still, and punish me if I did not obey them. I should be haunted by the suffering I had caused. Our love would be poisoned. Don't urge me, help me, - help me because I love you". ("The Mill on the Floss" Bk. 6, Chap. 11). We find in these words the confession of George Eliot's soul; knowing as we do how strongly her nature was moulded by those she loved, we cannot but regretthat she came under the influence of a man so selfish as to ask her to sacrifice what comprises a woman's brightest jewels - her purity, virtue, and honor. "What she really sacrificed was liberty of speech, the undisputedly foremost rank among the women of her time, and last, and greatest, her own peace of mind. Her ill-deed was, at the least, selfishness, and self in a most repulsive form: its consequences ran athwart her best work. She expounded all phases of the love of the sexes, but her expositions were cramped by the limitations of her illicit union. It made her indulgent toward sentiments which were repugnant to her better self - where in her pages love looks downward and away from the ethereal and the pure, her presentations are masterly; where it wings an upward flight towards its true home, she follows with uncertain and waning notions". (S. Parkes Cadman. "George Eliot," Methodist Review Sept., 1913) While the substance of this statement is largely correct, one feels inclined to differ from Mr. Cadman on the point of "liberty of speech" being forfeited by the union. "The Mill" is an open confession of regret for the past slip, and her works as a whole contain the assurance that marriage is a "sacrament, not of the Church, but of the sublime fellowship of humanity". (Cooke, G. W., "George Eliot" Chap. 3).

In "The Mill on the Floss" a new element appears in the writings of George Eliot; "a yearning after a fuller, better, larger life. Maggie represents the restless spirit of the nineteenth century, intense dissatisfaction with self, and a profoundly human passion for something higher and diviner. A passionate restlessness and a profound spiritual hunger are united in this novel to an eager desire for a deeper and fuller life, and for a satisfactory answer to the soul's spiritual thirst". (G. W. Cooke. "George Eliot" Chap. 13).

This observation is important when we consider that at this period George Eliot herself felt a desire for a fuller, more general and exhaustive field than that in which she had hitherto worked. Already there is a change noticeable in her writings. "The Scenes" had been simply charming idylls of English country life; in "Adam Bede" there appears a hint of mechanism; and in "The Mill on the Floss" and "Silas Marner" George Eliot is divided into two personnages. "The close observer of nature, mistress of laughter and tears, exquisite in the intensity of cumulative emotion, was present still, but she receded; the mechanician, overloading her pages with pretentious matter, working out her scheme as if she were building a steam-engine, comes more and more to the front". (Garnett and Gosse. "History of English Literature". Vol. 4, Chap. 4). She seems to have felt she had little more to tell of those early years and scenes; the enlargement of her intellectual horizon, since her union with Lewes, had suggested new possibilities. Her outlook on life had broadened immensurably since she began to write, and though intensely realistic in her portrayal of the rural districts of her early life, she has become more catholic in her sympathy through acquaintance with a variety of people, nationalities and creeds. She has outgrown her early years; poor Mrs. Bede said to her son, "The old mother's got no right t'hinder thee. She's nought but th'old husk, and thee'st slipped away from her like the ripe nut". ("Adam Bede" Chap. 26). So George Eliot is no longer confined to the familiar scenes of childhood but abandons them for other fields and pastures new. Her career as a novelist began only when she had reached her thirty-eighth year, and much of the spontaneity of youth had already passed away. Moreover her life was always a studious one, that of a deep thinker to whom life's more serious problems were always of paramount importance. To her early works the tendency to "philosophize" gave a didactic tone, and as she became older and her keen ear detects "the still, sad music of humanity" she cannot rest contented in the more secluded haven of those early years but must widen the sphere of her activities to encompass humanity at large. Yet our literature is the richer for those early stories. "Strike them out of English literature and we feel there would be a gap not to be filled up; a distinct vein of thought and feeling unrepresented; a characteristic and delightful type of social development left without any adequate interpreter". (Sir Leslie Stephen, quoted by Chas. S. Olcott in "George Eliot" Chap. 5).

In writing of the change noticeable in her later novels, George Eliot remarks, "Though I trust there is some growth in my appreciation of others and in my self-distrust, there has been no change in the point of view from which I regard our life since I wrote my first fiction, the "Scenes of Clerical Life". Any apparent change of spirit must be due to something of which I am unconscious. The principles which are at the root of my effort to paint Dinah Morris are equally at the root of my effort to paint Mordecai". (Quoted in "George Eliot"

by G. W. Cooke, Chap. 14). The unconscious element referred to is accounted for by the habit of introspection becoming greater. "In commonplace men and manners George Eliot is losing interest; the eye that has looked outward quite as much as inward is now concentrated on mental and moral facts, and out of herself she creates her character to illustrate her psychological discernment". (Cross, W. L., "The Development of the English Novel" Chap. 7).

