A Survey of Fiction Written By Mormon Authors and Appearing in Mormon Periodicals Between 1900 and 1945

Ross Stolworthy Esplin

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AN ABSTRACT OF
A SURVEY OF FICTION WRITTEN BY MORNON AUTHORS
AND APPEARING IN MORNON PERIODICALS
BETWEEN 1900 AND 1945

By
Ross S. Esplin
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Mormon periodical fiction has had a slow and pains-taking development. Not much fiction of worth was produced prior to 1900, but by 1900 the antecedents of a future "mature" fiction were established.

The fiction of the years following those initial developments of fiction is largely, as yet, unexplored and unevaluated. It is my purpose in this study to map out the broad areas of this fiction and attempt to measure its literary value.

Like the fiction produced before 1900, Mormon periodical fiction between 1900 and 1945 is predominantly didactic in purpose. A majority of these didactic stories seek to teach lessons regarding the Mormon religion and the Mormon way of life. Some of their messages are as follows: shun the evils of the world; obey the Word of Wisdom; be like the pioneers; live righteously in daily life; raise a family; be a missionary in everyday life; marry within the Mormon Church; learn the scriptures and master the principles of Mormonism.

Of significance is it that nearly ten percent more
stories written since 1920 than before that year have the
dominant purpose of providing entertainment for children,
young people, and adults. Old didactic purposes apparently
are giving way on a small scale to purposes of entertain-
ment.

Because they no longer are hated and persecuted by the
people of the world, the Mormon people do not write much
fiction having polemical purposes. Between 1900 and 1945
they write a few stories in defense of their institutions
and practices, such as the abandoned practice of polygamy,
but disputation is not an important purpose during the
period of this study.

Themes peculiarly Mormon in that they are concerned
with the Mormon situation and Mormon men and women in the
Mormon setting dominate periodical fiction of the period.
The following are typical Mormon themes: adventure,
courting, the family, The Book of Mormon, The Bible, con-
versions, miracles and dreams, friendship, the pioneers,
animals and nature, daily living.

A small number of stories, however, reveal evidence
of the influence of world events, for a few stories are
concerned with such events as war, the depression of the
1930's, and the historical adventures of world heroes like
Cortez and John Charles Fremont.

As would be expected of a body of fiction dominated
by didactic purposes and concerned primarily with the
subject matter of its own group, Mormon stories reveal didactic coloring and treatment. And accompanying this dominant "moralistic" tone oftentimes is a romantic treatment, evidenced by a love for and a pantheistic conception of nature, respect for events and characters from out of the past, unrealistic characters and settings, and exaggerated incidents and plot developments.

Many times thought of as a form of romanticism, a sentimental treatment—a tendency to emotionalize over events that do not merit extreme show of feeling—is prominent in the periodical fiction of the period. Sentimentality, significantly, is less apparent in the stories written since 1920 than in stories written before that time.

Unlike Mormon fiction before 1900, Mormon periodical fiction between 1900 and 1945 contains considerable humor. Good-natured fun characterizes most humorous stories, all of which are concerned with the humor of everyday life.

Accompanying the humorous treatment in about the same degree, although never in a dominating position in a story, realism is present in Mormon fiction. Unhappy situations regarded dispassionately, pessimism, and psychological probing into character are evidences of the realistic treatment.

Stories for children reveal the juvenile treatment, a treatment distinguished by simplicity in vocabulary and
sentence structure, rapid-moving plots, and consistently happy stories that are free from cruelty and bloodshed.

The stories found in Mormon periodicals are either single issue stories or continued stories. Single issue stories, those beginning and ending in a single number of a periodical, include the following literary types: the prose tale, a rambling, leisurely tale written without regard for singleness of effect and artistic excellence; the short story, a unified, well-planned, artistically conceived story; the short short story, an abbreviated, near- anecdotal short story; the allegory, a story with hidden or disguised meanings.

The prose tale is the most numerous single issue story found in Mormon periodicals, for the majority of Mormon stories are designed to instruct rather than to please. Short stories become more prominent, however, after 1920 than before.

Included in the continued stories are the following: the novel, a long story involving considerable complexity in plot and characterization; the episodic tale, a long story consisting of adventure "beads," joined together by no more than a single character or circumstance; the travel talk, a story form that catalogues items of interest about places and people; the frame story, a story designed as a core situation for relating other stories. The novel is the most abundant continued story type of the period.
Mormon fiction, which often appears in the form of a series of stories grouped about certain characters and settings, attempts in its opening sentences to introduce the moral message, present the principal characters, describe the physical setting, and set the plot into operation. Similarly, these Mormon fiction pieces attempt to conclude by giving the impression that peace and happiness now are supreme and with a restatement of the moral message.

As a rule, the plots of Mormon stories progress slowly and somewhat tediously to a climax and a drawn-out conclusion, for didactic elements and lengthy descriptions frequently intervene. A considerable number of stories, however, abridge climactic situations and closing chapters into a few paragraphs.

Characterizations in Mormon periodical fiction generally are superficial and weak. A few stories penetrate into a character's mind and heart, but most stories assume an objective approach to character. Few characters are complex and few of them show much development throughout the story.

Local color details permeate the descriptions found in Mormon fiction. These are usually quite detailed and long, and they often deal with settings that are conventionalized and patterned such as sunsets and views from lofty mountaintops.
Stylistically, Mormon stories, although correct grammatically, are slow and uneven in movement. Mormon writers employ terms that are simple and easy to understand, but their vocabularies are limited. Mormon fiction can be said to be "tame" in interest appeal, for it never, seemingly, rises to great heights of interest and feeling.

It is my belief that Mormon periodical fiction between 1900 and 1945 does not constitute a significant contribution to the literature of the world. In the first place, it is restricted in purpose, theme, and appeal to a tiny segment of humanity. Secondly, it deals with superficials, not delving into and dissecting the human personality nor touching life at sufficient various points to make it intelligible.

Mormon fiction, as a third reason, is unreal, idealistic, and romantic in the extreme; it does not add anything new to mankind's knowledge of himself. Fourth, most Mormon writers plod toward a pre-outlined didactic goal rather than soaring on "wings of song," toward great literary objectives. Fifth, Mormon stories reveal structural weaknesses, disunity, a tendency to "drag." And last, Mormon writers betray their lack of experience and training in what they write.

Mormon fiction, however, possesses these strengths: (1) Sentimentality apparently is decreasing; (2) entertainment as a purpose is becoming more important; (3) the
short story rapidly is replacing the prose tale in Mormon periodicals; (4) stylistic improvements are visible in Mormon periodical fiction; (5) there are individual writers of power among Mormon writers.

As for Mormon fiction of the future, it, without a doubt, will improve stylistically and structurally in the years to come. But didactic purposes, romantic treatments, and sectional and group themes always will be prominent in it.
A SURVEY OF FICTION WRITTEN BY MORMON AUTHORS
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BETWEEN 1900 AND 1945

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
OF
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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

By
Ross S. Esplin
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Background to the Problem

Mormon fiction before 1900 had a late beginning and a slow development. The leaders of the Mormon Church were at first actively opposed to fiction in any form, for they regarded it as a worldly, distracting influence and actively expressed the opinion that The Book of Mormon and The Bible were the only worthwhile books written.¹

Despite the opposition of the Mormon leaders to fiction, however, Mormon fiction had its beginning in the early, formative years of the Mormon organization. Mormon men and women, accustomed to telling one another

¹. Gean Clark, "A Survey of Early Mormon Fiction," Provo, Brigham Young University, 1935, p. 9. The introduction to the above study, pp. 1-3, contains the essentials of the material that I present in this section.
about instances in which dreams and miracles had aided faithful Latter-day Saints, gradually broadened and expanded these accounts to include instances of true adventure and imaginative episodes. In this way, the first Mormon fiction was born.  

The Mormon people had scant opportunity to create a true fiction during the years of their persecutions in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. And following these bitter years, they had to face the cruel, hard actuality of life on the frontier.

During the years of the arduous trek to Utah and the establishment of Mormon communities in Utah, there was little opportunity for a real fiction to be born. The Mormon people did not have a problem of what to do with their leisure time, for the Utah of 1847 was raw and undeveloped. They were concerned in the main with building homes, cultivating the sun-baked soil, resisting the elements, fighting off hostile Indians, and establishing a religious citadel and an agricultural economy.

The Mormon fiction of these pioneer years consisted mainly of true experiences related by men and women who had had dreams, had experienced or witnessed miracles, or had braved the savagery of Indian attacks.

The coming of Johnston's army to Utah in 1857 and the

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2. Ibid., pp. 3-6., 24.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
magnitude of the California and Oregon movements contributed to a qualified acceptance on the part of Mormon leaders of a fiction that was didactic and moralistic. The immigrants to California and Oregon and the soldiers brought into Utah such a worldly influence and such a quantity of "yellowback" literature that the leaders of the Mormon Church came to the decision that they must combat this outside influence with every means at their disposal. 4

So for this reason after 1888 the leaders of the Mormon Church gave a qualified acceptance of fiction that taught lessons of moral uprightness and that gave uplift and inspiration to its readers. They asked their people to produce fiction which would teach Mormon beliefs and practices, not only to themselves, but also to the people of the world. It was also true that these leaders desired to see their people keep artistic pace with the "Gentiles."

The earliest Mormon fiction pieces dealt with pioneer and Indian experiences, incidents of dreams and miracles, stories of conversions, and the experiences of Mormon missionaries.5 Lacking in maturity and strength, this fiction is of value today mainly because it preserves the attitudes and activities of the early Mormon people. Occasional pieces of excellence were produced, but the fiction was, for the most part, of mediocre worth.

4. Ibid., p. 4.
5. Ibid., pp. 24-44.
Whether a strictly literary criticism of Mormon fiction in its early phases could be made or not is a question which future critics may answer. It is my belief that there is not much literature of worth. Perhaps an occasional story may deserve applause for literary excellence, but for the most part, the fiction is of value for the sole reason that it preserves the attitudes and sections of life of the early Latter-day Saints out of which true literature may evolve.\(^6\)

Most Mormon fiction produced before 1900 had the purpose of teaching. No story was free from didacticism and romanticism; sentimentality was a favorite treatment; and grammatically, Mormon stories were poorly constructed.

We have seen that the first literary tool, grammar, is not used with skill in any of the literature quoted; we have also seen that the too-ambitious plots have run away with the unprepared authors; or that over-big words and high-sounding phrases confounded the small story element. Didacticism, romanticism, and sentimentalisms have crowded out simplicity and sincerity in writing.

This early period is one of experimentation and gallant effort to express the pioneer life which hurried by. And since literature is a succession of books upon books, we look with respect upon the parentage of Mormon fiction.\(^7\)

The themes of the stories of Mormon authorship written before 1900 were as follows: polygamous, didactic, Book of Mormon, conversion, romantic, humorous, Indian-frontier, and children. The happy Christmas ending was popular, and supernatural and scriptural subjects were favored. These stories were exact in details, and most

\(^6\) Ibid., p. 93.
\(^7\) Ibid., p. 95.
of them ended in a moral tag. Writers frequently attempted to imitate the style of The Bible and The Book of Mormon. Mormon writers by 1900, however, had taken the necessary steps preliminary to the production of a true literature. By 1900 they had pioneered the primitive antecedents of a future fiction.

The Mormon authors, however, by the turn of the century had not reached that degree of excellence attained by the average American story writers a half-century before. Literature is not born spontaneously out of life. It grows up of a succession of books upon books. Every book must have its literary parentage; and the Mormons, as an individual group, had barely created the primitive derivatives of future fiction.

The first Mormon periodical was The Evening and Morning Star, published for the first time in 1832 in Independence, Missouri. After "the mob" demolished it, this periodical was republished in Kirtland, Ohio, and its name changed to The Messenger and the Advocate.

Parley P. Pratt published the first Millennial Star in Liverpool, England, in 1840; and The Wasp, a Nauvoo weekly paper, was first published in 1842. The Woman's Exponent, the first magazine for Mormon women, was founded in 1842, and its sister periodical, The Relief Society Magazine, was created in 1914.

In 1866 the publication of the Deseret Sunday School Union, The Juvenile Instructor, later called The Instructor,
made its first appearance. The Contributor, founded in 1879 and later renamed The Improvement Era, and The Young Woman's Journal, created in 1889, publications of the Mutual Improvement Associations of the Mormon Church, were combined in 1929 as The Improvement Era. 9

The first Mormon fiction magazine was Parry's Monthly Magazine, created in 1888 to present stories of the right sort to Mormon young people. After 1890 all Mormon periodicals began to include works of fiction in their pages. 10

A Statement of the Problem and the Approach to It

It is my purpose in this study to determine the characteristics of and to arrive at an estimate of the literary value of the prose fiction produced by Mormon writers and published in Mormon periodicals between the years 1900 and 1945.

I approach the problem in this way:

1. I attempt to determine, first of all, the chief purposes back of the writing of this fiction, placing each story considered in one of these general classifications: didactic, entertaining, or polemical.

2. I classify the fiction of the period on a basis of the themes used. The theme classifications are as follows:

themes of the adolescent, adventure, The Bible, The Book of Mormon, conversions, courting, daily living, dreams and miracles, the depression, the family, friendship, history, the Indian, the juvenile, the pioneer, polygamy, and war.

3. I observe the treatments given their material by Mormon writers of the period and place each story in one of the following classifications: didactic, romantic, sentimental, humorous, juvenile, or realistic.

4. I analyze the fiction of the period for its stylistic and structural qualities and seek to determine what literary types are represented.

5. I attempt to arrive at an estimate of the literary value of the fiction by measuring it alongside such points of judgment as are listed below:

   First, how deeply and at how many points does the fiction touch life and make it intelligible?

   Second, to what degree are the themes and purposes of the fiction of universal significance?

   Third, are the stories correct in mechanical details? Do they possess unity, clarity, concreteness, and vividness?

   Fourth, to what degree are the fiction pieces uplifting, moving, and true to life?11

   11. Arlene Harris, "A Study of Standards in the Criticism of Contemporary Fiction," Provo, Brigham Young University, 1934.

Limits of the Study

I confine my attention to the fiction written by Mormon authors and published in Mormon periodicals between the years 1900 and 1945. True experiences, biographies, and autobiographies are not included in this study, and I do not devote any space to the study of individual Mormon writers. This is a survey of Mormon fiction over a forty-five year period. To attempt to penetrate at any length into the writings of individual authors is obviously impossible in a study of this length.

I do not intend that this study should in any sense be regarded as an exhaustive study. This is a first survey only in which only the broad areas of the subject are explored and defined.

Sources of Data


contain fiction on the adult level; The Children's Friend and The Juvenile Instructor are sources for children's fiction.

A number of reference works have given me help and guidance in classifying and arriving at a judgment of the fiction studied.

**Significance of This Study**

The field of this study—fiction created by Mormon writers and published in Mormon periodicals—is as yet relatively unmapped and unexplored. This fiction is largely unclassified and unevaluated, although there have been writings that have touched the subject lightly and briefly.¹²

The study to which this survey is a sequel ("A Survey of Early Mormon Fiction" by Gean Clark) points to the years after 1900 as the time in which a true Mormon literature would in all probability be born:

The Mormon authors, however, by the turn of the century had not reached that degree of excellence attained by the average American story writers a half-century before. . . . Since the

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¹² Lella Marler Hoggan, *loc. cit.*
Parley A. Christensen, "The Future of Utah Literature," *All in a Teacher's Day,* p. 73.
time limit in this thesis is 1900, we must leave Mormon fiction before it has accumulated the richness needed to make it mature, before it had passed through more than the beginning stages of maturity. 13

Here, then, is an open invitation and a challenge to the student to explore the Mormon fiction of the years following 1900 to determine just what is the nature of the stories there. The scope of the study is necessarily limited to Mormon periodical fiction.

