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EDGAR ALLEN POE, "FATHER OF THE SHORT STORY," DISCUSSED

By Gertrude N. Johnson.

Chaucer is aptly called the "Father of English Literature," Washington Irving the "Father of American Literature," and with equal candor can we place beside them the name of Edgar Allen Poe as the "Father of the Short-story." By that statement we do not mean to affirm that Poe was the first short-story writer, and more than that Chaucer or Irving was the originator of literature. There were many writers in England before the time of Chaucer, many writers in America before Irving, but each marks an epoch in literature; they stand out in history as landmarks that denote a transition, a material change, an advance over that of earlier times.

Viewing Poe in the same light, we readily see the wonderful advance, in form, over the short-story of the fifteen years previous, before 1835, the publication of Poe's "Hernie," the short-story was practically an experiment. The tales were criticised for lack of appreciation of material. It was not this, for the writers did appreciate the wide field of new material which the New World, as well as plot, was rather a lack of skill in expressing it. There was a looseness in plot and a decided tendency toward native themes and local sketches at the sacrifice of unity and time, perhaps one of the most generally violated principles of the short-story, as well as plot. The works of Cooper and Irving are splendid examples of this local coloring. Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" shows a slight change in the tale, but so slight that it can hardly count in the development of the short-story. N. P. Willis comes a little nearer to the ideal in his construction, and Hawthorne steps a notch higher because of his great imaginative power, which Poe says is not original, but "peculiarly," and to be peculiar is to be original; and this is the highest literary virtue, if it springs spontaneously from an active imagination, giving vigor and character to everything with which it comes in contact. It is this peculiarity which deprives Hawthorne of popular appreciation. But "the few to whom books belong and who belong to books, do not care for the popular, altogether by what he does, but estimate an author by what he is capable of doing." One obvious point, however, is monotony in the use of allegory, which seems to overpower many of his subjects.

Among the literary people of America, Hawthorne holds much the same place as Coleridge did in England. But it is to Poe that the literary people turn for their model of the short-story. A model which outlived the author's day—a model for the future.

When we consider the large number of tales published, and the great demand for them in this age of short-stories, it is remarkable to note how very few have style. The short-story has extensive and fertile fields to choose from, and, in many respects, has advantages over the novel. At the same time there are certain restrictions which must be observed in order to reach the highest degree of skill. Perhaps the three most universal broken principles, even of the present day, are brevity of time and space, and swift movement. William Austin makes his "Peter Rugg" laborious and monotonous by giving too full a treatment to a subject which could be made much more effective in less time and with swifter movement. Hawthorne falls short in his "White Old Maid" by choosing a subject which is a plot deep enough for a novel. In this, as well as many others, for instance, Irving's "Rip Van Winkle," "Peter Rugg," Hall's "The French Village," the unity is broken by a long lapse of years.

The secret of Poe's success was his skill in starting in immediately upon the story without long description, and holding the mind of the reader with intense interest until he had reached, with swift and steady movement, the inevitable climax. I have said it was the secret of Poe's success, but it was more his skill in using it; for it is this sympathy between writer and reader which is the goal of every author and a true test of any writer's success. His immediate attack and rapid movement permitted him to make use of the unlovely and horrible, which must necessarily be brief. Herein lies an advantage over the novel. His story of "the Black Cat," "Hernie," "Ligeria," and "The Tell-tale Heart" illustrate this necessity for haste. "The Black Cat" covers but five pages, and "The Tell-tale Heart" three, but could we longer endure the awfulness of the scene, the intense rage into which the innocent black cat throws its master until he strikes his gentle little wife in the head with the ax; or, in the latter case, the cool deliberate murder of the old man, which liberate murder of the one wicked-looking glass eye, and then the sickening sight when he calmly cuts the body to pieces and bestows it under the floor, which Poe depicts with awful minuteness.