B. Italian Period. (1860-1880).

1. Journey to Italy, and "Silas Marner". -- On March 21st, 1860, George Eliot wrote the closing scenes of "The Mill on the Floss" and on the 24th she and Lewes left England for Rome. "We expect to start on Saturday morning, and to be in Rome by Palm Sunday---- I am grateful and yet rather sad to have finished - and that I shall live with my people on the banks of the Floss no longer. But it is time that I should go and absorb some new life and gather fresh ideas". (Letter to John Blackwood, March 22d, 1860). This trip to Italy evidently meant more to her than is usually intended on a voyage of recreation. It appears to have formed a divisional point in her career as a novelist. From this period can be dated the change from the spontaneity and vigor of her early stories to the more didactic and labored studies of her later works. She records in her Journal, "We have finished our journey to Italy - the journey I had looked forward to for years, rather with the hope of the new elements it would bring to my culture, than with the hope of immediate pleasure. Travelling can hardly be without a continual current of disappointment, if the main object is not the enlargement of one's general life". (Journal-1860). That she realized it had the effect of introducing a new element to her culture is apparent from a letter to Miss Sara Hennell, 2d July, 1860:- "We have had an unspeakably delightful journey, - one of those journeys that seem to divide one's life in two, by the new ideas they suggest and the new veins of interest they open". From the early Warwickshire life she is henceforth dissociated though not entirely from the rural districts. What is lacking in her later works is "the personal experience in the English Midland counties which had hitherto supported her so bravely". (Garnett and Gosse. "History of English Literature", Vol. 4). The mechanician comes to the fore now, and "our ears are deafened by the hum of the philosophical machine, the balance of scenes and sentences, the intolerable artificiality of the whole construction". (Ibid. Chap. 4).

To this statement one exception, at least, must be made. "Silas Marner", published in March, 1861, can hardly be classified under either of the two distinct periods of her novelist's career. The story was the result of "a sudden inspiration" during her preparation for another and larger work of fiction. In writing of it to Mr. Blackwood, she said "It seems to me that nobody will take any interest in it but myself, for it is extremely unlike the popular stories going, but Mr. Lewes

declares I am wrong and says it is as good as anything I have done. It is a story of old-fashioned village life which has unfolded itself from the merest millet seed of thought". (Letter to John Blackwood - Jan. 12, 1861). About a month later she writes again:- "I hope you will not find it at all a sad story, as a whole, since it sets -or is intended to set- in a strong light the remedial influences of pure, natural, human relations. The Nemesis is a mild one ---. It came to me quite suddenly, as a sort of legendary tale, suggested by my recollection of having once, in early childhood, seen a linen weaver with a bag on his back". (Letter of J. Blackwood, Feb. 24 - '61).

"Silas Marner" marks the climax of the naturalness and humor of George Eliot's literary power. As she is about to wander far afield in her new novel, she hesitates a moment to cast a backward glance on her childhood surroundings. There are very realistic scenes and descriptions here, but, unlike those of "Adam Bede" they cannot be identified specifically. In general the background resembles Warwickshire, - a few points of similarity can also be found between this work, "Adam Bede" and the "Scenes which evidently have their origin in some memory of childhood.

The village choir, whose leader, the wheelwright, is assisted by the "key-bugle" and the "bassoon", resembles the Shepperton choir in which "the key-bugles ran away at a great pace, while the bassoon every now and then boomed a flying shot after them". ("The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton" Chap.1). Again, Mr. Macey, the village clerk, and Joshua Rann, in "Adam Bede", are evidently possessed of musical talent in common with the carpenter in "Amos Barton" who had "an amazing power of singing counter". Incidents such as these may have occurred in Chilvers Coton Church while George Eliot was a child though not too young to be observant.

The inimitable scene in the "Rainbow" tavern is probably the acme of George Eliot's powers as a realist and humorist. The arrangement of the inn is quite similar to that of the Bull Hotel at Nuneaton, which also serves as the original for the "Red Lion" of Milby. The gathering of rustics and village worthies here portrayed was probably typical of those assemblies into which his business as land-agent often brought George Eliot's father into contact; from him his daughter must have heard occasional descriptions of these meetings. The humorous conversation related shows the deep interest she paid to the rustics of her early home, though she claims that most of the epigrammatic witty sayings in her works are not distinct recollections repeated word for word as she heard them but are coined from her own mind. Even so, there is much that can be the result only of observation. "Each speaker, as in real life, has his peculiarities and habits of mind, temper, speech and gesture, and all there are expressed naturally. Ten Brink says that Shakespeare's characters are all clever.