That there should be something of worth in Mormon periodical fiction is testified to by such statements as the following:

Competent literary judges have termed Utah a gold mine of theme and color for writers, of source material waiting for an interpreter. One western poet has predicted that the "Mormon epoch, the scenic wonders, and the earthly people all will someday be the subject of a great literature." With the perspective of a century should come the calmness and impartiality that were lacking in the earlier books on Utah. 14

The Mormon hegira is the most epic, colorful and unusual thing in American history. . . . That the Mormons did a wonderful thing is past dispute. . . . Brigham Young was one of America's ablest and most individual men. . . . 15

So, for the reasons (1) that the area of the study is relatively unexplored, (2) that students have pointed to the years following 1900 as the time in which Mormon fiction

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would in all probability achieve some maturity and growth, and (3) that observers of Mormon fiction have declared that Mormondom is a treasure hoard for the story teller, I feel that this study is significant.

The great amount of abuse leveled at Mormon fiction and the strong defense made in its behalf have no place in this study. The controversial nature of the discussions on the subject is, however, another argument, perhaps, in favor of the need for clarification of the status of Mormon fiction on the most impartial basis possible.16

Acknowledgments

I wish to acknowledge the help and encouragement given to me by Professors Karl Young, Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, and Dr. Parley A. Christensen. Without their patient guidance and helpful suggestions I could not have carried this study to a successful completion. I also desire to express gratefulness to my wife, Olive Hoody Esplin, whose assistance has been invaluable.

CHAPTER II

THE PURPOSES OF MORMON FICTION

A Dominant Didactic Purpose

The greatest portion of the fiction appearing in Mormon periodicals between 1900 and 1945 is didactic in purpose. A small number of stories have the purpose of entertaining, but even in these stories a didactic purpose seems to hover near, for in all Mormon fiction, good triumphs over evil and the forces of right have the upper hand. A few stories seem to have a polemical purpose or a purpose that approaches the polemical.1

That a major share of Mormon fiction reveals a dominant didactic purpose is not a matter of chance. The periodicals of the Mormon Church have, almost without exception, editorial policies which aim at teaching the principles of the Mormon faith and way of life.

1. For this study I have read 606 stories from Mormon periodicals. Of this number, 442 are predominantly didactic in purpose; 152 seem to have entertainment as the principal purpose; and some twelve stories appear to have a polemical purpose.
Editorial Policies

Typical of the statements made from time to time in Mormon periodicals with reference to the didactic purpose of the material contained within them is the following taken from an early Young Woman's Journal:

To please while we teach important lessons, to implant solid principles of truth and nobility while chaining the minds and attentions with our seemingly "light literature"; these are some of our aims. We wish to always have a goodly share of that sound, substantial matter suited to older tastes. . . .

Representative statements from other Mormon periodicals are contained in the footnotes.  

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3. The mission of the Era is not to be confined to the limits of those only who are enlightened by a knowledge of the truth and who already possess the love of God in their hearts. It is also intended to reach the thoughtless and wayward, those who are prone to evil, and all, wheresoever they are found, who possibly may or can be reached and convinced by the potency of its reasoning, the clearness of its facts, and the witness of its spirit, together with the Father's blessing, and thereby be brought out of darkness and the shadows of the valley of death into the marvelous light and liberty of divine truth. . . .

"The Editor's Table," The Improvement Era vol. 1, (November, 1897), p. 55.

Asked what the moral to this story is, the author said, "It has none. It is just an incident from real life."

But since it would not have found space in the Era without having a moral in it, it is plain that the author is mistaken. The Era will be glad to receive suggestions from any young man as to what the moral is. We will print the best. ---Editor


(Continued)
Views of Mormon Leaders

The leaders of the Mormon Church have always frowned upon fiction of a worldly nature containing little or no moral teaching. Those same leaders have, on the other hand, always expressed approval of fiction that is didactic in purpose.4

3. (Continued) If the Editor of this enterprise might shape its policy and fashion its fulfillment, who would have this magazine filled with the spirit of the Lord from cover to cover. In order to do that, no article would be published which would encourage vanity, hurtful luxury, sin, or any evil passion of the human breast. Rather would we make of this magazine a beacon light of hope, beauty, and charity.

The Children's Friend desires to be all that its name implies, a friend to the children by helping the officers and teachers in the Primary Associations to teach the children the principles of the Gospel, to help them become Latter-day Saints; to fathers and mothers by offering good suggestions and words of encouragement in the care and management of the dear little ones; and last but not least we hope to be a Friend to many children who will read it, enjoy it, and from it gain inspiration and strength to grow into good men and good women.

4. Typical of the statements made by leaders of the Mormon Church is the following made by President Joseph F. Smith in an article entitled "Reading" in The Young Woman's Journal vol. 28, (August, 1917), p. 412.

Some of our good people read many of the books that are published today, popular fiction so-called, but they haven't the time to read the word of the Lord. Many of these books are beautiful, but often ideas are expressed which are only pretty words, well-connected sentences, or sentiments that are like flowers blooming on the stem without root. Real truth you can gain from books that have been adopted as standard works of the Church.

A similar message is found in The Improvement Era vol. 33-41, (November, 1929), p. 4.
Church leaders have encouraged Mormon readers to patronize church periodicals and to contribute to them. This encouragement has been made in editorials, in articles in the periodicals, and in story contests in which cash awards have been offered for the best stories submitted. A typical story contest is one that was conducted by *The Young Woman's Journal* in August, 1909, offering prizes of $15.00 and $10.00 for the best stories.\(^5\)

With few exceptions, the stories winning the contests aim to teach rather than to entertain. The winning story in the contest previously referred to is "The Wheel of Time"\(^6\) by Josephine Spencer. It, like almost all other prize-winning stories in Mormon periodicals, is didactic in purpose and treatment.\(^7\)

### Reviews of Didactic Fiction

Didactic pieces of fiction receive high praise in the pages of Mormon periodicals. *Romance of a Missionary* by

7. This story tells how an aphoristic bit of advice--"Thoughts are things. A man is master of his fate; it depends on what amount of faith he puts into his desire and effort"—helps a poor boy to overcome obstacles to his success and happiness. This boy loves a rich girl, but the girl's father refuses to allow him to marry her. The poor boy never gives up hope, and after he has become rich and famous, he saves the girl's life and wins her for his wife. The story counsels perseverance in every activity of life.
Nephi Anderson is typical of didactic works that receive warm commendation from Mormon book reviewers. The reviewer of Romance of a Missionary concludes his review with these words: "As with all of this pleasing author's productions, there is much of gospel teaching in the text, which in itself is compensation for the reading."8

Leaders' Messages in Stories

Further evidence that stories in Mormon periodicals are didactic in purpose is the fact that many Mormon stories reflect the messages of the leaders of the Mormon Church to their people. For example, in 1917 when President Joseph F. Smith issued his "A Message to the Soldier Boys of Mormondom," stories in Mormon periodicals echoed President Smith's plea for moral cleanliness.9


Similar to the praise lavished upon Romance of a Missionary are the favorable receptions given the didactic novels, Venna Hastings by Julia Farr, in The Improvement Era vol. 23, (November, 1919), p. 82, and Dorian by Nephi Anderson, The Improvement Era vol. 25, (February, 1922), p. 361.

9. President Smith said:

. . . Never in your life think of defiling any man's wife, or daughter, any more than you would think of defiling your mother or your sister. Go out into the world from your home clean. Keep yourself pure, unspotted from the world, and you will be immune from sin, and God will protect you.


Short stories like "Man's Responsibility" by Mrs. I. H. Koylanco, The Improvement Era vol. 20, (September, 1917), p. 971, and "The Touch of the Leper" by Annie W. Palmer,

(Continued)
Mormon Writers' Views

Such prominent Mormon writers as Nephi Anderson express the belief that the purpose of fiction should be to teach. Nephi Anderson's opinion is a reflection of the attitude of a good many Mormons toward fiction.

The Latter-day Saints understand that this world is not altogether a playground, and that the main object of life is not to be amused. He who reaches the people, and the story writer does that, should not lose the opportunity of "preaching" . . . A good story is artistic preaching. A novel which depicts high ideals and gives us representations of men and women as they should and can be, exerts an influence for good that is not easily computed.10

9. (Continued) The Improvement Era vol. 20, (August, 1917), p. 892, appeared in Mormon periodicals at about the same time as President Smith's announcement. Both of these stories emphasize the importance of a clean life and the horrible consequences of sexual sin. Such stories are numerous in The Improvement Era, The Young Woman's Journal, and The Relief Society Magazine during the years of the first World War.

Stories warning against the evils of the world accompany such messages as one appearing in The Improvement Era vol. 42, (January, 1939), warning Mormon young people to live clean "when going to large cities."

Similarly, the M. I. A. slogan for 1920 and 1921, "We stand for the non-use and non-sale of tobacco," is repeated numerous times in stories of the period. Found in Mormon periodicals of these years are such Word of Wisdom stories as "Coin of Eternity" by Ruth Moench Bell, The Improvement Era vol. 24, (February, 1921), p. 326, and "The Rights of Man" by Joe Hickman, The Improvement Era vol. 23, (May, 1920), p. 605.

A Dominantly Religious Didacticism

To begin with, apparently then, it can be said that the purpose of a majority of Mormon stories is to teach. These didactic stories offer two different kinds of instruction: (1) the principles of Mormonism; and (2) facts of a non-religious or secular nature. The teaching of the principles of Mormonism is the purpose encountered most frequently in Mormon fiction of the period.

Stories teaching the principles of the Mormon Church and the Mormon way of life have the purpose of presenting such messages as these that follow: shun the evils of the world; shun the evils to be found at home; live the simple life; return to the soil; be like the pioneers; marry within the Mormon Church; raise a family to be happy; be congenial in family life; be kind to old people; keep the Word of Wisdom; be righteous in daily life; know Mormonism; make conversions in daily life; remember that divine communication is possible; learn the scriptures.

Shunning Worldly Evils

A considerable number of stories from 1900 to 1945 counsel avoidance of the evil ways of the world. These stories often contrast the individual who finds happiness and success by resisting the ways of the world with one who has only unhappiness in life after he weakly succumbs to evil worldly practices.
"Two Paths" by Grace Ingles Frost, is an example of the story which warns against the evils of the world. A summary of it follows.

The story concerns two brothers, James and John. James enters business in the city; John stays at home. John, who is a Mormon, converts his mother and they move to Utah. James goes astray. As the years pass by, he becomes a hopeless drunkard. Near to death, he accompanies John to Utah. There he dies.

Before he dies, James says:

"Mother, you must not blame yourself. I alone brought about this misfortune which has come upon me. You always taught us, mother, that 'the wages of sin is death.' I heeded not your teachings, but John did. He chose the strait and narrow way that he preaches about; while I, thinking him foolish, chose the broad path, thinking it pleasant and more easily traveled. We have both received our reward."12

This story and others like it warn against the evils of the world and tell of the unhappiness and misery that come to those men and women who succumb to the temptations encountered in the world of men. Many such stories, particularly those early in the period of this study, picture the outside world as wholly evil and the Mormon people as wholly righteous.

12. Ibid., p. 866.
Shunning Evil Within Mormondom

In numerous stories late in the period of this study, the warning against the evils of the world begins to be altered into a warning against the practices that are found in any community, whether it is in the outside world or in the heart of Mormondom.

"Live clean," the stories urge. But they do not imply, as stories like "Two Paths" do, that Mormondom is a haven of righteousness. Rather, they urge the individual to avoid all evils wherever he may be. They urge the individual to be strong enough to refuse to do what everybody else is doing if it is against the teachings of the Mormon Church.

"A Good Sport"13 by Florence Strong is typical of stories having this purpose. It tells about Anne, who refuses to drink liquor with her friends just to appear to be "a good sport." The college man whom her friends are attempting to impress expresses deep admiration for her courage and clean, upright habits. Her loyalty to her convictions is rewarded. She is happy that he has been strong enough to say "No."

The Simple Way of Life

To promote the simple way of life among the Mormon

people seems to be one of the important purposes of didactic Mormon fiction. This purpose persists through the fiction considered in this study. By "the simple way of life" is meant a way of life in which individuals are largely self-sustaining, worldly influences are reduced to a minimum, labor is honored, class distinctions are unimportant, religion is placed before money and material gain, the economy of a people is based upon agricultural endeavors, and there is no attempt to exceed one's neighbors in the accumulation of the material comforts of life.

Repeated frequently in the stories of the period is the admonition to the Mormon people to avoid putting money and the material things of the world, which are inconsequential alongside God's work, before religion. Representative of stories having this purpose is "His Awakening" by T. W. Barker.

In "His Awakening," John Parton, who lives for money alone, throws away his wealth in order to rescue a child. As a result of this selfless experience, when wealth is again his, he uses it for the welfare of mankind rather than for his selfish gratification.

The human urge to have as many material possessions as one's neighbors is condemned in a number of stories

teaching the simple life. Typical of such stories is the serial or continued story, "Hearts and Hollyhocks" by Ruth Moench Bell.

"Hearts and Hollyhocks" is a story about two newly-wedded couples, John and Edna, and Judith and Phil. Judith and Phil are wealthy; John and Edna are poor. John, who does not want to try to live as Judith and Phil are able to do, prefers to live the simple kind of life his parents and grandparents lived. He says:

"... And you have described the kind of home I have always wished for, a place of peace... It's a terrible strain to be forever standing on tiptoe straining to reach a mark just beyond our grasp... and that is what makes our modern lives so trying on our soul strength. We have traveled far from leisurely lane." 16

But Edna insists that they have as fashionable a home and as many material possessions as Phil and Judith. And in his effort to make Edna happy, John resorts to stealing from Phil, who is his employer, to pay for their new home, their new car, gay parties, clothes for Edna.

Eventually, inevitably, John's dishonesty is found out. In disgrace, he and Edna flee from their home to the underworld of New York City where they suffer through years of hardship and heartbreak. Captured at last, John insists on paying in full the debt he owes society, even though

16. Ibid., p. 131.
Phil offers to let him go free. A chastened and wiser Edna, who has adopted a family of orphan children, prepares to go to the country to live while she waits for John to return.¹⁷

That Christmas spent in a humble home can be as happy, and oftentimes happier, as Christmas in settings of wealth and splendor is the lesson that a number of Mormon short stories and continued stories attempt to teach. Stories having this purpose are usually found in Christmastime issues of Mormon periodicals. "The Return of Santa Claus" by Elsie Talmage Brandley is representative of stories having such a purpose.

A wealthy businessman, Wesley Stannard, is lonely, for he and his wife are not congenial. He is faced with the prospect of spending Christmas by himself until he happens across a letter written by two little orphans asking Santa for a mother and father for Christmas. Wesley takes the orphan boy and girl home with him and proceeds to give them a real Christmas. His wife returning home in time to

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¹⁷ Edna says:
"I want to go back to the peace and comfort of grandfather's slow-ticking clock. No hurry, no worry! Apples and vegetables in the cellar, the good, old cellar! A cow in the barn! Chickens to feed and children to feed them. The clean, beautiful litter of doll parasols! Long, lovely evenings to fill each moment so full that the time will speed till John comes. Then we'll be happy together and forget everything that is past!"

--- Ibid., p. 308.

share in the Christmas festivities, the estranged couple decide to adopt the two orphan children for their own.

A Return to the Soil

The purpose of many short stories and continued stories is to counsel the Mormon people to find the ideal life in a return to the soil, a return to a life of contentment and simplicity on a ranch or farm or in a small town. "Return to the soil" stories were especially numerous in the 1930's when there was a general exodus from the farm and a financial depression gripped America.

"Green and Gold"19 by Blanche Robbins is typical of stories having the purpose of counseling the Mormon people to return to the soil. Marcene Anderson, who hates the hard actuality of farm life, tries to persuade her husband, Keith, to return to the city to live. One day Marcene goes asleep and dreams that she is at the Senior Ball with Keith and that he is asking her to marry him and join him on the farm—a farm of "patches of green and gold."