Poe's stories deal with plot and incident rather than with character. You see his people and feel their presence in the story, but they impress you in something of the same manner as a large crowd or persons merely passing along the street. You do not get acquainted with them; any man or woman might be substituted and not change the story in the least, but put in the place of the prisoner in "The Pit and the Pendulum," even Bret Hart's story of "Foker Flat," and immediately we are interested to know how this cool, self-possessed man of the world will receive or overcome this circumstance. We can feel with him because we know him. One might ask, before reading, are not "Hernie," "Elmore," or "Morella" character stories? But finish reading and you find there is no definite character, you are more impressed by the even, ivory looking teeth of Bernice than of any definite character of the girl. In "Morella," the quiet, silent suffering of the woman, in which we can see no reason for her husband's bitter repulsive feeling, is more apparent. In "Eleanora," Poe has given a description of "the Valley of the Many-colored Grass," which, to my

mind, is the most beautiful piece of workmanship that he has produced in his short-story. There is a certain melancholy, but it lacks that weird, grotesque, almost repulsive atmosphere, characteristic of his works. But, after all, the sweet, innocent peasant girl is not a distinct living character to us. On the other hand, observe how he makes his reader feel and live the incident. In "The Descent Into the Maelstrom," the reader himself seems to see the scene; he feels the convulsive heave of the boat; and at last he holds his breath as he beholds the bottom of the whirlpool and his slow, but steady progress as he whirls round and round, each time nearer his fate. Still, even though the most exciting incident stand out most forcibly, the reader is made to feel the inevitable end, the rescue of the man who is telling the story. But up to the climax, the question is, "How is it to be done?"

In his plot tales, the same intense interest is felt, only held for a longer time upon a more complicated mystery. Wronged for his own sake, from the moment the death's head is made visible, by heat, upon the dirty, thin parchment, accidentally picked up by Legard to lift the gold bug, the plot moves steadily on, each incident adding strength to the main action. Even the effect of the gold bug on the superstitious neighbors is treated with the mystery of the final discovery. This use of leading each incident and word with significance is one great charm of Poe. He did not possess the wonderful vocabulary of Hawthorne, but made flow of words, and his style is striking words charged with meaning, which conveyed to the mind, not merely color, form or attitude, but used them, as well as the scenery, to forward the mood. In the story mentioned above, the mournful howl and peculiar actions of the dog while they are digging in the ground, "Hard-henry, when they find his sudden change when they find the right place, add to the loneliness of the night and the seeming madness of his master. In his "Ligeria," and also "Metzenstein," the slow wavy movements of the waving araperies add to the soundness of the room. The "storm" in the "House of Usher" coincides with the perturbed minds of the inmates of the house, and also with the terrible destruction of the House of Usher.

Unlike the short-story of the present day, Poe's does not deal with the social problems of the time, that they are placed in any one place—they lack locality. I can think of but few tales that he has definitely placed. "The Descent Into the Maelstrom" is laid off the coast of Norway; "The Murder of the Rue Morgue," in Paris; his first prize story, "MS. Found in a Bottle," is placed between "Batavia" of Java and the Archipelago of the Sunda Islands; and "The Adventures of One Hans Pfall," is laid in Rotterdam. His locations, as well as his characters, belong to no one particular place or age, but, perhaps, the most strikingly get, perhaps, a slight glimpse of the early Dutch of America, in the tale "The Devil in the Selfry." He enters into a detailed description of the appearance of a Dutch settlement, the mode of living, and some of their peculiar habits.

Poe has written a few others which are charged, and seemingly with foundation. P. L. Willis said of Poe "that with a single glass of wine his whole nature was reversed, the demon became uppermost, and though none of the usual signs of intoxication were visible, his will was palpably insane." The London Athenian said that "Edgar A. Poe's stories seem all of them to have been written under the inspiration of gin and water," but the Spectator, the greatest London critic, said that "Poe stands as much alone among verse writers as Salvator Rosa among painters."