Eliot keeps nearer to life, and makes one stupid, and another contradictory, and still another compromising without falling into Dickan's error of making them impersonations of stupidity, contradiction, and compromise. The keenest analysis discriminates them, the profoundest knowledge of the human mind and character is shown in the dialogue as well as in the reflective passages". ("Silas Marner" criticism by Ed. Gulick). She is intensely human in this scene and illustrates in it her ability to sympathize with her characters, as shown in her description of the conciliatory landlord who, though of neutral disposition and "accustomed to stand aloof from human differences, as those of beings who were all alike in need of liquor", still occasionally felt the necessity of keeping the peace between the irascible farrier and the less argumentative butcher. "Never was a group of honest, garrulous, village simpletons, more kindly and more humanely handled". (James Henry. "Views and Reviews"). In her treatment of the poorer class here she is at her best, which is but natural since she was surrounded by these elements during her most impressionable years. "In "Silas Marner" she has come nearest the mildly rich tints of brown and gray, the mellow lights and the undreadful corner shadows of the Dutch masters whom she emulates". (Henry James. "Views and Reviews" Chap. 1).

In this work, called her "prose poem", George Eliot is at once a realist and a psychologist. A realist in the intensely human portrayal of these village characters, their speech and manners; a psychologist in her deep analysis of the motives actuating them; and again, she is a moralist here, teaching clearly several important lessons which have grown out of her own religious and moral difficulties, and which take the place, with her, of Christian doctrine and morality, viz., the inevitable consequences that follow our slightest action; in the case of Godfrey Cass and his brother Dunsey, evil deeds reap evil results - in stealing the miser's gold, Dunsey found death; through rejecting his true wife, and denying his child, Godfrey reaped a sorry harvest in later years: his second marriage was childless, and his daughter whom he denied when she was but a babe, in turn denies him.

Here, however, this "law of consequences" of which George Eliot first heard from Charles Bray, and which plays so important a part in her works, is treated for the first time in a happy way also; the "good consequences of good actions" plays an interesting part in the story. Silas casts aside an unworthy love for a pure one and receives in return a full harvest of affection and joy in the gratitude of little Eppie. Thus the Nemesis is indeed a very mild one. Godfrey alone is left the victim of evil deeds. "There's debts we can't pay like money debts, by paying extra for the years that have slipped by. While I've been putting off and putting off, the trees have been growing - it's too late now. Marner was in the right in what he said about a man's turning away a blessing from his door: it falls to somebody else. I wanted to pass for childless once, Nancy - I shall pass for childless now against my wish". ("Silas Marner" Chap. 20).

Another important ethical idea shown here is the influence of environment and tradition upon man, and the necessity of social ties. Man as a social being was a foremost consideration with George Eliot. She realized to her sorrow the necessity of social obligations herself, and her own life might well be compared with that of Silas Marner. The latter, through the sundering of social ties, lived, isolated and useless, for years. It was only by taking up his connections with society through the adoption of Eppie that he became an active member of the great human fraternity, and so gained happiness. George Eliot also, through her unlawful love and union, isolated herself from her fellow-creatures for a time; it was only through the contribution of her work to the upbuilding of society that she regained her status in that society. Her works rebuilt what her life had destroyed.

Holding no belief in God, she fails to teach a spiritual lesson in "Silas Marner." That which she advocates is not that men must look to a Higher Source for help and happiness, but that man's greatest satisfaction consists in the sympathy and love he bestows upon his fellow-creatures and receives in turn from them. "In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction; a hand is put into theirs, which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's". ("Silas Marner" Chap. 14).

2. "Romola". -- The publication of "Silas Marner" saw the close of George Eliot's career as a novelist of spontaneity and humor. Henceforth the psychologist and moralist reigns supreme. That such a change should take place is not entirely inexplicable. In passing through a period of development such as her Italian journey meant to her her mind must necessarily have travelled far from early scenes and characters. It is not surprising that her reflective introspective powers should become greater as she advanced in years. Reason is substituted for intuition as life becomes more complicated, and what Wordsworth calls "the still, sad music of humanity" penetrates more easily the ears of those by whom life's lessons have been learned with sorrow of heart and mental anguish. George Eliot has already experienced both, and underneath the apparent calm which she declares has come to her one detects the sadness of unattained happiness through loss of faith and loss of friends. The storms which played such havoc in her mind and heart have abated, and she floats, unexhausted, with no Beacon Light to follow, towards an unknown shore. The sole force that drives her on is the hope that by her writings she may sound the warning bell for those who, also, may be in danger of shipwreck. This, I take it, is the motive that prompts her later works.