So strong is the old, romantic thrill of that moment that when Keith comes and awakens her, she assures him that she loves him and that she has come to love the farm. Together the young couple watches the sun's last rays fade away behind a bank of golden clouds, then Marcene looks up

at her husband and whispers: "Oh—and Keith, let's always and always be here where we can see the patches of green and gold."20

Another story with a purpose similar to that of "Green and Gold" is "The House on the Hillside"21 by Sam H. Fletcher.

The Example of the Pioneers

Closely related to the purpose of counseling the Mormon people to live the simple life is the purpose found in connection with a number of stories to teach Mormon boys and girls and men and women to live the kind of lives their pioneer forefathers lived. These stories eulogize the pioneers, advise a return to their ways of life, and urge Mormon youth to be as enterprising, courageous, and persevering as they were.

A continued story for boys by Harrison R. Merrill entitled "Johny Rawson, Sheepman,"22 like many other Mormon stories of this kind, praises the pioneer spirit of enterprise and industry and pictures the pioneer spirit at work

20. Ibid., p. 632.
today among the young people of the Mormon Church.

Johny Rawson and Wils, Johny's friend, although they are just boys, are successful in their project of raising sheep. The spirit of the pioneers fills the boys and inspires them. The story is designed to show boys and girls that in this day they can be like the pioneers. 23

Marriage Within The Church

The purpose of advising young men and women in regard to marriage is prominent in many Mormon stories from 1900 to 1945. Most such stories advise young people to marry clean, upright Mormon neighborhood boys or girls. Although a good many Mormon stories have professional men and women, such as doctors and lawyers, as heroes and heroines, most stories throughout the period of this study advise marriage to a person who leads a simple, ordinary life. The stories, which warn repeatedly against a Mormon's marrying outside the Mormon Church, picture marriage in a Latter-day Saint temple as the ideal marriage.

Typical of the large number of such stories is "In

23. The story concludes:

Almost any day Johny and Wils can be found with their lambs working towards a new harvest. Both are exceedingly happy for both have become useful citizens contributing something good to the world.

And so, gentle reader, let us leave them to their task. Do you think they'll win first place again? Well, I don't know, for I hope they'll have a lot of keen competition from among those who read The Children's Friend.

---Ibid., p. 568.
Memory" by W. J. Sloan. "In Memory" is a letter addressed to Ethel, who is dead.

Ethel is a small-town girl who leaves her childhood home and goes to the city to live. She soon becomes weaned away from the life she know. Money and the luxuries money can buy becoming her first concern, she chooses to marry outside the Mormon Church.

Until one of her children dies, Ethel is happy. Then longing for her dead child prompts her to remember the religion she forsok—the religion that teaches the principle of immortality. But Ethel endeavors in vain to get her husband to believe that there is a life after this life. And after another of her children sickens and dies, Ethel, heartbroken, dies also.

The Happiness in Raising a Family

The purpose of a number of Mormon stories is to teach Mormon men and women that raising a family is the highest and noblest calling that a person can have. The stories


25. The story begins this way:

Ethel—, from your home in the spirit land, will you forgive me for using your name and telling your life story? As I tell it, old memories haunt me, old scenes come back to my mind; scenes of pleasure, of doubt and of pain; even as your life was one of pleasant and happy thoughts, doubts, and a fatal decision, and then unhappiness, misery and death.

—Tbid., p. 266.
belittle and term an empty shell any career for a woman other than that of motherhood.

"Career Girl"26 by John Sherman Walker is a typical "marriage versus career" story. It is the story of Sonia, a great violinist, who although successful is unhappy. While en route to a concert engagement, Sonia misses her train, meets a musical composer, Kent Dowell, falls in love with him, and marries him. Sonia finds her new career as wife and mother far more satisfying than her career as a pianist.

A number of the Mormon stories from 1900 to 1945 teach or imply that children are necessary to happiness in marriage. That children weld the family group together and enrich parents' lives is a lesson repeated many times in short stories and continued stories of the years of this study.

Typical of such stories is "The Strength of the Hills"27 by Myrtle Young. This story pictures the unhappiness of William Gordon, a successful businessman, and his wife in their old age. When they are young, the Gordons refuse to have a family; when they grow old, they are lonely and unhappy. They envy the Browns across the street who, though

they have no money, have a large and happy family.

The Happy, Congenial Family

To promote the well-being of the Mormon family is one of the outstanding purposes of Mormon fiction. A number of stories from 1900 to 1945 stress the importance of happy home life.

Mormon stories having such a purpose glorify home life and advise boys and girls to love their homes and respect and honor their parents. Such stories show why unity, cooperation, and congeniality are desirable and necessary to the happy home and give emphasis to the relationship that exists between husband and wife, father and child, brother and sister. A number of stories are concerned with the promotion of harmony and comradeship between father and son.

"The Season Beautiful" by Susa A. Talmage is representative of stories concerned with the Mormon family and the home. As evening falls, in response to the Boy Beautiful's request, the boy's mother tells him a story of a beautiful garden and a woman who is happy because her husband can be with her always. But one day after the man and his wife quarrel, the woman becomes unhappy and the garden ceases to be the beautiful place that it once

The boy falls asleep, and the woman's husband, who has listened to her story, comes to her side. They correct the problem which caused them to quarrel. And once more—the way they were before—the flowers are beautiful in the garden and the home is a happy place.

Kindness to Old People

Mormon stories advise young people to be kind to old people, counseling them to give old people a chance to live active and satisfying lives. "The First Farm in Dry Valley" by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll is a typical story having this purpose.

Even though Jeremiah Mortimer insists that he is not old, his son decides that his father is too old to work on the farm; consequently "Old" Jeremiah is out of a job. He, enlisting the help of his little grandson, Johny, pioneers a farm of his own, a dry farm in a country in which dry farming has never before been attempted. The old man and the little boy surprise everybody by raising farm products that win them prizes at the state fair that fall.

The Word of Wisdom

The purpose of instructing the Mormon people to obey

the Word of Wisdom is found in a number of Mormon stories, which advise proper observance of the Word of Wisdom and warn against the consequences of not obeying it.

Typical of the large number of such stories is "The Pig and the Man" by Harrison R. Merrill, which pictures Sandy lying half drunk on a ditch bank. A pig dressed like a man comes toward him and, calling him a pig, tells him:

"No man would ever allow his appetite to rule him so far—only pigs do that. A man is not reckoned by his money; neither are all who smoke cigars gentlemen. In fact, no matter how polished a man may be, if he smokes even cigars he just lacks that one point of being a true gentleman. A true gentleman will not satisfy his abnormal appetites at the expense of his friends and loved ones. While he is puffing at one cigar, he may be robbing a dozen people of clean, pure air; and every glass of wine he drinks sometimes adds just that much to the cup of sorrow that is being drained by a loved one. No, a man who smokes lacks that much of being a gentleman. He is that one point worse than a pig. A pig will rob his friends of food to satisfy his own hunger, but he will not rob them of the free gifts of God by doing that which does not even benefit himself." 31

Following his conversation with the pig, Sandy resolves that he will mend his ways. He determines that he will be a pig no longer. Going home to his wife, he asks her to forgive him. His home becomes a happy place again.32

31. Ibid., p. 1065.
32. The pig has been cast out—the drunkard and the tobacco fiend have gone with him—the gentleman has taken his place.
---Ibid., p. 1069.
Righteousness in Daily Life

A large number of Mormon short stories and continued stories aim to teach the value of honest, courageous, helpful, tolerant, persevering, and unselfish living; they commend turning the other cheek, refraining from swearing, paying an honest tithing, and being helpful and kind.

Typical of stories with the purpose of counseling the Mormon people in regard to daily living are "Aunt Libby's Fourth of July"33 by Emma C. Dowd, "Speck's Faith"34 by Harrison R. Merrill, and "Jim's Test"35 by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll.

Emma C. Dowd's "Aunt Libby's Fourth of July" aims to teach boys and girls to be helpful and kind to those who are not so fortunate as they are. It is the story of a kind-hearted boy who carries his crippled Aunt Libby across the street and upstairs to his mother's room in order that she might see the Fourth of July fireworks.

The purpose of "Speck's Faith" is to advise Mormons that the example of every individual has much to do with the attitude toward life with which boys and girls grow up. Speck Jones watches with admiration while his Sunday School

teacher, Mr. Reid, pitches the local baseball team to victory. Then waiting breathlessly to see whether or not Mr. Reid will accept an invitation to drink with the other players, he is overjoyed when his idol refuses the drink. He realizes now that Mr. Reid is teaching truthful things in his Sunday School class, for he has proof that he practices what he teaches.

"Jim's Test" teaches a lesson in honesty. Jim, a new forest ranger, determined to do his duty, discovers that the father of the girl he loves is guilty of taking too many cattle onto the forest range. Jim insists that the law be obeyed, and happily discovers that he has been undergoing a test in honesty and trustworthiness and has not been found wanting.

The Principles of Mormonism

Mormon short stories and continued stories of this study frequently have the purpose of teaching the principles of Mormonism and of testifying to their truthfulness. "Herbert Melbourne"36 by Edwin F. Parry is representative of stories having the purpose of spreading the message of Mormonism among men.

"Herbert Melbourne" is the story of a college-educated man who, until he is called to labor in the mission field,

is unable to accept fully the teachings of the Mormon Church. It is not until after he has studied and thought much about religion that he is able to bring his convictions regarding science and the teachings of the Mormon Church into harmony. There is a considerable amount of gospel discussion in "Herbert Melbourne." A number of chapters are nothing more than lengthy sermons and gospel dialogues.

Conversions in Daily Life

That every person, no matter who he is, can be, if he wants to be, an instrument in the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the lesson that such a story as "Into the Light" by J. Arthur Horne seeks to present. Stories with such a purpose can be found in every volume of Mormon periodicals from 1900 to 1945.

"Into the Light" is the story of a bandit named Kid Gordon who, because some Mormon settlers befriend him, volunteers to go through a blizzard to get help and food. Gordon returns the money he has stolen, obtains food, and by superhuman effort fights his way back through the storm to the starving settlers. Humbly he asks to be admitted into the Mormon Church. The simple act of living among the Mormon people has converted him to the principles of

Mormonism and the Mormon way of life.

Divine Communication

To teach that it is possible for mortal man to communicate with the spirit world and with God is the purpose of a group of stories written between the years 1900 to 1945. Large numbers of stories teach that a human being can communicate with God through the medium of prayers, dreams, or the world of nature. Stories having the romantic purpose to teach that God is visible in nature are especially popular in the periodicals of the period.

"And Afterward Came Spring"38 by Ardyth Kennelly is representative of such stories. It is the story of the death of David, who was engaged to marry Julie. David's mother, Mrs. Curtis, cannot understand why God would take her son away as He did unless He is cruel and mean of heart.

Spring returns, but Mrs. Curtis continues to mourn for her son. Julie, detecting in spring's re-awakening a sign of the immortality of David's soul, tries to plant this hope in Mrs. Curtis' heart. But Mrs. Curtis refuses to acknowledge that the flowers of spring are evidence of a supreme, God-conceived plan.

Angrily then Julie says:

"There is a God and you know it. Stop praying for signs, for proof, when they're right at your fingertips, right in your arms, against your mouth and eyes. . . . Keep smelling the lilacs, Mrs. Curtis. Don't stop. Then you'll see. Then you'll know. Spring came, didn't it? Isn't that proof? Hasn't spring always come? Won't it come again and again?"

Mrs. Curtis experiences a new wild hope. She looks down at the lilacs in her arms, smells their fragrance, detects for the first time their beauty, and suddenly she feels once again that life is good and beautiful and hopeful.

The Scriptures

The purpose of popularizing and imparting knowledge about The Book of Mormon and The Bible and the other sacred writings of the Mormon Church is found in a number of stories in Mormon periodicals. An example of a story having this purpose is "The Two Wreaths" by J. H. Ward.

"The Two Wreaths" tells how King Solomon, when he is put to the test, proves his native wisdom and ingenuity. Asked to identify a wreath of natural flowers when it is placed alongside a wreath of artificial flowers, King Solomon opens a window and allows a swarm of bees to enter the room and make his selection for him.

39. Ibid., p. 383.
A Secular Didacticism

Although a majority of the stories in Mormon periodicals from 1900 to 1945 have the purpose of teaching the principles of Mormonism, a very small number seek to present material of a non-religious nature to Mormon readers, offering information about the world and the ways of life of the people of the world.

A continued story by Olive Woolley Burt entitled "Peter's Silver Dollar" is representative of the non-religious didactic stories found in Mormon periodicals of the period.

After Mr. Henderson gives the little boy, Peter, a silver dollar for doing some work for him, Peter becomes interested in the silver and smelting industries. His kind Uncle Ben, who is a reporter for a local newspaper, invites him to accompany him on a tour of the silver industry. On this tour, Peter is privileged to view the making of a silver dollar from the time that the silver is mined as raw ore to the time that it reaches him in its completed form.


42. The following passage illustrates the type of information which the story presents to the reader:

... Then he told Mr. Henderson the whole story—about the mine where the dollar lay hidden from sight, a captive in the rocky

(Continued)
Stories having the purpose of presenting information of a non-religious nature are few in number, but a good many Mormon stories, particularly Mormon continued stories, catalogue information about places, people, and historical facts. Very frequently, however, the main purpose of such stories is not to present these non-religious facts, even though they are included within them.

An Implied Didactic Purpose

The didactic purpose is not readily apparent in a number of Mormon stories, for the writer of a story does not always state his didactic purpose. On occasions he leaves the interpretation of the story's purpose to the individual reader.

An example of stories that teach by implication rather than by direct statement is "Corporal Ron of the 362nd" by Venice F. Anderson.

42. (Continued) ore; about the mill, where the rock was crushed so that the lead and copper that held the silver could be got at; about the smelter, where the lead and copper and zinc ore was heated, so that the metals that weren't wanted were driven away; and then about the silver refinery, where at last the copper was driven off by electricity, and the silver itself was freed by an electric current; and then about the mint, where the silver was rolled and cut and stamped into the shining coins that Peter worked so hard to earn.

--Ibid., p. 197.

"Corporal Ron of the 362nd," a World War I story, contains the implied lesson that there is good in every man, no matter how rough and unattractive he may be.

When Ron, a black sheep, is drafted into the army, because he is such a "perfect specimen of man" and has had experience felling trees, he is put in charge of a group of men who are cutting trees. At the risk of his life, he saves one of his men from serious injury or death. Waking up in the hospital, he discovers that overnight he has become a hero. Ron, the black sheep, the boy the villagers said could do no good, has proved that he is a good citizen after all.44

The Purpose of Entertaining

A major portion of the stories in Mormon periodicals have a didactic purpose, but most of the stories have a subordinate or secondary purpose, that of providing entertainment for the reader. In a few stories, the purposes of teaching and of entertaining seem to be of equal importance. And the dominant purpose in a smaller number of

44. Another story with an implied lesson is "Tonic" by G. E. Wallace, The Improvement Era vol. 44, (September, 1941), p. 536. It is the story of a young and inexperienced "boss" who feels that he is a failure because the men under him are grouchy and disagreeable. But the "boss" makes the discovery that the workmen, once they are confronted with the necessity of meeting an emergency, respond cheerfully and wholeheartedly to the heavy demands that are made of them. Idleness has been the reason for their dissatisfaction.
stories is to entertain.45

If the editorial policies of the Mormon periodicals are to be taken at face value, however, a didactic purpose permeates every Mormon story. And it must be admitted that consistently throughout Mormon fiction good triumphs over evil and right is ascendant. Many stories having the purpose of entertaining contain passages of didactic thought.