Mrs. Osgood, however, did justice to Poe, and she appreciated his character. She especially referred to his appreciation of womanhood, and of his Christian, graceful and tender reverence therefor. His wife's mother always spoke highly of Poe, and said he seemed more than a son to her in his

feelings before the old man under a bland smile and winning speech, laugh-illud. The old man obstinately stands by the east a day in advance of London time, and the one from the west twenty-four hours behind the time of London, the old man tries to make one more effort to save himself by the opinion of Dubble L. Dee, but failing, gives his consent.

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It is true that every author leaves more or less of his influence and character upon his work. The same statement holds good for the artist, the sculptor, or the musician, although it is more noticeable, perhaps, in the work of the musician and writer of literature. Hawthorne was an optimist, and though he wrote, as did Poe, from his own imagination, his tales were not "a he all and end all here." Poe were. He was a pessimist, a cynic, and his stories all bear witness to the fact. His sad, dissipated, wasted life is reflected upon almost every page, and at times unutterable despair is exhaled therefrom. In all of the numerous stories that he has written, only one, I believe, has spoken of forgiveness in the next world, of peace, love and future life. Still, even as he utters these words: "Sleep in peace!—the Spirit of Love reigneth and smiles!"—the art of the poet, for reasons which shall be made known to thee in heaven, of thy vows unto Eleanora"; it seems that there is a sad note of longing and despair. In fact, the whole story of "Eleanora" seems to be a cry from his very soul for the pure and beautiful life which he has cast from him and is powerless to regain. After having read that story, I cannot agree with all of N. P. Willis' harsh criticisms, but must argue with Mrs. Osgood in maintaining that Poe was not altogether a hard-hearted wretch who seemed to have no "moral susceptibility" and whose chief aim was to rise or succeed that he might gain a right to "despise a world which galled his self-conceit."

As to which of his stories is the best, it is difficult to say, though most of his later works show an improvement over the earlier ones. He himself declares that if they were all bound in one volume he could not decide which one was the best, for they are all good, of their kind. Still, he thinks that his "Ligeria" may be called his best, as he believes the highest imagination is the loftiest literary virtue.

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Probably some of your silver-plated spoons, forks or knives are beginning to show signs of wear. Bring them to us and let us re-plate them—we wear them practically the same as new. All of our work is triple plated and guaranteed. We also do gold, nickel, and copper plating. If you have anything that needs re-finishing and re-plating give us a trial. We guarantee to please you. Any work entrusted to our solicitor, Mr. H. I. Brown, will receive our best attention.



POE'S CHARACTER.

The essay on "Poe and the Short Story" by Miss Gertrude M. Johnson of this city is the one for which she was given the Shakespeare prize by Mr. W. H. Burkhardt at the school of oratory graduating exercises recently. Miss Johnson displays powers of both criticism and literary composition in the essay, and the article will be read by Statesman readers this morning with much interest. She shows at least a high appreciation of the works of Edgar Allen Poe, and her study of his writings, and her comparisons of his short stories with others show a deep study of literature and literary method. The only thing in her article that will not be generally accepted is her acceptance of the charge that Poe was so dissipated that he considered himself a failure. That he was a dreamer, is not denied; that he occasionally drank to excess may have also been true, but that he was a subject of constant dissipation has been denied by many men who knew him intimately. Rev. John B. Tabb, known as the poet priest of the south, professor of English literature at St. Charles college at Carrollton, Md., was one of Poe's friends and knew him well. A gentleman of this city has often heard Father Tabb speak of Poe and of their acquaintance, and has often heard his denial of the charge of utter dissipation against Poe. Many others have taken the same stand and made the same statements as Father Tabb.

long-continued observance of every duty to her. This does not indicate that he was such a terrible character as has been painted. At least admirers of his works have preferred to think well of him.

A SURPRISE PARTY.
A pleasant surprise party may be given to a medicine which will relieve their pain and discomfort, viz., Dr. King's New Life Pills. They are a most wonderful remedy, affording sure relief and cure for headache, dizziness and constipation; 25c at Dan'l J. Fry's drug store.