It was during this visit to Italy that she conceived the great project of writing an historical romance on a crisis

of renaissance history, the celestial frescoes in Savonarola's home at San Marco suggesting the argument of "Romola". To Blackwood, she writes in June 1860, "I don't think I can venture to tell you what my great project is by letter, for I am anxious to keep it a secret. It will require a great deal of study and labor, and I am athirst to begin", and in August she declares, "I think I must tell you the secret, though I am distrusting my power to make it grow into a published fact. When we were in Florence I was rather fired with the idea of writing an historical romance-scene, Florence, period, the close of the fifteenth century, which was marked by Savonarola's career and martyrdom". With reference to the work being published anonymously at first, she said "I need not tell you the wherefore of this plan. You know well enough the received phrases with which an author is greeted when he does something else than what was expected of him". The work was put aside for a short time in order that "Silas Marner" might be written. In 1861 another trip to Florence was taken in order to obtain the necessary material for the work. She and Lewes spent "thirty-four days of precious time looking at streets, buildings, and pictures, in hunting up old books, at shops or stalls, or in reading at the Magliabecchian Library, the first book taken out being one on costumes. The number of books read on the subject is astonishing and illustrates the minute attention paid to the slightest detail. She tells Mr. R. Hutton that "there is scarcely a phrase, an incident, an allusion (in Romola) that did not gather its value to me from its supposed subservience to my main artistic purpose". "The psychological causes which prompted me to give such details of Florentine life and history as I have are precisely the same as those which determined me in giving the details of English village life". (Ibid).

The important task of writing "Romola" occupied her attention from May, 1861, until June, 1863. During this time she was subject to spells of depression in which she despaired of accomplishing the work. Aug. 18, 1861, she writes to Miss Hennell, "Got into a state of so much wretchedness in attempting to concentrate my thoughts on the construction of my story, that I suddenly burst my bonds, saying, I will not think of writing!" Oct. 4th finds her "still worried about my plot - and without any confidence in my ability to do what I want", but on Oct. 7th, she records in her diary: "Began the first chapter of my novel". Jan. 31, 1862, finds her once more in the depths of despair. "It is impossible to me to believe I have ever been in so uncompromising and despairing a state as I now feel". Later she writes with evident enjoyment in her work and by June 1863 the book was finished. In the writing of "Romola" Mr. Cross tells us it "ploughed into her more than any of her other books. She told me she could put her finger on it as marking a well-defined transition in her life. In her own words "I began it a young woman, I finished it an old woman".

As an historical novel, "Romola" has attained an enviable rank. George Eliot very wisely has picked on those

characters of whose lives she could easily obtain accurate information, for practically all, with the exception of Romola and Tito, Tessa and Baldassare, are men who held more or less prominent positions under the "Tyranny" of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Nello, the barber, is a portrait of Domenico Burchiello, also a barber and poet, who lived fifty years before the period of Romola. The shop of Nello, is also a copy of that of Burchiello, of which a picture may be seen in the Medici Library. The various characters who meet here and whose lives are woven into the novel, are all intensely real; the most important of these is Bernardo del Nero, Romola's god-father, one of the foremost citizens of Florence, being leader of the "Bigi" who secretly sought to restore Piero de' Medici, though apparently supporting Savonarola.

Without doubt, Savonarola, occupies the outstanding position in the novel as an historical character. She has given a very powerful conception of the man who dared send the following message to the great Lorenzo, "Tell him to repent of his sins for the Lord spares no one, and fears not the princes of the earth". Of the fervent orator, the dauntless opponent of evil, the prophet, and the politician she has painted a realistic likeness. Yet "her account of Savonarola is inadequate, because it does not enter fully enough into his history, and because it omits much which is necessary to a full understanding of the man and his influences". (G. W. Cooke,"George Eliot" Chap. 14). It is possible that she had sufficient sympathy with him but rather uses him as a mouthpiece for the expression her own "religion of humanity". Or, as is more probable, she has not caught the spirit of the times sufficiently to portray him adequately. The portrayal of the great monk-preacher was not her main purpose however. "Not only did the author desire to contrast a man like Savonarola, led by the spirit of self-denial and renunciation, with one like Tito Melema led by the spirit of self-love and personal gratification, but she wished to contrast worldliness and spirituality, or individualism and altruism, as social forces. Lorenzo and the renaissance give one form of life, Savonarola and Christianity give another; and these two appear as affecting every class in society and every phase of the social order". (Ibid).

In addition to this she could hardly do justice to a theme the subject of which was purely historical for the philosophical tendency was too strong - nor does she claim historical accuracy for "Romola" since the historical purpose is subordinated to the ethical purpose.

It is the moral growth of character, as well as its moral decay, which is the main theme of "Romola". To emphasize this point, George Eliot very wisely chooses for her novel a foreign country and a distant time as its setting. She is no longer hampered by the need of accuracy in description which formed such an integral part of her early works. In

this connection it might be said that her description here of the people and place are not quite true to life. But it can hardly be expected that an English woman spending thirty-four days in Florence -even in deep study- could do justice to its people and its scenic beauties. Her choice of subject affords a wider scope for her ethical teaching. Romola, Tito, Tessa, and to a great extent, Savonarola, become types rather than individuals, and not types found in Florence only, but those belonging to the human race. She bears a message in "Romola" not confined to the limits of English rural districts but extending to every nation and every clime. Tito, it is true, is an accurate description of a Florentine politician, and, again, it is claimed he is a portrait of Machiavelli possessing his diplomacy and cunning, craftiness and cruelty in politics. If this is so, then indeed is he typical for there are unfortunately Machiavelli's not only in Florence, but in the political life of all lands.