Of significance is the fact that a larger percentage of Mormon periodical stories since 1920 than before that year seem to have the dominant purpose of providing entertainment. Although the didactic purpose is much in the majority in the stories of every time, the purpose of entertaining seems to have made some headway through the years. Old, traditional didactic purposes are apparently gradually being replaced on a small scale by the purpose of giving entertainment.46


Because of the fact that they (Mormon writers) write for the church periodicals—magazines with necessarily a definite editorial policy—their themes are somewhat alike and are apt to have a didactic tone. This later characteristic is not always a necessary one, for all of the church magazines occasionally carry stories with this element lacking.

46. Of the more than six hundred short stories and continued stories that I have read for this study, not more than 152 seem to have the primary purpose of entertaining. Fifty-one stories out of 256 written before 1920 have a purpose of entertaining; 101 out of 349 stories written after 1920 seem to me to have an entertainment purpose. This means that 29 percent of the stories written after 1920 are designed to entertain as compared with 19.5 percent before 1920.
The purpose of providing entertainment is found in periodical stories addressed to children, young people, and adults.

Entertainment for Children

From *The Children's Friend* comes a story that is typical of those designed to entertain young children. "The Little Explorers" by Jane Adams Parker is about two brothers, Tommy and Dicky, and their little sister, Daisy. Tommy and Dicky and Daisy meet the Queen, a beautiful lady, who takes them to her lovely home and tells them about her little, blue-eyed baby boy who is lost.

Tommy and Dicky and Daisy go to their Aunt Jolly's farm to spend the summer where they meet Little Joe Ameo, a poor orphan boy who has to pick berries all day. The children, who have been dubbed the Explorers by the Queen, plan to give Joe to the Queen to take the place of her little boy. To the children's surprise and to the surprise of the Queen and her husband, Joe is their little lost boy.

Entertainment for Young People

A good, young man triumphs over a dark, suave villain in "To Him Who Strives" by Josephine Spencer. The story

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is representative of stories designed to entertain young men and women.

"To Him Who Strives" is the story of an orphan boy, Jack, who joins the United States Navy, has many experiences in the Orient, and after a long voyage, returns home. Jack's return is not a happy one, however, for he finds that his girl friend, Afton, is engaged to a handsome and disagreeable young Cuban named Hademy.

Lonely and discouraged, Jack walks to the beach one night, where he overhears Hademy and another man laying plans to blow up the battleship Lincoln, arranging it so that Japanese-Americans receive the blame for the incident. By eliminating Japanese growers from the orange market, Hademy plans to seize control of the California orange industry.

Jack informs his superior officer of Hademy's plans. The next day, Jack, disguised as a Japanese boatman, subdues Hademy's accomplice, and sailors from the battleship intercept Hademy and take him into custody.

Jack is a hero. He chooses, however, to leave the navy, marry, and go into the orange business.

Good triumphs over evil in "To Him Who Strives," but in no other way is the story didactic in purpose. Entertainment is its important objective. Two other stories
of this kind are "Moving Mountains"49 by Walter L. Bailey and "By Way of a Miracle"50 by Josephine Spencer.

Entertainment for Adults

To entertain adults is the dominant purpose of such stories as "Five Minute Hero"51 by Anna Prince Redd and "The Distorted Face"52 by Claude T. Barnes. "Five Minute

   This continued story contains some didactic passages, but seems to have the dominant purpose of providing entertainment.

   It is the story of two boys and an old seaman who are compelled to abandon ship and set up camp on an iceberg after an ice floe crushes their ship. The boys and the old seaman undergo many exciting experiences before they are finally rescued by an ice patrol vessel. Among the experiences that they have are a fight with a polar bear, numerous falls down icy cliffs, the ever-present prospect of starvation, and the danger of freezing.


"The Distorted Face" is the story of the author's experience while camping in the mountains of Utah. He is startled one night to see a horribly distorted face bending over him. But the face disappears and he forgets about it. The next day the author returns to camp to find a book of poems open to a poem by Byron entitled "When We Two Parted."

When we two parted
   In silence and tears,
   Half broken-hearted
   To sever for years,
   Pale grew thy cheek and cold
   Colder thy kiss; . . .

Interested in the distorted face and in the secret of the poem, the author finds an answer to the mystery when he meets an old man with a scarred face. The old man willingly tells him the story of his life.

He had been clawed by an angry grizzly bear when he was young; consequently he had lived in the mountains for forty-three years, having chosen such a life after the girl he loved had shrunk from his scarred face.
“Five Minute Hero” is the story of Officer Zebulon Smith, who, hearing angry voices and a terrified scream from the room next to his, drives his shoulders through the door connecting the two rooms. But the only person he sees when he sprawls into the room is a pale, young man seated in a chair, his leg bandaged and supported by another chair.

Zeb next reasons that he has fallen into a trap, for a cool voice behind him orders him to put up his hands. Lunging quickly, he grabs for the young man’s gun. But the gun is a book. The young man laughs; the volume Zeb has in his hands is entitled Ventriloquism--Its Uses on Stage and in Drawing Room.

The Polemical Purpose

By the term, polemical purpose, I mean a purpose in fiction that aims at supporting a side in an argument or in attacking the opposing point of view. A great deal of early Mormon fiction can be said to be, in a sense, polemical in purpose, for much of it is concerned with

53. The Winston Dictionary defines polemics as: supporting or disputing an opinion or argument; controversial; a paper written to support or dispute an opinion or argument.
defending Mormonism and the practices of the Mormon people against the bitter attacks of non-Mormons. An exception to this is found in regard to the defense of polygamous marriage; the defense of polygamy has never figured prominently in Mormon fiction.54

Utah and the Mormon people are, however, no longer the targets of attack that they were prior to 1900. The Mormon people have become a part of the unified pattern that makes up America. And the exchange of ideas between Mormondom and the outside world continues at an accelerated pace.55

As a result, the defense of Mormonism and retaliatory attacks upon the institutions of the people of the outside

54. One of the peculiarities of Mormon fiction is the avoidance of polygamy as a theme. Vehement articles of vindication (including those written by plural wives, dialogues teaching the doctrine, and pages devoted to interpreting the holy practices of polygamy as Abraham lived it) are all printed in great number. Later, notices are published of the detailed court proceedings, in which men, found guilty of polygamy, are sentenced to imprisonment. But polygamy as a subject of fiction is seldom used. If it is mentioned in a story it is done with haste.

---Jean Clark, op. cit., p. 46.

55. Present day Utah is but another portion of standardized America.

But even though the Mormons have lost, with the coming of this standardization, the individuality which isolation gave them, they have a pioneer tradition which can never be lost.

---Ibid., p. 1.

Another statement telling about standardized Utah is found in this reference: Ephraim Edward Erickson, The Psychological and Ethical Aspects of Mormon Group Life, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1922, p. 62.
world have become increasingly less frequent in the fiction written since 1900. 56

Disputations among members of the Mormon group have no place in Mormon periodical fiction. The fiction published in these periodicals is recognized as a reflection of the attitudes and beliefs of the leaders of the Mormon organization; opinions counter to these do not find a place there.

A few stories having polemical purposes are found in Mormon periodicals after 1900. One or two stories defend polygamy and attack the immoral practices of the people of the world; the anti-tobacco law in the state of Utah receives a stout defense; the problem of the intermarriage of the white and colored races is debated; and the allied cause in the first World War receives support. But the number of stories having a polemical purpose is extremely small.

The Defense of Polygamy

As I have pointed out previous to this, stories having

56. So long as the people were at war with nature and with another society there was no time for personal reflection. So long as the people were engaged with a common enemy the individuals were easily controlled by the authority of the priesthood, but when the outer problems failed to demand the attention of the individuals they began to look into their own institutional life.

--Ibid., p. 60.
the purpose of defending the long abandoned practice of polygamous marriage are rare in Mormon periodicals of the period of this study. The few stories that are concerned with this purpose seem to follow a similar line of defense: a contrasting of the immoralities of non-Mormons with the righteousness and happiness of people living in polygamy.

"A Shipwrecked Life--A Mormon Story"57 by Samuel Sorghum is typical of the stories that have the purpose of defending polygamy. "A Shipwrecked Life--A Mormon Story" is a letter written on June 15, 1899, from Salt Lake City, Utah, by Lillian to Julie. Lillian, who terms the scenery "perfectly charming," relates how she and her Aunt Susan one night meet an unhappy woman who seems to be a polygamous wife. While the woman is talking to Lillian and Aunt Susan, her gruff, bearded husband--the conventional picture of the Mormon male--leaves the house in company with another woman.

Aunt Susan and Lillian meet the "martyr wife" the next day. They discover, to their surprise, that the woman is not a Mormon and that her husband is the most prominent Mormon-hater in the city. The "other woman" is her husband's mistress.

In high disgust, Aunt Susan and Lillian walk away.

The letter concludes:

Of course I shared in Auntie's disappointment at the grotesque ending to our romance, but I could not quite agree with her logic. On the contrary, dear Julia, the little incident has taught me that in our anxiety to relieve others of their moral beams, we should not be indifferent to our own social mores.

As ever,
Lillian. 58

Defense of the Anti-Cigarette Law

The polemical purpose of defending the Utah statute forbidding the sale of tobacco to minors is found in a few Mormon stories during the early 1920's. The anti-cigarette law was under attack, and Mormon periodicals vigorously defended it.

"The Battle on the Heights" 59 by Elizabeth Cannon Porter is a strong defense of the anti-cigarette law. It is written in the form of a debate presumably being conducted in the Utah House of Representatives. The defenders of the anti-cigarette law have the upper hand in the debate; the story ends on a note of triumph for the forces of freedom and right. Mrs. Landon, the chief spokesman for the anti-tobacco forces, argues that the present law is a safeguard for freedom of the body and soul. 60

58. Ibid., p. 265.
60. "But..." Mrs. Landon continued, "if we see our children injuring themselves, do we..." (Continued)
Discussion of Racial Intermarriage

Racial intermarriage is discussed in a small number of the stories in Mormon periodicals of the period. This controversial subject is discussed in different stories from both the positive and the negative points of view. Most of these stories countenance the marrying of white people and American Indians; but Mormon writers, on the whole, oppose the marriage of white and colored people.

60. (Continued) allow them to go on? We stop them from burning, cutting, or drowning themselves. We surround them with every safeguard that our ingenuity can devise. So must we save them from poisoning—the inhalation of nicotine. At the meeting of the Council of Women, a member of the Y. L. M. I. A. of our state introduced the resolution, 'We stand for the non-sale of cigarettes to minors.' It was enthusiastically acclaimed and adopted. And the women and girls represent one-half the population of our nation."

--Ibid., p. 356.

The opinion expressed in "Tsonianina" seems to be representative of the belief held by the Mormon people regarding the marriage of white people and American Indians.
A cowboy falls in love with Tsonianina, an Indian maiden. He plans to marry her, but his friends tell him that marriage to an Indian will bring disgrace to his family; therefore he tries to forget her.
But after a Mormon missionary tells him the story of the Lamanite people and assures him that the Indians are of good blood, he decides to find Tsonianina and marry her.
But tragedy awaits the white man when he finds her, for she lies on her death bed, the innocent victim of an evil man's desires. Filled with thoughts of revenge, the cowboy journeys westward. Time and the Christian-tempered words of the missionary convince him that it is best to leave the vengeance up to God.
The cowboy lives for the hope of seeing his Tsonianina again.
Racial intermarriage is a problem in America today. The controversial nature of the subject gives most stories of this kind a polemical purpose.

Representative of stories which consider the problem of the intermarriage of the white and colored races is "Expatriation" by Hugh J. Cannon. It gives the impression that it is a mistake for intermarriage of the two races to take place.

On the eve of the announcement of her engagement to aristocratic Nathan Everett, Lilly Nell Redfield discovers that her mother was of Fijian blood. Lonely, discouraged, and heart-sick, Nell tells her lover and her foster parents goodbye and sails for the Samoan Islands, the islands of her birth.

Nate follows Nell to the Hawaiian Islands urging her to reconsider and marry him. Nell indeed half promises to marry him, but after she hears a lecturer compare the native Fijian with the American Negro, she refuses to entertain any further thoughts of marriage.

The lecturer says:

"They have many of the same characteristics as the Polynesians, though they cannot be said to have the same blood. The true Fijian is of Melanesian descent, quite different from the Polynesian. Until the advent of the whites he was a natural cannibal. In many particulars he resembles the Negro one sees in America and indeed their origin is probably the same. One

characteristic which they have in common is particularly noticeable—the persistency of their blood when it is mixed in marriage with the whites. Of course many whites have been foolish enough to marry—"63

In Samoa Nell gains enough information to convince her that she truly is partly Fijian. She also meets Dick Hawley, who falls in love with her. Back home in America Nate and Jessie, Nell's best friend, become engaged.

Quite by accident Nell discovers that her mother was not Fijian. After her mother, a white woman, died, her father married her mother's half sister, a girl who was partly Fijian. The world had erroneously thought that her step-mother was her real mother.

Free now to return to her home, Nell marries Nate. Jessie and Dick meet, fall in love, and marry.

The story seems to assume from the start that it would be a mistake for Nell, when her Fijian parentage is discovered, to marry a white person. This assumption is maintained throughout the story. Nell regards the Fijians as inferior to her, and the other characters seem to have the same idea.

In order for the story to have a happy ending, it seems to be necessary to remove the racial barrier. Everything is all right after Nell discovers that she does not have the tainted blood of a Fijian in her veins. From these circumstances, it would appear that the chief purpose of the story seems to be to argue that racial intermarriage is

63. Ibid., p. 783.
undesirable.

**War Propaganda**

In a few periodical stories written during World War I and World War II, a certain amount of propaganda for the allied cause appears. The central or totalitarian powers never receive support.

"Defeat" by D. W. Cummings is the story of two friends, one a German and the other an American, who are on opposing sides in the great World War. Transformed by war into a cruel, heartless man, the German meets death in the same savage way that he has fought and lived. The German admits as he dies that the cause for which Germany is fighting is hopeless.

The story is a strong condemnation of war and of Germany's part in the conflict.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion it can be said that the principal purposes of the fiction of the forty-five years of this study are didactic and that the lessons which the majority of stories seek to teach are, in the main, concerned with Mormon religious beliefs and the Mormon way of life. A small number of Mormon stories have the purpose of imparting

knowledge of a secular nature, this purpose being most clearly shown in the common practice among Mormon writers to catalogue facts of interest in regard to places and people of the world.

Although the purpose of providing entertainment is a secondary purpose in most of the fiction of the period, I regard it as a significant fact that, of the stories I have sampled for this study, almost ten percent more stories since 1920 have the purpose of providing entertainment than before that time. This is evidence of a trend toward increased entertainment in Mormon fiction.

Little Mormon fiction since 1900 has had a polemical purpose. This is to be accounted for by the improved relations existing between the Mormon people and the people of the world. The Mormons no longer are a castigated and a castigating people who are driven and persecuted. As a result, polemical fiction is not abundant in Mormon periodicals since 1920.
CHAPTER III

THE THEMES OF MORMON FICTION

Mormon fiction partakes of the unique religious background, the pioneer life, and the undying faith in the soil which have been prominent environmental influences in the Mormon movement from the time of its founding on. The Mormon past is mirrored in its fiction just as truly as its present is visible there.

The historical setting and environment of its founders are the forces that have molded the literature of Utah and given it character and significance. Toil and tragedy, religious persecution, and strife have left their imprint in the written word and homely songs of the State. Across the pages of its literature marches a pageantry of Indians, fur clad trappers, Government explorers, weary ox teams, Mormon pioneers pushing wooden handcarts, gold seekers and pack mules, the galloping pony express, a great leader who commanded a temple to be built in a wilderness.1

Two Main Types of Themes

The themes of the fiction in Mormon periodicals

between 1900 and 1945 admit classification into two classes: (1) Themes that are peculiarly Mormon in that they are suggested by and are directly influenced by the Mormon situation, the Mormon setting, and are peopled by characters who are typically Mormon; and (2) themes that are broader and more comprehensive in scope than the Mormon setting and situation, for they are suggested by and are directly influenced by world events and "beyond Mormondom" situations. Mormon characters, settings, and teachings may or may not be pictured in themes of this latter classification, but the motivation for the themes is events of the world rather than events within the Mormon group.