THE BURDEN BEARERS.

Say, growler, with the loaded hod, You think you carry weight; Enough to crush you to the earth; And curse the cruel fate That puts the heavy load on you While other men go free! Of all the burdens that you bear— As far as you can see.

You think because a man is rich And does not lug a hod, He has nothing else to do But live and loaf and nod, And wear fine clothes and eat fine food, And whom it up for fair— Well, you don't know a little bit About a rich man's care.

Look at the wrinkles in his face, And note those tired eyes, And see him turn away from food That you would think a prize; And see the marks of age on youth, The gray hair on his head— You lay your burden down at night, He carries his to bed.

Say, growler, would you like to sleep With that hard hod of yours, And have it scrape you down the back And spoil your soothing snore? And give you dreams to make the night A wretchedness that brought You to your morning work again, An old man overwrought?

Your load is heavy, none denies; Your days are hard and long, And labor in excess, no doubt, Seems little short of wrong; But wealth is not a cure for that, Whatever it may do— Thank God you do not have to take Your hod to bed with you. —William J. Lampton, in Leslie's Weekly.

STATESMAN CLASSIFIED ADS BRING QUICK RESULTS.

Markets

LIVERPOOL, July 1.—July wheat, 6s 11 3/4.
Chicago, July 1.—July wheat opened at 93 1/2@93 3/4 and closed at 93c. Barley—47@49c. Flax—\$1.25.
Northwestern—\$1.43.
San Francisco, July 1.—Wheat, \$1.47 1/2@1.55.
Portland, July 1.—Wheat—Export club, 82c@83c; bluestem, 89c@90c.
Local Markets.
Oats—40 to 42 cents.
Hay—Chest, 49; clover, 48 to 48.50; timothy, \$11.50 to \$12.
Flour—\$4.40 per bbl. retail.
Wheat—77 cents.
Flour—City retail selling price, \$1.15 Mill Feed—Bran, \$22.50 per ton; shorts, 22 1/2.
Eggs—17 cents.
Hens—9 cents.
Butter—Country, 15 cents.
Butter fat—19 cents.
Ducks—10 cents.
Wool—25 to 27 cents.
Mohair—30 cents.
Potatoes—25c to 30c per bushel.
Hops—25 cents.
Salem Live Stock Market.
Cattle—1100 to 1200 lb. steers, 3 to 3 1/2.
Lighter steers, 2 1/2.
Cows, 900 to 1000 lbs., 2 to 2 1/2.
Hogs—175 to 200 lbs., 5 1/2c.
Stock, 4c.
Sheep—Best wethers, 2 1/2c.
Mixed ewes and wethers, 2 1/2c.
Lamb (alive), 3c.
Veal—Dressed, 4 to 5c, according to quality.

VIBRATION

Eugene Guard.
Electricity is a force resulting from the vibrations of ether waves. Owing to the fact that life force is also vibratory ether, the effect of electricity on the human body is very pronounced. If from any cause the vibratory rate of the etherical life waves in the human body is lowered, vitality is weakened and sickness is the result.
An application of electricity by a skillful physician who understands the law governing its action is the most powerful healing force that can be applied. It raises the vibratory rate to its normal condition, and health is restored. As to results, read the case appended, cured by Dr. Darrin, at Hotel Smeede:

Miss Anderson is very well-known and is living at the Hoffman House, Eugene, and will answer all questions concerning the treatment and cure.

Miss Anderson's Card.
Dr. Darrin: Dear Sir—It gives me pleasure to express my grateful appreciation of your skill in successful curing me of dense and cataract eye for some time been afflicted with cataract in the head, which affected my hearing. I am gratified to say that after a few electrical treatments by you my hearing has been entirely restored and the cataract condition has passed away.

I am very gratefully yours,
MISS ANNA ANDERSON.
E. P. Redford's Card.
To the Editor.—For four years I have been gradually growing deafened cataract deafness—until it was with great difficulty I could hear common conversation. It annoyed me very much. I went under Dr. Darrin's electrical treatment and now can hear about as well as ever in my life. Refer to me at Saginaw, Lane county, Or.
E. P. REDFORD.