Tito is a splendid illustration of George Eliot's knowledge of the renaissance characteristics. "He has the Grecian love ease and luxury, the renaissance love of sensuous enjoyment, superficial scholarship and also its craft and flexibility in politics". (Ibid). He represents the Greeks side of the renaissance as opposed to Christianity in the person of Savonarola. As the renaissance spirit failed so does Tito fail. This brings to the fore the psychological element in his character portrayal. Retribution sets in early in his career. He fails to live up to his duty when he denies his foster-father; from that moment we may expect his downward course to begin. "Our deeds are like children that are born to us; they live and act apart from our will. Nay, children may be strangled, but deeds never: they have an indestructible life in and out of our consciousness, and that dreadful vitality of deeds was pressing hard on Tito for the first time". Later, we are told "Tito was experiencing that inexorable law of human souls that we prepare for sudden deeds by the reiterated choice of good or evil that gradually determines character". ("Romola", Chap. 29).

Though Romola is professedly a Florentine, her history is evidently that of George Eliot's own spiritual tragedy. The change of her religious beliefs, from mere renaissance "paganism" to Christian belief which in turn fails her through the moral failure of Savonarola, is intensely realistic, and but another phase of Maggie Tulliver's troubles and those of George Eliot. Once more the sacredness of human ties is emphasised, but they are shown here as binding because they are part of our Duty to our fellow-men. Maggie Tulliver represents the more emotional phase of this attitude for she claims they are binding through the love we bear our neighbors. Here the kindlier attitude is lost, the more experienced writer speaks, the woman to whom life has become a Duty. Romola fleeing from her husband is arrested by the voice of Savonarola. "You are not permitted to flee -- My daughter you must return to your place -- You are fleeing from your debts; the debt of a Florentine woman, the debt of a wife. You are turning your back

on the lot that has been appointed for you --- But can man or woman choose duties?" Yet she is not convinced. "My father, I have been driven by great sorrow. I am resolved to go". The monk replies: "You were warned before marriage when you might still have chosen lawfully to be free from the marriage bond. But you chose the bond; and in wilfully breaking it - I speak to you as a pagan if, the holy mystery of matrimony is not sacred to you - You are breaking a pledge --- Of what wrong will you complain where you yourself are breaking the simplest law that lies at the foundation of the trust that binds man to man - faithfulness to the spoken word? -- You may choose to forsake your duties and choose not to have the sorrow they bring. But you will go forth: and what will you find, my daughter? Sorrow without duty - bitter herbs and no bread with them". ("Romola" Chap. 40).

The same struggle that took place in the mind of George Eliot is waged in "Romola"; "the influence upon a thoughtful woman of a contention between culture and religion and how a person may gradually attain to a self-poised life in loving service to others". (G. W. Cooke. Chap. 14).

3. "Felix Holt" and "Middlemarch" - After journeying far afield in her historical novel, George Eliot returns to her native land and her remaining novels find their setting in English surroundings. In "Felix Holt" and "Middlemarch" the local color is distinctly English whilst it cannot be definitely identified with any particular spot in England. In general one might say the district resembles Warwickshire as indicated in the scenic descriptions of the introductory chapter of "Felix Holt", already quoted. There are occasional references also to certain well-remembered connections of childhood but the larger outlines of setting and scenery do not bear out these more minute descriptions. In "Felix Holt" a very vivid description is given of a riot which occurred at Nuneaton when George Eliot was a girl at school there. It was the occasion of a closely contested election in North Warwickshire after the passing of the Reform Bill. Voters were forcibly interfered with, necessitating the reading of the Riot Act and the aid of the military force. Still another point of identification is the portrait of the Rev. Rufus Lyon, the original being the Rev. Francis Franklin, father of the Misses Franklin whose school George Eliot attended at Coventry. The chapel of which he was pastor still remains near the old Ford Hospital, and his home, described in "Felix Holt", may be seen in the Chapel Yard. Caleb Garth and Celia Brooke are also connecting links between "Middlemarch" and George Eliot's early life. The latter is a picture of her elder sister whose quiet kitten-like ways were a continual reproach to the impetuous Maggie, but the delight of their aunts. Caleb Garth with his strong integrity, love of his employment, and fatherly kindness is another portrait of Robert Evans who has already been admirably described in Adam Bede. "He was one of those rare men who are rigid to themselves and indulgent to others.

He had a certain shame about his neighbor's errors and never spoke about them willingly, "Though he had only been a short time under a surveyor and had been chiefly his own teacher, he knew more of land, building and mining than most of the special men in the county". ("Middlemarch", Chap. 24).