Stories having themes that are influenced by the Mormon people and the Mormon situation are, as would be expected, much in the majority in Mormon periodicals of the period. ²

Themes Peculiarly Mormon

The fact that a major portion of Mormon short stories and continued stories deal with themes peculiarly Mormon is the result of intensive encouragement on the part of the leaders of the Mormon Church and the editors of Mormon

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² Some 540 stories of those that I have read for this study have themes that are peculiarly Mormon; 66 have themes that reveal the influence of the events of the world beyond Mormondom.
periodicals to have home writers write about subjects near at home.

It has been and is the policy of Mormon leaders to approve of fiction pieces that are based upon Mormon life. And writings by home writers containing a sympathetic approach to the Mormon people and their beliefs are certain to receive a favorable reception from the editors of Mormon periodicals.

Two works of fiction that are restricted in theme to the Mormon situation receive these representative comments in the pages of a Mormon periodical:

**Piney Ridge Cottage** by Nephi Anderson: It is an excellent thing for our writers to found some of their fiction on Mormon life; we hope more will follow Brother Anderson in this. There is much that is wholesome and good in the book.

**Metta, a Sierra Love Tale** by Alfred Lambourne is a charming little tale of Western life. Chaste, simple, and quaint is the story and the manner of telling it. The descriptions are vivid and beautiful. Nothing is unfolded abruptly, but by the very atmosphere is the reader prepared for that which is to come. As is usual with this

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In the early days of the Church, the Prophet Joseph gave this advice to the Saints: "Seek ye wisdom from the best books." This counsel, good at that time, is doubly necessary now when the market is flooded with books of all types, some good, many questionable, and a host that are really vicious. Thomas Carlyle, after reading a popular French novel, said:

(Continued)
author's work, no mechanical detail has been overlooked, so that the book is artistic and attractive.

The Theme of Daily Living

The most abundantly employed theme of those concerned with the Mormon people, setting, and situation is that designated as the theme of daily living. Two main types of stories might be written employing this theme. In one division belong stories that tell about Mormon religious doctrines and teachings put into practice in daily life; in the other division are stories that tell about the daily lives of Mormon people without giving consideration to religious teachings.

The stories that are concerned with Mormon religious doctrine put into application in daily life deal with such subjects as the importance of the Word of Wisdom to health and happiness, the need for honesty, kindness demonstrated, the blessings that accompany payment of tithing, the significance of the Sabbath Day, the power of prayer, the beauty that can be found in life. The subjects of these stories, all of which are concerned with the practical

3. (Continued) "I feel as if I should go and bathe seven times in the River Jordan." That type of reading, salacious, prolific, and "popular," is the kind that should be displaced in all our homes by the literature of our own writers.

applications of religious teachings, are as numerous as there are Mormon religious teachings.

The themes of such stories are oftentimes stereotyped, conventionalized devices employed to achieve a didactic purpose. The stories follow a pattern similar to this: A character is confronted with the difficult alternative of choosing between doing what is right and what is wrong. He chooses to do either the right thing or the wrong thing and suffers the consequences of his act or enjoys blessings because of his righteousness.

"The Debt of Honor" by Henry Nicol Adamson is representative of such stories. An eccentric and wealthy uncle agrees to lend his nephew $250.00, but he specifies that his nephew must pay back the money before a certain date. This the nephew promises to do.

The uncle dies before the loan is repaid and the nephew is advised that he does not need to settle the debt. He, however, insisting that he must fulfill his obligation to his uncle, pays back the amount he borrowed. It is not until after he has paid the debt that he is informed that a provision in his uncle's will grants him his uncle's property on condition that he lives up to his word and pays back the money he borrowed.

A second group of stories tell of events in the daily lives of the Mormon people without regard for the religious teachings of the Mormon Church. These stories simply describe Mormon people at work, at play, in their fields and homes and schools and communities. Such stories are not limited to the Mormon scene, but it is implied in all the stories that the characters and settings are Mormon.

"How Squire Pygus Got Even"6 by Everett Spring is a story of this kind. It is summarized below.

Squire Pygus' neighbor goes to the city, becomes wealthy, and forgetting his old friends, deliberately swindles them out of much that they have. Honest, courageous Squire Pygus, setting out to achieve justice, goes to the city, calls on the swindling neighbor, and gives him a good, old-fashioned "licking."

The Theme of Miracles and Dreams

Throughout this period in Mormon periodical fiction, the theme of miracles and dreams is a favored theme. Stories employing this theme are of two types: stories telling of instances in which dreams and miracles have enriched or altered an individual's life; and stories in which the power and beauty of prayer are told. The theme of miracles and dreams has been popular from the beginnings

of Mormon fiction to the present time.

"Restraining Hands" by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll is typical of stories presenting this theme. It tells the following story:

Tom Clayton, a poor fellow working his way through college, finds himself eligible to participate in gay social life after his rich uncle dies leaving him a large amount of money. Tom's newly-acquired wealth wins him new friends, who set out to show him a good time.

For the first time in his life, Tom tastes tobacco and drinks liquor. Fortunately he becomes exceedingly drunk and his so-called "friends" take him home.

Dreams horrible and very real trouble him in his sleep. He dreams that he is standing on a precipice high above a roaring, angry stream and that he is being pulled irresistibly toward the edge.

Just as he is on the point of toppling from the precipice, the friendly, restraining hands of his Sunday School teacher, instructor in M. I. A., and father reach out and pull him back to safety. He is so thankful for their saving him that tears fill his eyes. Then he awakes.

He recalled his dream, . . . That deep, dark cavern into which he was about to plunge his manhood was the temptation a life of luxury and dissipation was holding out to him. Those

restraining hands . . . were the influences of
the gospel which had been unconsciously rooted
into his being during his youth and early child-
hood. . . . he felt a great wave of repentant
gratitude sweep over him. . . . "O God, I
thank thee! I thank thee!"

Determined that he will live a clean life, Tom decides
that he will use his money to help him in his school and
church work. The gay social whirl no longer seems attrac-
tive to him.

The Theme of Conversions

The theme of conversions is one of the most popular
themes in Mormon fiction of the period. Stories about con-
versions have always been abundant in Mormon periodicals.

Stories having the theme of conversions are of three
kinds: those telling of conversions of men and women of
the outside world to Mormonism; those telling of conver-
sions made at home; and those describing the hardships
and sacrifices of converts to the Mormon Church.

"The Open Road" by John Henry Evans is an example of
a story having the conversion theme. It is the story of a
little orphan boy, Brocketts Porter, who escapes from an
orphanage in faraway Germany, journeys to America, and
drifts westward to Salt Lake City where he finds employment.
Successful in his work, Brocketts falls in love with the

8. Ibid., p. 803.
9. John Henry Evans, "The Open Road," The Improvement
Era vols. 14, 15, and 16, (October, 1911, to December, 1912),
P. 1077.
daughter of a Mormon bishop, but because he is not a Mormon, he cannot marry her. This prompts him to study Mormonism, to which he becomes converted. Later he marries the Mormon girl.

When Mr. Bernstein, Brocketts' employer, is faced with financial ruin, Brocketts steps in and saves his business. Mr. and Mrs. Bernstein become convinced that he is their long lost son.

The Theme of the Pioneers

The theme of the pioneers appears often in the periodicals of the years 1900 to 1945. Stories of the Mormon trek to Utah and of the colonization of Utah are favorite subjects among Mormon authors in every period of time. Stories having this theme are of two kinds: those relating the experiences of the Mormon pioneers; and those attempting to establish a connection between the experiences and hardships of the pioneers and the problems of the modern world.

The short story, "All Is Well! All Is Well!" by Susa Young Gates, is one of the best examples of the pioneer story that can be found in Mormon periodicals. It describes the hardships experienced by the Mormon pioneers on the long journey westward from Nauvoo to Utah.

The pioneers traveling through the August dust and heat

sing as they trudge along.

Come, come ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear
But with joy wend your way;
Though hard to you, this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive,
Our useless cares from us to drive;
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! All is well! 11

Tommy and his invalid father, immigrants from England, trudge behind the rear wagon. At the water hole, the father, unable to go on, tells Tommy to leave him behind, that he will follow after him in the cool of evening.

On the dusty plain, the pioneers dance that night to the jangling strains of "Arkansas Traveler" and a Scotch Reel. Because Tommy's father has not reached camp, a posse of men goes out to find him and help him. After Tommy has gone to bed, his father stands alone beneath the stars and sings again the song, "All Is Well! All Is Well!"

... Singing it softly at first, but letting all his worn spirit soar to God and wife, in the hope so sweetly couched in that closing verse:

And should we die before our journey's through
Happy day! All is well,
We then are free from toil and sorrow too,
With the just we shall dwell.
But if our lives are spared again
To see the Saints their rest obtain,
0, how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! All is well! 12

11. Ibid., p. 697.
12. Ibid., p. 705.
The next morning the father does not awaken. Death has overtaken him.13

The Theme of The Book of Mormon

Characters, settings, and incidents from The Book of Mormon provide the subject matter for a large body of Mormon fiction. Elizabeth Rachel Cannon is an outstanding writer of stories suggested by The Book of Mormon. Typical of her stories, romantic interpretations of characters and incidents from The Book of Mormon, is "The Martyr."14

Because the Prophet Abinadi refuses to cease to preach and to prophesy, wicked and voluptuous King Noah burns him at the stake and outlaws Alma, a courtier who supports Abinadi. Amulon, King Noah's favorite, attempts to seduce Zara, Alma's sweetheart, but Zara flees to Helem, the new city that Alma has established in the wilderness.

Meanwhile, the Lamanites subdue King Noah. Amulon and a number of corrupt priests marry Lamanite girls, and in various ways succeed in inveigling themselves into the

13. And when Tommy roused and looked upon the white, still features of his father, and knew that he, too, was with God, the glory of the slightly parted lips, the peace in the softly-solemn features, hushed the frightened cry which gurgled to his throat, and he threw himself upon that quiet breast, sobbing gently, but, oh, so heartbrokenly.

"Oh, daddy, daddy, all is well with you—but, oh, daddy, —daddy."

—Ibid., p. 706

high favor of King Laman. Eventually Amulon becomes ruler of the land of the Nephites, his evil rule extending out to include Helem. Oppressed and persecuted by Amulon, Alma, Zara, and their followers flee for a second time into the wilderness.

The Theme of The Bible

A typical Bible story is "The Thief and the Cross"\(^\text{15}\) by Willard Done.

The story opens as Joseph and Ariel of Cabul in Galilee hasten, in company with other Jews, to Jerusalem to hear and see Jesus. Joseph is convinced that Jesus is a weakling and not the true Messiah; Ariel wonders and is perplexed, for he believes, like Joseph, that the Messiah must be a great military leader, but he is impressed by Jesus' gentleness and great wisdom.

\[\ldots\] the oldest of the Pharisees advanced, and in stately measured tones preferred a charge. "This woman," said he, "was taken last night in sin--in the very act."

"Her partner a Roman soldier," interpolated another.

"Our law," resumed the first, "says that such should be stoned; what sayest thou?"

\[\ldots\] At length the answer came, addressed not to the woman, not to her betrothed, not to the other two. Nor was it for their satisfaction. It was answer and rebuke to the hypocritical questioners. "Let him that is without sin among you first cast a stone at her." Then as her accusers, self-condemned, slunk away from Him, the woman and her lover

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heard the words of dismissal. "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."\textsuperscript{16}

Joseph organizes a guerilla force and attacks the Roman garrisons. Ariel, growing impatient that Jesus does not launch a vigorous military campaign against the Roman forces, three months later joins the guerillas.

Joseph and Ariel are successful at first, but in time their forces and resources become depleted. Then the Romans, launching a surprise attack, kill Joseph and take Ariel prisoner.

Still not ready to admit that Jesus is the Messiah, Ariel becomes an unwilling participant in the crucifixion of the Savior. Dragged from his prison cell, he bears a heavy cross up the hill of Golgatha, then is placed upon a cross below and beside Jesus.

Before death comes to him, Ariel comes to know that Jesus is in truth the Messiah. It is Ariel who cries in a pleading voice:

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."

The answer, one of the last assurances given by the dying Christ to mortal man, came like a benediction: "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise."\textsuperscript{17}

Beulah, Ariel's sweetheart, marries Zadok, a Christian. As the hour of sunset approaches, the husband and

\textsuperscript{16. Ibid., p. 302.}
\textsuperscript{17. Ibid., p. 448.}
wife gaze from the Mount of Olives down into the City of Jerusalem. Their thoughts are with Joseph, Ariel and Jesus Christ—each one of whom gave his life for them. 

The Theme of the Mormon Family

One of the Most popular themes in Mormon periodical fiction is that of family life. The theme of family life deals usually with such subject matter as the relationships existing among parents and children, husbands and wives, children with children, and old people with young people.

"Mother Passes Through the Shadows," a short story by Elizabeth Cannon Porter, is a representative story having this theme. In the Miller household, Mother Miller is an unappreciated household drudge. She is alone in her drudgery, for Father Miller works; Maud teaches school and plans her marriage; Mable concerns herself with clothes, dates, and boy friends; and Dob does nothing but participate in athletic contests.

This is the way it is until Mother Miller becomes deathly ill. By degrees the family learns to share in the

18. She reverently pressed his hand with pitying tenderness. The sun sank, a ball of fire, behind the verdant hills. The night wind sighed, the night birds called, the peace of evening settled on the sacred hills of Zion, and the weary, troubled city was at rest.

—Ibid., p. 450

duties and responsibilities their mother has carried. When Mother Hiller recovers, she is appreciated; never again does she have to bear the responsibility of managing the household alone.

The Theme of Courting

A considerable number of stories in Mormon periodical fiction from 1900 to 1945 present the theme of courting, stories telling of the romantic adventures of young, unmarried men and women and written from the point of view of a girl or a boy. Events in these stories consistently revolve themselves into a happy ending.

A representative story of this type is "A Righteous Woman's Recompense" by Lella Marler Hoggan, in which a good but worldly non-Mormon professor goes to a little Mormon town to supervise the school and is attracted to a Mormon girl, Ethel Barton. Ethel, however, likes Willard Taylor, a rough Mormon youth.

Because she has promised her father that she will marry within the Mormon Church, Ethel, refusing the non-Mormon's proposal of marriage, promises to become Willard Taylor's bride when he returns from a Mormon mission.

The professor makes a show of being converted to the Mormon Church, but Ethel soon becomes aware that his

conversion is just a pretense. She settles down to wait for Willard to return home.

The Theme of the Adolescent

In stories such as "With the Younger 'Bunch!'" 21 by Jennie Roberts Mabey, the problems, experiences, and something of the psychology of the Mormon adolescent boy and girl are told. Stories that are concerned with the theme of the adolescent are found in every Mormon periodical and throughout the period of this study.

"With the Younger 'Bunch!'" pictures two contrasting adolescent girls: Beatrice, spoiled and selfish, who expects her escort to lavish money on her; Shirley, friendly, kind, cheerfully helpful, considerate of the boys who go with her.

Both girls seek to win the favor of Leon Summers, the handsomest, most popular boy in the school. Shirley succeeds in winning Leon for her boy friend.

The Theme of the Juvenile

Stories about children and addressed to children abound in Mormon periodicals. The Children's Friend and The Juvenile Instructor contain numerous juvenile stories. These stories picture Mormon boys and girls in the

activities of life both at home and in exotic, adventure-filled settings. They are addressed to boys and girls of every age. Different juvenile stories permit classification into three general groups or age levels: stories for small children, for children of grammar school age, and for older children.