Junction City Man Speaks.
Mr. Editor—I wish to subscribe to the merits of Dr. Darrin's electric and medical treatment. For a long time I have been afflicted with dyspepsia, liver complaint, constipation and generally run down in health. Dr. Darrin has so far relieved me that I feel like a new man. I commend him to all similarly afflicted. I reside in Junction City, Or., and will gladly answer all questions.
E. MOUTSGAARD.

Dr. Darrin's Place of Business.
Dr. Darrin can be consulted free at the Hotel Smeede, Eugene, Or., until October 1, from 10 to 5 o'clock daily; evenings, 7 to 8; Sunday, 2 to 4.

The doctor makes a specialty of all diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat, cataract, deafness, bronchitis, la grippe, heart, liver, bladder and kidney diseases, or those who suffer from apathy and indifference; also genito-urinary and skin diseases, in either sex, such as blood taint, seminal weakness and lost vigor, varicoles and stricture.
All curable chronic diseases treated at \$5 a week, or in that proportion of time as the case may require. The poor treated free, except medicines, from 10 to 11 daily. No cases published except by permission of the patient. All business relations with Dr. Darrin strictly confidential. One visit is desirable, though many cases can be treated by home treatment by writing symptoms.

POWER OF GOLD.

In one of our eastern cities a certain family suddenly found themselves at the top notch of wealth and prosperity. They then began to seek for the secondary requirement of culture. A most excellent master was engaged to instruct their only daughter on the piano. His patience being taxed to the utmost, the master complained to the young woman's mother.
"Madam, I cannot teach your daughter longer."
"And why not? Doesn't my daughter study? I will make her study."
"It ceases not," persisted the old man. "I cannot teach her. She has no talent."

Have you read our great clubbing offer in this issue? If not turn to it at once and read it.
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LIGHT FASTER THAN SOUND

About a thousand yards from the window where I sit is a factory which I know its whistle every noon. The steam always comes from the whistle some little time before the sound is heard. I once counted three seconds between the time when the first steam was seen from the factory to the time when the whistle was first heard. The whistle is heard when the weather is foggy and clear, hot or cold, windy or calm. It is sometimes louder than at other times, but it always takes three seconds to travel the three thousand feet from the factory to my house.

We also hear often an echo of the whistle, which comes two seconds later than the first sound. This is the same sound coming by a roundabout journey 5,000 feet long. It travels 1,000 feet to a hill beyond, and is then sent back 4,000 feet to our house.

A few days ago I heard a band of musicians playing upon the street, and although they were far distant from me, the high tones of the piccolo and the low tones of the bass horn reached me exactly together, showing that high and low tones travel at the same speed.
During a recent thunderstorm I noticed a flash of lightning and counted ten seconds before the sound of the thunder was heard. This showed me that the storm was about ten thousand feet away. A little later however, the time between the lightning and the thunder began to grow less, and the noise of the thunder became louder, which showed that the storm was getting nearer. Finally a dazzling flash of lightning was followed immediately by a deafening crash of thunder, and at the same time the shingles flew from a patch of roof on a farm nearby. It had been struck by lightning and was soon in flames.

ROYAL TIPS.

Some of the European monarchs give very large tips whenever they travel, and others, on the contrary, are quite niggardly. Emperor Nicholas of Russia is the most liberal in this respect. During his brief visit to France three years ago he spent \$16,000 on tips to servants and almost as much on presents to officials and others. King Edward of England is not quite so generous, but as he travels a good deal both within his own realm and abroad he is obliged to lay aside each year \$32,000 as an allowance for tips. Emperor William of Germany is much more generous in a foreign country than at home, and during his recent visit to Cowes, England, he spent not less than \$10,000 on tips. Of the remaining rulers, some spend respectable sums and others very little, but probably quite as much as they can afford.

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