In her sympathetic treatment of Esther Lyon and Dorothea Brooke, George Eliot reveals many of her own characteristics. Esther's love of refinement and dainty, lady-like ways which provoked the remark from the neighbors that"she had too many airs and graces and held her head much too high", were very much the same traits which caused Marian Evans to hold aloof from her school-companions, and which found their expression in the dainty, refined arrangement and decoration of her father's house while she superintended its management. Dorothea Brooke resembles George Eliot also during this period but it is another phase of her character she presents. She found some satisfaction in giving up all care about dress and in austerely refusing to participate in the pleasures of society. "I used to go about like an owl, to the great disgust of my brother, and I would have denied him what I now see to have been quite lawful amusements". She also reflects the soul-struggle which took place with George Eliot at practically the same age, as shown also in Romola. Dorothea is a repetition, in more modern dress of Romola. There is a slightly different treatment because of the difference of nationality and country, but there is"the same lofty individuality almost to self-absorption, and resulting in complete self-surrender to the imaginary need of another soul - the same fall of the ideal, and terrible rending away of all veils until meanness and even business and hypocrisy, are face to face with a nature too noble not to contend with its own scorn and hatred; the same struggle with overpowering disgust and the same return to duty"- (Margaret Lowsdale. "George Eliot").

Like Romola, also, Dorothea represents a typical character rather than a personal one and in this they differ from Maggie Tulliver, the product of George Eliot's earlier English period. They represent the changed attitude of mind with which their author writes, and in this her other characters show the same influence. Felix Holt is to portray the type of workman which George Eliot considers can best bring about reforms. Not by the vote alone can they hope to remedy existing evils but by the "true and manly acceptance of altruism. George Eliot wished to indicate in his creation what can be done by workingmen towards the uplifting of their own class. In spite of this teaching, that by altruism alone can the human race and society be improved, George Eliot seems distinctly conservative in this, her later period of writing. Her own life has become more reserved and she has not the intimate sympathy with her "ideal workman" that she had with her humbler neighbors of her early novels, therefore she cannot appreciate the position and difficulties of the average workingman. Moreover her "political philosophy, if carried into actual life, would keep the proletariate where they are and strengthen the social power of the aristocratic classes; for the workingman she says is to think not of himself or his class but of society and humanity,

is to become an altruistic worker for the common good". "Felix Holt" gives George Eliot's own views of social reform and is a constructive work, wheras "Middlemarch" is more destructive in tendency, pointing out the flaws of the present social system which becomes a hindrance to the execution of noble aspirations. Characters such as Saint Theresa, might realize their highest aims in years gone by, but the social system as it is today prevents such realization taking effect. Dorothea's "heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness" are misunderstood and hindered by the prosaic natures of the characters about her, and her marriage by which she hoped to aid in a work for the uplifting of humanity, turns out a failure. The work may be considered as an apology for her own union, on the part of George Eliot, by placing the blame on the social system which, countenancing and encouraging an apparent unmeet marriage yet condemns and seeks to make impossible a union which, she judges, meets all the requirements of a true marriage. It would seem that as she advanced in years and experienced the bitter lessons taught as a result of our misdeeds, she became more depressed in her outlook upon life and the tone of her novels becomes correspondingly critical and despondent.

4. Poetry - The poetry of George Eliot contains very much the same philosophical attitude as her prose works. With the exception of "Brother and Sister" which is the nearest she comes to spontaneity in her poems, her poetical output is but a repetitio n of the ethical teaching shown in her novels. It seemed only natural that the creative ability in writing which she possessed should seek expression in verse. That she waited till she had reached her thirty-fourth year before giving expression to any lengthy poem is sufficient evidence that her talent did not lie in this direction. The ethical element which finds its best expression in her novels, saturates her poems giving to them a thoughtful stately style and beautiful diction. Her positivist and artistic conceptions are revealed here, together with the popular Darwinian theory of evolution, as shown in "The Spanish Gypsy". In "Armgart" she teaches that no artistic success is of such value as a life spent in sympathy with others. To Armgart, refusing to abandon her career, Graf says,

"Pain had been saved,
Nay, purer glory reached, had you been
throned
As woman only, holding all your art
As tribute to that dear sovreignity -
Concentring your power in home delights
Which penetrate and purify the world".

This thought is also presented in "The Death of Moses" and "Jubal"; in the former case Moses "dwells not with dead, but lives as Law"; in the latter the"face" of Jubal's Past consoles him in his hour of sadness when the world scorns his claim "I made the Lyre", by saying,

This was thy lot, to feel, create, bestow,
And that immeasurable life to know
From which the fleshly self falls, shrivelled, dead

A seed primeval that has forests bred.
It is the glory of the heritage
Thy life has left, that makes thy outcast age:
Thy life shall lie dark, tombless on this sea,
Because thou shinest in man's soul, a god,
Who found and gave new passion and new joy
That naught but Earth's destruction can destroy
Thy gifts to give was thine of men alone:
'Twas but in giving that thou couldst atone
For too much wealth amid their poverty".
(The Legend of Jubal).