Pioneers and Indians are popular subjects for children's stories. *Pioneer Bobby* by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, which appeared in *The Children's Friend* in 1915 and has since been published in book form, is a representative juvenile story. It is a story about the Mormon pioneers, told from the viewpoint of a Mormon pioneer boy, Bobby Patterson, whose adventures are a compounding of the experiences of many Mormon pioneers.

Driven from Nauvoo in the dead of winter, the Pattersons journey westward. Attacked by Indians, near to starving, beset by numerous difficulties, the pioneers finally succeed in reaching Utah. Many experiences follow—planting of the crops, an invasion of cricket hordes, and the call of the father to the mission field, which leaves Bobby with grave responsibilities. Bobby participates in the Utah War and finally goes on a mission himself. He succeeds in converting his uncle to the Mormon Church.

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23. Years have passed since that glad day. Bobby has filled many positions of trust (Continued)
Other stories resembling *Pioneer Bobby* in theme are two stories by Howard R. Driggs, "Covered Wagon Boy" and "Handcart Boy." Stories such as these are evidence of the popularity of stories about Mormon pioneer boys and girls.

**The Theme of Friendship**

The theme of friendship is prominent in Mormon periodical fiction. Stories dealing with this theme tell of the beauty of friendship and relate instances of particularly splendid and beautiful friendships. "Riding for a Star" by Pauline Hammer is a recent story of this kind. It is the story of a girl, who, although deathly afraid of

23. (Continued) and honor in the Church, and is now a beloved patriarch in one of the towns of Utah. He has a lovely wife and a devoted family of sons and daughters and grandchildren. His hair is white, but his eyes are as bright as ever. He has a little grandson, Bobby, who loves to sit on his knee and hear him tell the stories of the days of long ago when he was a pioneer boy crossing the plains to Utah.

--Ibid., p. 33


This story relates the experiences of a boy named Ben White. Ben helps build the city of Nauvoo, experiences the withdrawal from Nauvoo, and journeys westward to Utah with the Mormon pioneers, settling in Pleasant Grove, Utah. He is a typical Mormon boy.


horses, insists on riding an outlaw bronco even though she knows its bad reputation. Contrary to all the laws of nature, she succeeds in riding it. Not until after she has received her two thousand dollars in prize money does the girl reveal that she ventured to ride the bronco in an effort to get money to pay for her friend's hospital expenses.

The Theme of the American Indian

The theme of the American Indian is popular in Mormon periodicals between 1900 and 1945. Stories about Indians appear most often in the form of Indian legends, pioneer stories, and stories about the Indians of the present day. The Indian legend is among the most popular subjects in Mormon fiction.

Indian legends, stories of the past, usually carry within them the romantic atmosphere of the long ago. Quite often they are associated with scenes of great beauty, sadness, and mystery. "The Old Trail" by Harrison R. Merrill is a typical Indian legend of the period.

The author finds a broken heart of stone in a buckskin bag stained with blood. The broken heart prompts him to sit down and to think of the past for a possible story connected with the trinkets. As he sits there, he is

inspired to write the following story.

In the long ago, a young Indian brave named War Eagle meets an Indian maiden, Kaomi, beside a jewel-like mountain lake. They belong to enemy tribes, but they come to love each other.

As the summer wanes and the time approaches for Kaomi's people to leave the mountains, War Eagle makes plans to run away with her into the mountains. A warrior follows them one evening to their meeting place, and while attempting to kill War Eagle, inadvertently stabs Kaomi. War Eagle kills the warrior then turns to Kaomi to find that the warrior's knife has split the stone heart she wears about her neck and has penetrated into her heart. Tearfully, he places the broken heart in a hiding place. There it remains until the author finds it and is inspired to tell its story.

"Lone-Rock" by Orville S. Johnson is representative of stories telling of the experiences of the Indians of the West with the Mormon pioneers. Like most stories having this theme, it emphasizes the point that the pioneers tried to be friends to the Indians and killed only when it became a matter of self-preservation.

A white man learns to love a certain lone rock of

unusual formation beside the trail after Indians one day ambush him at this rock, capture him, and threaten him with cruel torture. Then, as if in answer to his prayer, a flash flood sweeps through the canyon, frightening the Indians away and providing the man with an opportunity to clamber to safety atop the pinnacle.

The Indian as he is in the present day generally receives sympathetic consideration in short stories and continued stories of the period. Stories such as "The Native Blood"30 by Albert R. Lyman reveal that the Mormon people are sympathetic toward the American Indian in the present day, for stories about Indians generally picture them in a favorable or friendly light.

"The Native Blood" is the story of Peejo, an orphan Navajo, who, resenting the treatment of Yoinsnez, an Indian who has taken him into his home, runs away, is adopted by a wealthy white man, and assumes the ways of white people. But Peejo's heart is back in the deserts with Yoinsnez's daughter, Eltceesie, and with the desert horses he loves so much.

Old Yoinsnez's world is rapidly changing; white men are enroaching more and more upon the Indians' lands. A white trader called the Badger sets up a trading post near where Yoinsnez lives and with hearty good fellowship

cheats the Indians at cards and belittles the Indians' horses.

Artfully the Badger goads Yoinsnez into betting everything that he owns on a race between a Navajo horse and a white man's horse and a footrace between the Navajo, Begay, and a white runner. The Badger's horse and runner win the races, but Peejo steps forward with proof that the Badger's horse is a Navajo horse and his foot-racer is of Indian blood.

The Badger and Yoinsnez schedule another race. Peejo provides a horse that he claims is the son of the famed desert stallion, Blackhorse. And Peejo himself runs as the official Navajo runner. Peejo's horse outruns the Badger's fleetest horse and Peejo outdistances his Indian rival, Begay, and the white runner. The Badger is forced to sell his trading post and leave the country. And Peejo, after defeating Begay in a wrestling contest, claims Eltceesie for his bride.

"The Native Blood" presents a clear, strong, and sympathetic picture of the Navajo people. It contains an implied criticism of the white man's treatment of the Indians and gives a splendid picture of the life and reasoning of people of Indian blood. The story is critical of the white man who has departed from the ways of nature in direct contrast to the Indian who lives close to nature and, by obeying its rules, knows its signs.
Yoinsnez's words of defiance, challenge, and pride are the words of a man who believes fiercely in the way of life of his fathers. His are the words of an Indian of the present day who remembers his past and is proud.

"A law!" he gloated as he entered the store. "The great spirit gives no people faster horses nor faster logs than he gives us. We fight our way in heat and cold; we meet the fury of drouth and desolation in the desert, and we thrive because of our superior roughness. . . ."

"Everything among us that can't take it," the old man went on, "must die, whether it's a horse or a man. But your weak horses and your weak men are doctored along to live and propagate their kind for a weak race!"

"Your horses have to be kept in warm barns or they die with the cold—you have to feed them with a spoon and wrap them in blankets like babies. Your men must have dainty foods prepared for sick people, and they have to live in warm rooms away from the drafts and sleep in snug blankets like mice in winter. You are an effeminate breed," Yoinsnez declared, rubbing it in with a vengeance. "That's why our horse beat your horse, and our man beat your man." 31

The Theme of Adventure

The over-popular theme of adventure includes stories about such subjects as athletic contests, the accomplishments of women, ranch and cowboy experiences, travel experiences in remote and exotic places, adventure in the professions, and the struggle of individuals to overcome bad names and establish good ones.

31. Ibid., p. 216.
A large number of stories deal with the subject of athletic contests. The athlete hero in Mormon sports stories is usually defeated in a preliminary contest, but he comes back and emerges triumphant in the climatic contest that follows. Never under any circumstances will the athlete hero compromise his honor for the sake of victory. 32

In stories telling of the accomplishments of women, a woman heroine makes good in some activity in which she has previously been a failure or in which few other women have succeeded. Most women in stories of this kind really prefer to stay at home raising a family instead of winning success in the world of the professions. And in the conclusions of these stories the heroines usually decide to make homemaking their life's work.

The compelling urge of a man to make a good name for himself, particularly after he has previously failed in some way, provides the subject for a good number of Mormon stories. Cowardice is a brand that most characters in Mormon fiction are not able to bear. They set out with

32. "Javelin Tosserr" by R. D. Galt, found in The Improvement Era vol. 41, (March, 1938), p. 148, is a typical sports story.

A javelin tosser hits a little boy and cripples him. Grieved so deeply by the accident that he cannot force himself to throw the javelin again, the athlete is on the point of giving up the sport.

Then he is confronted with the chance to save a drowning boy's life by throwing him a rope attached to a javelin. He throws the javelin, saves the boy, and makes the acquaintance of a famous leg surgeon who cures the little boy he crippled. Happy and very thankful, the javelin tosser throws the javelin to a record distance.
determination to clear their names of stain.

Adventure in the Western outdoors provides the subject matter for a number of stories found in Mormon fiction. Good consistently triumphs over evil in such stories, and they are usually outstanding for their descriptions of the world of nature.

Travel and activity in remote and exotic settings, such as the South Seas, the North Atlantic, Book of Mormon and Biblical settings, and fairyland-like places, is the subject matter for many Mormon stories.

Among more recent narratives, the subject of adventure in the professions is important for its frequency and for the fact that it provides an indication of the changed attitude toward doctors and lawyers and other professional people among the Mormon people. Professional people were once regarded with suspicion in Mormon literature; in more recent stories professional people have prominent and praiseworthy roles.

"Test Case"33 by Mark E. Phillips and a continued story, "A Week in a Box Canyon,"34 are typical adventure stories found in Mormon periodicals between 1900 and 1945. Following is a summary of "Test Case," depicting adventure

34. Malcolm Little, "A Week in a Box Canyon," The Improvement Era vol. 6, (April, 1903 to June, 1903), p. 401.
in the professions. The opportune collapse of a building enables Dr. Brent, an unpopular young doctor, to prove that he is a good doctor. After he performs a delicate operation successfully, the townspeople recognize that he is a skilled and competent physician.

A Western adventure story, "A Week in a Box Canyon," is the story of a cowboy's experiences on the rangelands of Utah. He is on his way to a little village when he loses his way. His horse wanders away, and while following it, he comes across a valley in which cattle rustlers have secreted stolen cattle.

His presence discovered by the outlaws, the cowboy hides in a cave, escapes through a rear entrance, steals a horse, and rides to the settlements to raise a posse. He and his men return to the box canyon, where they prey upon the superstitions of the outlaw leader and frighten him to death. They then capture the outlaws and return the stolen cattle to their rightful owners.

The Theme of Animals and Nature

Nature and animal stories are numerous and very popular in fiction of this study. A love for the outdoors and for the free, wild life found in the world of nature is characteristically a part of the stories of the Mormon people. Many of the stories evidence a love for nature in the raw, nature as it is before mankind corrupts it.
Mormon animal stories ordinarily tell of contests between men and wild animals in which the men are usually the victors. But admiration for the stubborn independence and courage of wild animals is expressed or implied in all animal stories. A few stories tell of the cleverness, faithfulness, and courage of domestic animals.

A story of a wild horse's gallant fight to retain his freedom, "Palmetto" by Daniel S. McQuarrie, is representative of Mormon stories about wild animals. Palmetto is a wild stallion, famed for his beauty and speed and for the fact that he has successfully eluded every attempt made to capture him.

The author and his friends, on the trail of the fabulous stallion, make plans to run after him in relays until he can run no longer. The plan is successful. Strung out in relays across the desert, the men pursue Palmetto for many miles. At last he begins to falter and to weaken.

From a distance the author admires Palmetto. And when he joins in the mad race, his admiration for the great stallion increases. At first unconsciously, then with all his conscious heart, the cowboy prays that they will be unsuccessful in their attempt to capture the kingly animal.

But I looked upon the foaming Palmetto, who had so gallantly shown his worthiness to

be free. I thought of his seven-mile run before he had reached the ridge. I admired his finely-shaped body, even more because it was covered with dust and sweat; and his largo nostrils more, because they were full of blood; and him more for his mettle and endurance. Then, too, his long, flowing mane and tail, fresh in the breeze, presented such a striking contrast to his straining body, covered with sweat and blood. I watched old Pedro, and how I longed to see him weaken! But we neared inch by inch, until just fifty yards ahead of us, the yellow mustang strained. "O Spirit who guards the wild animals," I thought, "save this hero."36

The author's prayer is answered. Even as the cow-boys rope him, Palmetto leaps into the air and topples over dead.

A representative story of those telling about domesticated animals is "Peggy"37 by Agnes Just Reid. "Peggy" tells how a pet calf furthers a romance between a boy and a girl. The calf, Peggy, is instrumental in promoting relations between a country boy and a girl from the city to the extent that they decide to get married.

A love for nature and the great outdoors is evidenced in all the stories about animals and the adventures of men with animals. This love of nature is not limited to stories having the animal theme; it is found in all Mormon stories. The mystical theory that the countenance and voice of God

36. Ibid., p. 294.
can be seen and heard in nature is oftentimes encountered in Mormon stories, as is also the belief that the outdoors is a healing agent.

**Themes Revealing the Influence of the World**

A major share of the stories in Mormon periodicals have themes that reveal the dominant influence of Mormon institutions and practices. This is to be expected in periodicals which have the avowed purpose of imparting knowledge in regard to their sponsoring institution.

A certain small percentage of stories in Mormon periodicals, however, have themes that, although they may contain Mormon characters, Mormon settings, or events in Mormon history, yet they are motivated by and reveal the dominant influence of the events and outlooks of the world, past and present.

Typical subjects considered in such stories are the following: two World Wars, the financial depression of the 1930's, the San Francisco earthquake in 1906, the coronation of King George VI of England, John Charles Fremont's adventures, the story of Cortez.

Stories having themes showing the influence of world events are not numerous, and the percentage of stories having such themes does not seem to increase appreciably
through the years.38

The Theme of War

Notable among the influences of the world which have left their mark upon the themes of Mormon fiction are two World Wars. During the years that these wars were in progress and during those immediately following, stories about war are much in evidence in Mormon periodicals. A number of stories which do not actually present the theme of war allude to the progress of the war then in progress.39

Most Mormon war stories tell of war on the home front; a very few picture actual fighting. The aftermath of war is described in several stories, and anti-war stories although few in number, are found in Mormon periodicals.

The war seems remote and far away in stories telling of war on the home front. The home pictured in such stories may or may not be Mormon homes and the characters may or may not be Mormon men and women. The situation and

38. Sixty-six stories of the 606 that I sampled appear to have themes suggested by the events of the world. Thirty-eight out of 347 stories, or 10.9 percent were written after 1920; twenty-eight of 256 stories, or 10.9 percent, were written before that time.

39. An example: In "The Evolution of Mr. Penny" by D. W. Cummings, The Young Woman's Journal vol. 26, (May, 1915 to October, 1915), p. 305, mention is made of the war then in progress in Europe. The story itself, however, is not about war. It is the story of how an orphan baby awakes an old bachelor named Mr. Penny to the beauty that can be found in life.

On page 305 of the story, this passage appears: "He was picking out the towns mentioned in the day's war dispatches."
the cause of the situation are, however, worldwide and universal in significance.

Typical of stories written during the first World War picturing conditions at home is "Pink Pearls vs. Self-Respect"40 by Venice Farnsworth Anderson, which tells of a girl living near an army base who, like her friends, sells dances to soldiers. Ashamed, she regrets doing it. A Mormon soldier sees her shame and offers to take her home. In the months that follow, the girl and the soldier fall in love and get married.

Conditions at home during World War II are evidenced in such stories as "A Substitute for Gas"41 by Olive W. Burt, which pictures teenage boys and girls at home, who, faced with the wartime emergency of a shortage of gasoline and oil, are forced to find their recreation at home and in Mutual Improvement Association activities instead of seeking it at commercial recreation centers.

Few Mormon stories picture war on the fighting fronts and tell of the hard actuality of war, but a small number of anti-war stories present some realistic glimpses of war. A representative of Mormon stories describing war at the

battlefront is "The Escape" by Henry Nicol Adamson, a story of World War I in German-occupied Belgium. A girl and her husband are guided safely across the border of Belgium into France by the girl's rejected sweetheart. This same noble man deliberately offers his life to save them.