"The Spanish Gypsy" had been undertaken before "Felix Holt" but having reduced its creator to a condition of despair it was abandoned in favor of the novel. Later it was taken up once more. "At present I am going to take up again a work which I laid down before writing "Felix".--- There is not a thought or symbol that I do not long to use; but the whole requires recasting, and as I never recast anything before, I think of the issue very doubtfully.--- I think I have the right "locus" and historic conditions, but much else is wanting". (Letter to Fred. Harrison, Aug. 15, 1866). To secure accuracy and true local color in her ambitious poem George Eliot journeyed to Spain in 1867 and much time was also spent in reading histories and other sources of information. The poem, as a presentation of these facts is admirable but even in its finished state, "there is much wanting". The subject is inadequate and not at all a satisfactory one for poetry. The influence of heredity as part of the evolution philosophy might have formed an admirable theme for a novel, as in indeed, introduced to her more successful prose works, but as a subject for a poem it fails. Moreover George Eliot, always didactic in her works, is much more so in her later years and the whole poem is a labored mechanical contrivance moving slowly and awkwardly as a whole but with an occasional beautiful line. When the author forgets her capacity as "mechanician" and gives vent to the spontaneous promptings of the heart, we get true poetry.

5. "Daniel Deronda" -- Of this swan-song of George Eliot's career as a novelist, G. W. Cooke declares: "It has the religious interest and inspiration of "Adam Bede", the historic value of "Romola", and the critical elements of "Middlemarch", and these are wrought into a work of lofty insight and imagination, along with a high spiritual ardor and a supreme ethical purpose". (G. W. Cooke, "George Eliot". Chap. 16). The work is undoubtedly one of her greatest successes from a literary standpoint, though the Jewish element has served to make it less popular than its literary merits deserve. The sincerity of her sympathy with this wandering race gives a far greater interest to the work than exists in the more ambitious "Romola" in which she takes as hero, Savonarola, also the product of another land than England. The impersonal character of Deronda's position in life, his vague surroundings unidentified with any specific rank - not knowing even to what stratum of society he was born, till near the end of the book - affords excellent

material out of which she may mould his character as she wishes. The sum-total of her philosophical creed is contained in him, though he represents a race whose religion cannot have been agreeable to her.

The book was begun in June, 1874, caused the usual moods of depression in which she doubted her ability "to complete it so as to make a contribution to literature and not a mere addition to the heap of books", and was completed in June, 1876.

It is important in the consideration of the genesis of the novel to note that the deep knowledge George Eliot possessed of the Jewish people owed its origin to the translation which she undertook, as a young woman, of Strauss' "Leben Jesu". In order to accomplish her task thoroughly she studied Hebrew, and later paid great attention to Jewish history and literature. This early knowledge of the Jewish race led to great sympathy for it which reached its culmination in the important part taken by the Jewish ideals and ambitions in "Daniel Deronda".

The vivid introductory chapter is also based upon personal experience. During a visit to Homburg, George Eliot was deeply moved by the spectacle of a young girl gambler "completely in the grasp of this mean money-making demon. It made me cry to see her fresh young face among the hags and brutally stupid men around her". (Letter to Blackwood). The only other personal incidents of importance in contributing to her work are that of the club known as "The Philosophers" to which Deronda belonged, a picture of a club which met weekly in Holborn, to which Lewes, when a boy of nineteen belonged, and that of the Meyrick's home which is believed to be a copy of a cottage in Shotlerville village, Surrey "where we have old prints for our dumb companions". Though these are the only autobiographical incidents in the book, George Eliot, looking back upon her childhood days, pays a loving tribute to their influence. "A human life, I think, should be well-rooted in some spot of a native land, where it may get the love of tender kinship for the face of the earth. --- for whatever will give that early home a familiar unmistakable difference amidst the future widening of knowledge; a spot where the definiteness of early memories may be inwrought with affection and kindly acquaintance with all neighbors". ("Daniel Deronda" Chap. 3).

None of the characters of "Deronda" are taken from life. George Eliot has outgrown this tendency so marked in her early novels in two ways. In the first place, she no longer treats of the individual personal life as in the "Scenes" and "The Mill on the Floss"; her outlook on life has broadened, and she portrays types, - the type of character which has aspirations after a higher life, in Romola and Dorothea; the type of ideal workman which alone can bring about reform, in Felix Holt; the type of man who, though capable of accomplishing great things in life is turned aside from his true vocation by the love of ease, as well as by susceptibility to beauty without soul in women, in Dr. Lydgate, and the "boa-constrictor" type which takes " a sort of voluptuous enjoyment of malignant

tyranny", in Tito and Grandcourt. Secondly, in order to portray these types George Eliot no longer needs to draw from real life; her creative ability fashions the characters to suit her purpose. Moreover, the realism noticeable in her earlier novels as a result of direct portrayal from life is replaced by the realism of a contemporaneous period. "Daniel Deronda" is the first novel in which she trusts herself to treat of current English society.