A small number of stories attacking war as an institution among men appear in Mormon periodicals. The anti-war stories contain some of the best pictures of the bloody business of war that can be found in Mormon periodicals. A short story by Robert M. Hyatt entitled "Mad Alan Wayne" is representative of these stories.

The following explanatory note precedes the story:

As war clouds gather again over the earth may we not read this story... and hold tightly to peace... Just now war is in the air everywhere--newspapers and silver screens scream it at us... Steady heads and hearts must hold firmly to the peace ideal or another conflagration may send our sons and brothers roaring through the skies, under and over the seas, across shell-marked terrain at each other's throats. And for what?

We must remember that there are hordes of people in every country who will profit by a war. We must never forget that. These people, though publicly decrying war can always find some reason for war. Our honor, or our property, or our sovereign rights, or something else, to them, is ample excuse for flinging our boys as sacrifices to the gods of war...

44. Ibid.
The story tells that Alan Wayne, a pilot, haunted by visions of his comrades who have been shot down and the enemy soldiers he has killed, is driven to such despair and mental torment that he deliberately noses his plane toward the earth and plunges to his death.

War's aftermath is the theme of a number of Mormon stories. A story representative of this theme is "Another Unknown Soldier"45 by Margaret C. Moloney. The soldier, Stephen, alone in the world, unemployed, ill, seemingly unwanted by anybody, is so deeply discouraged that he wonders whether or not life is worth living.

Just as he is about to give up the discouraging struggle to find a place for himself in the world of civilians, he becomes acquainted with the mother of his army "buddy," who was lost in battle. The mother insists that Stephen accompany her home and stay with her until he regains his strength and can find a job. The lonely soldier and the unhappy mother help each other in re-adjusting to changed conditions in life.

The Theme of the Depression

The theme of the depression is prominent in Mormon fiction, for stories telling of financial hardships and simple living abound throughout the fiction of this study.

Many pioneer stories echo the depression theme, as do also many adventure stories and stories about daily living.

Depression stories, most numerous throughout the 1930's, describe the hardships experienced by the Mormon people during times of trouble and adversity. Troubles in the form of drought, bankruptcy, unemployment, or the death of a prize animal arise to perplex and trouble Mormon men and women. Mormon characters, however, usually find the security they seek on a farm or in a simple way of living in which the emphasis is placed upon religion rather than on money. Most depression stories offer the thought that the materialistic things of life are not important but that religion is.

A typical depression story, "Promise of the Wheat"46 by Isabel Neill is the story of a farmer's wife who, growing dissatisfied with life on the farm, goes to the city to visit. A few days in the city convince her that life on the farm is not so bad after all, for she becomes aware of the financial troubles of her city friends, and she recognizes all at once the wisdom of her energetic, level-headed farmer husband. The wife returns to the farm determined to help her husband make a success of it.

Other Themes Showing the Influence of the World

National and world events in addition to the two World Wars and the great depression of the 1930's are mirrored in Mormon fiction of the period. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 and the coronation of King George VI of England in 1937 are representative events of the period that find a place in Mormon periodical fiction.

"A Loaf of Bread"47 by Willard Done, a story about the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, tells how a non-Mormon financier, Philip Blake, falls in love with Majorie Trent, a Mormon girl, then rejects her after he discovers that she is a Mormon. Left destitute by the earthquake, Philip consumes a loaf of bread baked by Marjorie, is reminded of his love for her, travels to Utah, and tells her of his love. Marjorie agrees to marry him after he has served a period of probation to prove his worthiness.

Another subject suggested by the events of the world is the coronation of King George VI of England in 1937. "Mary--Maid in Waiting to a Queen"48 by Georgia Moore Eberling is a representative story having this subject. It is the story of a little English seamstress whose ambition is to be maid in waiting to the Queen of England.

Delighted when she is asked to help make Queen Victoria's wedding dress, she realizes her brightest dreams when she is named as the Queen's maid in waiting.

The Theme of History

Histories of the world, histories of America in particular, provide the themes for a number of Mormon short stories and continued stories. A story that is representative of those having a historical theme is "The Lost Pathfinder" by Ann Woodbury Hafen. It tells of the experiences of John Charles Fremont on the Western frontier. While attempting to cross the San Juan Mountains in the middle of the winter, Fremont and his men, who are seeking to prove that the route is practicable for a railroad line, are caught in a blizzard and snowed in.

Because their food is beginning to run low, Fremont leaves his party and struggles alone through the snows to civilization. Almost snow-blind, partially frozen, he obtains help. But by the time the rescue party finds his men, eleven of them are dead. The survivors experience great hardship and suffering.

A few years later, Fremont proves to his own satisfaction and that of his men that it is possible to cross the San Juan Mountains in the middle of the winter.  


50. Another representative historical story in Mormon (Continued)
Conclusions

I have arrived at the following conclusions in regard to the themes of Mormon fiction:

1. Mormon stories reflect both the past and the present of the Mormon people.

2. The themes are, for the most part, repeated over and over through the years, for most of them are concerned with the practices and institutions connected with the Mormon people and belonging to them.

3. A few stories have themes that are influenced by the events of the outside world and the outlook of the people of the world. Stories having such themes, however, show no substantial change in number throughout the period of this study.

4. The most popular themes are these: daily living, adventure, courting, animals and nature, and the pioneers.

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50. (Continued) periodicals of the period is "Retreat of the Dismal Night" by Elizabeth Cannon Porter, The Improvement Era vol. 21, (May, 1918), p. 603. Appended to the story is the author's statement that "it is correct historically, and represents much research work combined with a knowledge gained first-handed."

"Retreat of the Dismal Night" is the story of the conqueror, Cortez, and the little-known details of his tragic flight from the city of the Indians following the death of Montezuma, the ruler of Mexico. Cortez barely escapes with his life as the aroused Indians slaughter his men.
CHAPTER IV

TREATMENTS USED IN MORMON FICTION

As would be expected in a body of fiction which was predominantly didactic, romantic, and sentimental before 1900, and in which from 1900 to 1945 a didactic purpose dominates, Mormon fiction from 1900 to 1945 is predominantly didactic in treatment.

By the term, treatment, I mean the manner in which Mormon authors approach and handle the material of their stories, giving to it one or more of the following "touches": the qualities of a lesson book, instructive, pedagogical; the unreality of romantic settings, characters, and situations; the tear-compelling circumstances of sentimental situations; the stark reality of life; a laughter or smile-provoking approach to material; the simple philosophies of children couched in simple, understandable terms.

I employ the terms romantic, realistic, humorous, sentimental, and juvenile to designate the different treatments used in Mormon fiction.
Although a majority of Mormon stories of the period are didactic in treatment, quite a large number of them, including many didactic stories, are romantic in treatment. A sentimental treatment is evidenced in Mormon fiction, as is a humorous treatment. Juvenile stories reveal a distinctive treatment.¹

The Didactic Treatment

The didactic treatment, which dominates, is a term used to describe a form of fiction which aims by means of dialogue, narration, and description to teach a lesson. It attaches more importance to this than to anything else.

William Thrall and Addison Hibbard in *A Handbook to Literature* define didacticism in this way:

**Didacticism:** That quality of writing which manifests a desire on the part of the author to instruct and improve the reader. A very general term, it is impossible to block out its limits in a definite way acceptable to all since different people have different impressions of what constitutes a didactic manner. The term is often used contemptuously, but if all didactic writing were destroyed all literatures

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¹ I have classified the stories I have read on the basis of their treatments in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Didactic</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentimental</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic (or partially so)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
would be greatly impoverished. The truth probably is that we all accept didactic writing up to the point where it impresses us as self-righteous; then it becomes offensive and we hurl the charge of didacticism. 2

This treatment in Mormon fiction from 1900 to 1945 is evidenced in a number of ways: (1) by a conclusion in the form of a moral exhortation called a "moral tag," in which the didactic message is repeated or explained; (2) by means of a lengthy speech in the body of the story; (3) in the form of a didactic conversation; (4) by frequent departures from the thread of the story to teach; (5) by peering into characters' minds and hearts; (6) with scriptural quotations, within, at the beginning, or at the end of the story; (7) by "good deed" actions on the part of leading characters in the story. 3


3. This quotation from "The Glimpses" by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, The Young Woman's Journal vol. 25, (March, 1917), p. 151, is representative of didactic devices employed in Mormon stories of the period. The didactic digression is found in most Mormon stories.

Ah, when will men cease to expect efficient motherhood the instant it comes, in the sweet-hearts they have admired and wooed for efficiency in almost any other field save that? When will woman realize that she needs preparatory training for her life's work as much as man does for his? When that time comes perhaps domestic crises... will not be so common.

"In Memory" by W. J. Sloan is an example of a story having the didactic treatment that begins and ends with scriptural quotations. A passage from The Doctrine and Covenants 132: 19-20 precedes the story; the story ends (Continued)
A representative story having the didactic treatment is "Smoky Summer" by Otis L. Burton. It contains a lengthy didactic speech, a didactic conversation, and ends with a "moral tag."

It is the story of a Mormon boy, Bill, who begins to smoke because most of his associates in the construction gang do. Bill does not regard his newly-developed habit as of much significance until in a conversation with Jerry, his non-Mormon boss, he begins to sense the importance of a good example and right conduct in teaching Mormonism to the people of the world. Jerry's words and the conversation between Bill and Jerry contain the didactic message of the story.

"You know," spoke up Jerry after a short pause, "I've taken quite an interest in you, Bill. You see, I'm from the East and we think nothing at all of the fact that a good share of the women and most of the men back there smoke. Most of them do it, so no one pays much attention.

"Well, I smoke, too," laughed Jerry, noting Bill's embarrassment.

"But I remember an incident that impressed me very much. One day... I picked up a young fellow, ... a Mormon missionary. I offered him a smoke to get the conversation going, but this young fellow refused--courteous enough, though.

"Well, as I was saying," continued Jerry, "this missionary told me about a code of

3. (Continued) with a quotation from the same reference, 132:18. Both passages deal with Mormon temple marriage, the subject of the story.

these Mormons. He called it the Word of Wisdom. In a nutshell, they strongly disapprove smoking and drinking, and they practice it where other churches only preach it. It's a darn fine thing. I sometimes wish I felt like they do. I'd be better off, I know," "Yes, he would," thought Bill, "and so would I."5

On this note the story ends. A statement at the end of the story summarizes the didactic message: Live true to the ideals of Mormonism.

Other Mormon stories present the same or similar didactic devices that "Smoky Summer" does, a romantic or a sentimental treatment often accompanying the didactic treatment. This is probably true because didactic treatments and purposes oftentimes make stories untrue to life.

The Romantic Treatment

The romantic treatment is in evidence in a great many Mormon stories from 1900 to 1945. It, in conjunction with the didactic treatment, can be said to be the dominating treatment in the fiction of the period of this study.

Homer A. Watt and William W. Watt in A Dictionary of English Literature define romanticism as follows:

The tendency in art or literature to represent life as it is not—either with the help of the imagination to distort the real world or to escape from it entirely into the shadowy realm of romance. The term is

5. Ibid., pp. 566-567.
also applied to a work in which an author expresses his individuality in defiance of established rules. 6

The characteristics of the romantic movement in England are representative of the characteristics of romanticism found in almost every romantic literature:

Among the aspects of the "romantic" movement in England may be listed: sentimentalism; primitivism; love of external nature; sympathetic interest in the past; mysticism; individualism; romantic criticism; . . . the idealization of rural life; enthusiasm for the wild, irregular, or grotesque in nature and art; unrestrained imagination; enthusiasm for the uncivilized or "natural": interest in human rights; sympathy with animal life; sentimental melancholy; emotional psychology in fiction. 7

Evidences of the romantic treatment in Mormon fiction of the years 1900 to 1945 are numerous and varied. The romantic treatment is demonstrated in the following ways: (1) by exaggerated, idealized descriptions of nature's beauties, in which primitivism is praised, God's spirit is described as visible, and nature is claimed to have a healing power; (2) in statements expressing romantic melancholy; (3) in plots that are improbable and untrue to life; (4) by melodramatic sensationalism; (5) by idealized, overdrawn characters, as the martyr and good-badman; (6) by settings that are removed from reality;

(7) in worship of people and events from out of the past.

I prefer to regard sentimentality as a treatment by itself because of its frequency and importance in Mormon fiction.

**Romantic Nature**

Many Mormon stories contain fervent, lyrical, and exaggerated praises of the beauties of nature, asserting or hinting that nature possesses a healing power, that God is visible amid nature's beauties, and that the world of wild and unsullied nature is preferable to our mechanized civilization. It is also characteristic of large numbers of Mormon stories to manifest an interest in animal life, in wild animals in particular.

A story by Claude T. Barnes entitled "At the Top of the Canyon" contains some representative expressions of appreciation for the beauties of nature. A description of nature found in the story follows:

Far below him spread a level valley, quivering rays of summer heat and a thin haze of smoke giving a distant range of mountains an opalescent hue, while the great city that reposed on the gentle slopes resembled a mammoth checker-board of antique green and gray, with here and there colossal chess men of white or brown.

The canyon sides about him were shaded with forests of lodge pole and white pines; and he lounged beside a blue spruce as handsome as any he had yet seen. As he meditated the fretful

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brook at his feet, the sun's rays were reflected as if by a thousand tiny mirrors and even the leaves of the aspens scintillated and shone with a vibrant brilliancy almost as strong as that of the tinkling bubbles and miniature waves. 9

Such descriptions of nature and outright expressions of appreciation for its beauties abound in Mormon stories. "At the Top of the Canyon" is the love story of a government research man and a shy, sweet country girl, who find love and happiness together after they learn to share their appreciation of nature with each other.

The beauties of nature are frequently the occasion for Mormon stories to venture into the realm of philosophy and theology. Mormon writers often express the belief that nature possesses supernatural healing powers and that God's spirit is manifested in it.

Such thoughts are expressed in the continued story, "A Summer Outing and What Came of It" 10 by Anthony W. Ivins. It is a story about Frank Anderson, an ennuied banker, who follows his friend George's advice and goes out into the world of nature, where he finds happiness and gains an altered outlook on life.

The following statement is typical of the numerous references to healing and spiritual nature that are made in the story.

9. Ibid., p. 137.
"Have you ever tried outdoor life as an antidote to ennui?" continued George. "Have you ever, with rod, gun, and dog, pitched your tent in an open park bordered with pine and juniper, at the bottom of a rugged canyon with titan peaks towering above, and a noisy mountain torrent tumbling over the rocks at your feet; or camped on the shores of a crystal lake, fed by the ice cold brooks which dance over the boulders as they merrily wind their way from the snow-capped peaks above? Have you ever cast a fly on the sparkling water on that lake and felt the thrill which comes with the click of the reel, as the delicate rod bends and sways in your hand, and the ecstasy which makes the pulse beat faster as you land the speckled beauty, and after estimating his weight, carefully place him in your creel?

"Have you ever stalked the antlered monarch of the woods across the beautiful glades, through rugged defiles, or over the mountain peaks, and felt that exaltation which comes to the hunter when he finally brings down the quarry? If these experiences have never come into your life, there is yet hope that you may find recreation, the health, and above all, appreciation of the works of the Creator which you failed to realize last year in your trip to Europe."

George's declaration of his belief that men who live close to the soil are blessed and good is a romantic thought having wide currency in Mormon fiction. George states:

"Governments must exist for the protection of society. There must be legislators to frame the laws, and capable men to execute them. Great financiers are necessary to transact the world's businesses, but you must not overlook the fact that these men of the mountains and plains, these men of toil, who take the rough elements as they are found in nature and convert them into that which man requires--

11. Ibid., p. 698.
these men from the workshops, the mills, and the farms have in them the elements for the making of legislators, executors of the law, and financiers. They do the world's work, they fight the world's battles; so, long as we have them with us we are safe."12

The story ends with a statement of how Frank's experience in intimate communion with nature has not only cured him of ennui; he has, in the process, found an answer to life's meaning.13

Romantic Melancholy

Descriptions picturing a cold, dark, and melancholy world are found in a number of the stories of the period. A mood similar to that created by the poet MacPherson in his "Ossian" is found in many Mormon stories, particularly in the romances of the Mormon poet and author Alfred Lambourne.