Thus Deronda, Mordecai, Grandcourt and Gwendolyn are all children of her imagination and all serve to express her philosophical belief. The novel consists of two distinct stories connected only by the contrast they afford of two elements, the Jewish and the English. Professor Kaufmann declares the Jewish element represents those "whose life is anchored in the spiritual tradition of a great people, whilst the English element represents those "who find the centre of their life in egotism and an individualistic spirit". Grandcourt and Gwendolyn are the incarnation of selfishness, whereas Deronda and Mordecai illustrate the spirit of altruism.

This, however, was not the only aim George Eliot had in this last novel. It contains a summary of all the doctrines she has enunciated in her earlier works. The influence of heredity upon which she laid so much stress in her later years and which she defines in "Felix Holt", is one of the three points she emphasizes here. Deronda, drawn towards vice by his surroundings, yet rises above the temptation through the influence which his religious and strictly moral ancestors exert upon him through heredity. George Eliot assumes a denunciatory tone in speaking of a social system which would tolerate a man like Grandcourt. "The work is important in pointing out a state of society in which such a piece of corruption as Grandcourt should be not only the leader but also the erasing fascination and ideal of the most delicate and fastidious young woman in that society". (Sidney Lanier, quotes from "Saturday Review"). Gwendolyn, the egotist, is also a product of this society of "Self and culture", of irreligion, and is saved only "as by fire" through the remedial influence of her acquaintance with Deronda. The latter presents the spirit of Judaism, its religion, manners and traditions, but he also contains the ethical teaching of George Eliot, that ideals and personal feeling form the reality and substance of religion.

Conslusion:

We have seen that there appear to have been two distinct influences or periods in the career of George Eliot as a novelist. Her early essays were marked by "Blue-stockingism", sweeping statements, scathing criticisms, and all subordinate to a philosophical conception of things, often harsh and severe. Succeeding the year 1854, important because it marks a change in her life through her union with Lewes, there followed a period of five years in which she breaks away from this severe régime, and loses herself in delightful descriptions of English

rural life, free, spontaneous and realistic. The fruit of this period consists of "Scenes of Clerical Life", "Adam Bede", and "The Mill on the Floss". The veil is lowered again however, and we are shut out forever from the realm of lovable human beings each of which is so intensely real. We are face to face with a series of essays through which runs a slight thread of narrative but whose main purpose is distinctly didactic and philosophical. The lesson to be learnt is presented under the guise of fiction but the polemic is easily recognizable. In this period there are five psychological novels, "Romola", "Silas Marner", "Felix Holt", "Middlemarch", and "Daniel Deronda", together with several didactic short poems and one longer drama.

What then, in brief, is the cause of this difference? In the words of Richard Burton, "Unquestionably the first period (of her life) was most important in influencing her genius. Here came the primal inspiration which produced her best. The experiences of George Eliot's childhood, youth and young womanhood were those which taught her the bottom facts about middle-class country life in the mid-century and in a mid-county of England; Shakespeare's county of Warwick. Those experiences gave her such a sympathetic comprehension of the human ooze in that environment that she became its chronicler, as Dickens had become the chronicler of the lower middle-class of the cities". (R. Burton. "Masters of the English Novel" Chap. 1). The change which took place from the results of this early influence was largely due to the fact that she "took herself too seriously to maintain for any long period the true freshness and spontaneity of the artist. ... She was too philosophic, too theologic, too great a philosophical analyst, and had known too much of books and had had too unhappy a life". (W. J. Dawson. "Makers of English Literature").

The last statement is strictly true and accounts for the change. Her life as a whole had been unhappy; as a child she was misunderstood, as a girl she suffered intellectually and spiritually from the lack of a guiding hand and a mind sufficiently enlightened to satisfy her questioning on religious subjects, and her later life was saddened by her isolation from society which followed the moral catastrophe of her life. For a woman who lived, like her own Maggie, in her affections to so great an extent these influences precluded the possibility of continuing for long the happy vein followed in the earlier works.

Yet from her darkened soul she sends forth heroically a faint glimmer of light and adds her offering to the great human society in advocating "Love of Humanity".

"Her losses make our gains ashamed,
She bore life's empty pack
As gallantly as if the Vast
Were swinging at her back.
Life's empty pack is heaviest
As every porter knows,
In vain to punish honey
It only sweeter grows."

(Emily Dickinson. 1896).

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