"Plet: A Christmas Tale of the Wasatch"14 by Alfred

12. Ibid., p. 309.
13. The following passage is an expression of Frank's discovery of God's spirit in nature:

... He had often looked at the mountains from afar, but had conceived nothing of their beauty and mystery. It was so with the gospel; he knew now that its blessings had been within his reach, that the Lord is in temples built with hands, as He is here in the wilds in the solitude, under the stars, but had required their experience to awaken the latent spark of faith which was in his heart. Here, in the solitude, for the first time since he had been a man, he had humbled himself before the Lord, and his prayer had been heard and answered. He knew that his Redeemer lived.

--Ibid., p. 1071.
Lambourne is representative of Mormon stories that present the romantic mood of darkness and gloom in nature. The story tells how the author and his friend, Jo, live in a tiny hut in the Wasatch Mountains, set in surroundings grim but somehow beautiful. The author's description of their home emphasizes the meloncholy nature of the scenes around them.

The lake waters, a pale, coldish green, where they mingled with the melting snow, or lay shallow in the rock pools on the north shore, appeared nevertheless of a terrible darkness where they leaned deep on the mountain side. On clear noonays, we could trace the step-like ledges of granite leading down into the watery gloom . . .

Oh, we knew the voice of the mountains well! Three years we lived in that hollow, winter and summer. We saw the place under a thousand different aspects, but none, we thought more beautiful than when we first met, Jo and I, and we set foot for the first time also by the deep, dark lake.

'Twas a wondrous sight then, surely. Heavy curtains of stormclouds hung over the hollow that day, and in the murky gloom, the Babylonish pile of crags at its eastern end appeared to be little else than shadows, black, gigantic shadows, save for the lines of snow that gleamed on the spiral ledges. Along the northern shore of the lake the rounded boulders, and the clusters of brilliant flowers were relieved in mass against the indigo blue of the canyon depths. The top of the conical peak was half buried in cloud, and a great wreath of steam-like vapor lay white along the crests. 15

Jo, who loves a beautiful girl named Plet, plans to marry her after he and the author strike it rich. On the

15. Ibid., pp. 50-51.
evening before Jo's wedding day, the author dreams that
Jo is swept away by a snowslide. He is happy when he
awakes to find that it has been nothing but a dream. Jo
and Plet are married amid general rejoicing.

The Romantic Plot

Improbabilities in the working out of plots are roman-
tic evidences found in many Mormon stories of the years
1900 to 1945. Mormon stories consistently have happy end-
ings, and these endings often make the stories untrue to
life. Far-fetched chance and coincidence, prominent in
the plots of many stories of the period, also help to make
Mormon stories seem unreal. Such devices as having a
character make an amazing transformation; the creation of
artificial suspense-provoking mysteries; and "from rags to
riches" incidents of success are romantic evidences found
in many Mormon stories.

Coincidence and chance in the extreme and an unreal-
istically happy ending are visible in such stories as "The
Friend"\textsuperscript{16} by Willard Done, the story of Big Bill Dayton, a
discredited politician and unsuccessful suitor for Edith
Bailey's hand, who is now a frontiersman. Big Bill's more
successful rival, Robert Bailey, resigns as senator and with
his wife sets out for the West after he discovers that he
did not win fairly in his contest with Big Bill.

\textsuperscript{16} Willard Done, "The Friend," \textit{The Improvement Era}
On the Western prairies, Robert and Edith Bailey meet Big Bill Dayton. Indians attack their wagon train and carry their little daughter away. Big Bill intercepts the marauding Indians, rescues the child, and saves Robert Bailey from an Indian ambush.

But Big Bill, fatally wounded in his encounters with the Indians, dies, hearing in the last minutes of his life a certain Henry Peters confess his complicity in the unfair plot that resulted in his defeat in the election years before.

Chance figures prominently in the plot of this story. By chance, Big Bill, in the immensity of the Western plains, is in the vicinity of the wagon train in which the Baileys are journeying. By chance, Big Bill intercepts the particular group of Indians that kidnap the Baileys' daughter. By chance, Big Bill's political enemies confront him as he lies on his deathbed. These are coincidences that are romantic and implausible in the extreme.17

17. Another excellent example of chance and coincidence carried to the extreme is found in the short story, "Someplace in France" by Ivy Williams Stone, The Young Woman's Journal vol. 28, (September, 1917), p. 475. This is the story of a man who is blinded in battle and of his sweetheart, a nurse whose face is horribly disfigured when a bomb strikes the hospital in which she is working. The nurse, caring for a helpless little orphan, by coincidence goes to the house where her blind lover is staying. And by chance, the blind man's servant recognizes the little war orphan as his own child. The lovers are reunited and the father gets back his child. The plot of the story is dependent entirely upon extreme chance and circumstances that are difficult or impossible to believe.
The device of the sudden and amazing transformation of a character so that his or her personality or physical appearance is completely changed is often found in Mormon romantic stories. This device is untrue to life, for it operates contrary to human nature. Overnight alteration in the thinking and acting of a human being is extremely improbable.

"Farmer Gone Wrong"18 by Ralph Harvard Olson illustrates the amazing transformation device put into application in the telling of a Mormon story. It is the story of Sadie Ross, a girl who is unpopular socially. Sadie meets Lowell Nevet and falls in love with him. Nevet, however makes fun of Sadie and her country ways. Sadie, overhearing a conversation in which she is ridiculed, determines that she will overcome her social weaknesses. Pete, the brother of Sadie's roommate, helps her to transform herself.

Sadie goes to San Francisco, enters business college, and, aided by Pete, learns how to dress, how to act, and how to talk in polite society. After a few weeks, Sadie is a changed person.

Weeks passed. . . . Sadie went through this school as she had gone through the other two. The results were amazing, even to Sadie Ross, who was now Rosalyn Ross, after her mother. The work she did at the office came easy and she was well liked. She started to go out to

parties, to hotel dances, and then up a step to the operas and musical shows and symphony concerts. Sadie Rosalyn Ross; she didn't even know herself at times. She became more self confident in time and even ventured to put forth some of her ideas and convictions out in public, always in a quiet, cool, unruffled voice. Never views on farming.

When anyone asked her who she was and from whence she came, she smiled and said, "I'm a farmer gone wrong." Everybody laughed and nobody believed her. In the old days when she tried to hide the straw in her makeup everybody knew she was a farmer. She laughed and wondered about it all.\[19\]

Sadie gets her revenge. When Lowell Nevet seeks her assistance and her friendship, Sadie deliberately snubs him. Pete and Sadie marry and are very happy together.

The artificial device of creating a mystery of inflated importance as a means of stimulating interest and suspense is encountered in a number of Mormon stories. Elsie Chamberlain Carroll's continued story, "A Volunteer Missionary,"\[20\] contains examples of the artificial, exaggerated mystery. It is the story of Horace and Frances Ballard, a young married couple who go East to school. Horace enters Cornell University and Frances proceeds to do missionary work. She is pleased to make the acquaintance of an old, white-haired man, but she is unhappy over her failure to convert her husband's Mormon-hating uncle, James

\[19\] Ibid., p. 575.
James Ballard disappears under mysterious circumstances, and shortly after his disappearance someone donates a large sum of money to Mormon schools and to the Timpanogos National Monument movement.

The mysteries of James Ballard's disappearance, the identity of the old, white-haired man, and the name of the donor to Mormon education and to the national monument movement concern the reader throughout a good share of the story. These suspense-provoking mysteries give the story a romantic coloring.

The mysteries are solved at the end of the story. James Ballard has been secretly studying the teachings of the Mormon Church and has become converted. He is the old, white-headed man who listens to Frances talk about Mormonism; and he is the person who gives large sums of money to promote education among the Mormon people and to preserve the beauty of their mountains.

Romantic Sensationalism

Sensationalism and emotionalism and forms of melodrama find a place in a number of Mormon stories. Such stories are romantic in that they give a distorted and overdrawn view of life. Murders, gun battles, black-hearted villains, and noble "supermen" are found in these stories. Everything about them is exaggerated in the
extreme.

"Madelon" by Alfred Lambourne is a representative sensational tale about a bandit father, a sheriff lover, blood treasure, a mysterious cave, and a fight to the death. As the story opens, the girl, Madelon, is mad and her father is dying from a bullet wound. Madelon's lover, Pierre, is dead in the cave where Madelon and he played when they were children.

Madelon's father, a bandit, robbed the stage; Pierre, the sheriff, followed him. In the gunfight that took place, Pierre was killed and Madelon's father severely wounded. Madelon, going to the cave to meet Pierre, found him dead. Madness claimed her. Now she sits alone beside a stream, crying, "Pierre, Pierre, give me back Pierre."

A sample passage from the story illustrates the sensational nature of the plot. It is exaggerated, unreal, distorted. The characters seem like characters out of such old-fashioned melodramas as "Ten Nights in a Barroom," and the situation is more like an incident in a cheap Western movie than an actual incident from real life.

A guilty father, a maddened daughter--they confronted each other. At the cave mouth the station master and Madelon met. There was no purpose in the father's dissembling now. Madelon knew the truth, or rather, she had known the truth. In those eyes there shone no light of reason. She no longer knew of that which she

had seen....

And so the grizzled and one-armed father lying upon his death-bed, learned the truth of the words:
"Their sins shall discover them." "He that getteth riches and not by right shall leave them in the midst of his days and at the end shall be a fool."

And so Madelon wore her wreath of flowers, believing it ever her bridal day. And so she sat by the ford, watching for a lover who never came. Or, suddenly, she would laugh and cry out upon the silence, "Pierre, Pierre, give me back Pierre."22

Romantic Characters

Idealized and overdrawn characters, mysterious characters whose pasts are shadowy and vague, characters who can do no wrong, characters who are completely evil, pathetic and helpless human beings such as a little child or a feeble old man, abused martyrs, characters outwardly bad but inwardly good, and fanciful and fantastic characters such as fairies or elves—all are romantic characters, for they represent departures from the real and the usual in life. Such characters usually people romantic plots in exotic settings.

The characters in "Madelon" are romantic. Pierre is a "spotless" officer of the law who can do no wrong; Madelon's father is completely evil; Madelon is a pathetic and helpless heroine who suffers dire misfortunes and hardships. She can almost be regarded as a typical romantic

22. Ibid., p. 306.
martyr who bravely bears a burden greater than anyone else and who trusts in God for strength to bear up under it and to persevere.

A typical martyr character in Mormon fiction is a girl named Mary in a story by Nephi Anderson entitled "The Straw." Mary refuses to do as other girls do in matters of dress and conduct. She prefers to be "different" rather than to imitate the extremes in styles of other girls of her own age.

Although she is unpopular with the boys, she tries not to care. Disgusted when she sees a boy she has always admired smoking a cigarette, she expresses thankfulness that she has the courage to be unpopular while remaining true to her religious convictions.

Mary is a first class martyr. She deliberately chooses to be unpopular, her unpopularity being an honor in her eyes, a cross heavy but gratifying to bear. Her conduct is extreme, unrealistic, and untrue to life.

Butch Cassidy is a typical good-badman character in Mormon fiction. Mormon writers credit him with a number of the noble and praiseworthy characteristics of a legendary Robin Hood. He would rob wealthy men and give to poor people according to the story, "Walking for Health" by

James P. Sharp.

"Walking for Health" is concerned with a Robin Hood-like incident in Butch Cassidy's career. One of Cassidy's men steals a horse from a poor Mormon farmboy. Cassidy, as soon as he discovers what his man has done, compels him to return the horse to its rightful owner and to plead the boy's forgiveness.

Cassidy's action seems exaggerated, extreme, untrue to life. The paradox of the good-badman is present in a number of Mormon stories of the period.25

**Romantic Settings**

Settings picturesque, exotic, fantastic, and connoting the distant past very frequently are romantic. They are romantic because they are removed from the reality of life, are products of the author's imagination, seemingly, rather than pictures of life. Settings such as these are usually the stages upon which romantic events occur and romantic characters parade.

Typical of stories telling about picturesque, exotic,

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25. The central figure in a short story entitled "Mary Ellen" by Maud Baggarley, *The Improvement Era* vol. 20, (July, 1917), p. 811, is a typical romantic character. Mary Ellen, a cold, hard woman of the desert, comes to believe that there is a God after she is forced to give aid to a dying mother and is left with the responsibility of caring for the dead woman's children.

Mary Ellen is puzzling to the reader. Outwardly she is hard and cruel, but within she is kind and noble and good.
and imaginative places is "Coquette -- A Tale of the Haunted Mesa"\textsuperscript{26} by Alfred Lambourne. This is a tragedy-romance about an actress who, after encouraging a poor man to propose marriage to her, laughs at him, breaking his heart.

The setting of the story is the cliffs where an ancient and forgotten people, the cliff-dwellers, once lived. The author gives the reader the impression that the spirits of the cliff-dwellers continue to hover about the place where they lived and loved and died many centuries ago.

"Happy Valley"\textsuperscript{27} by Dorothy Carolyn Retsloff is a story having an imaginative setting. Happy Valley is a place that lies "just over the mountain," but the mountain is high and the only people who are able to find it are the righteous and the pure in heart. Happy Valley is in a fairyland setting, a land of "make-believe."

\ldots a long narrow valley tucked between the mountain ranges. One end is stopped by a blue-green sea, the other where a high wall, with a water-fall, joins the two rows of mountains. There are green trees and mossy nooks and long fields of waving grain. There are wide, sunny places, and a warm wind laden with contentment blows every day.\textsuperscript{28}

The story tells of John Craystein, who is unhappy

\textsuperscript{26} Alfred Lambourne, "Coquette -- A Tale of the Haunted Mesa," \textit{The Improvement Era} vol. 21, (May, 1918), p. 618.
\textsuperscript{27} Dorothy Carolyn Retsloff, "Happy Valley," \textit{The Improvement Era} vol. 27, (November, 1923), p. 47.
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 48.
because he is a hunchback and a cripple. Hearing of a place called Happy Valley, he sets out in search of it. After a long, hard journey, he finds Happy Valley, and from a blind girl who has a song on her lips, he learns the secret of how to be happy. Happiness, he discovers, comes to those individuals who, forgetting themselves, love their fellowmen.

The Romantic Past

Incidents from out of the past oftentimes are romantic material, for they are separated from the reality of the present by a golden veil of time. Indian legends may be romantic, as may also pioneer stories and stories about life in "the old country." Book of Mormon and Biblical stories oftentimes are romantic because they are about the idealized past.

"Ben's Chimney Baby"29 by Jean Moore is an example of the Mormon story telling about the past. It contains reminiscences of pioneer life in the best romantic tradition.

Grandfather and Grandmother Morgan are pleased when their grandchildren come to see them. The old pioneer man and woman live in a memory-filled house, and the grandchildren love to sit around them and hear them tell stories about the past.

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Grandfather Morgan had no sooner arranged the old patchwork pillow behind his back, humoring his pleurisy as he called it, than the clamoring for a story began. "An Indian story," begged small Tad. Grandfather Morgan smiled, thinking of the many friendly Indians he had known in the early days who wished only to be left alone. . . . But enough of reminiscing. . . Tonight. . . he had a story which he had saved for a long time, so after clearing his throat loudly he began: 

"Many years ago there lived a small boy called Ben. . . ." 30

Grandfather Morgan tells the children a story about Ben, a boy who rescues a little pioneer girl named Precious from the Indians. Ben's parents adopt the baby, and when Ben and Precious grow up, they marry.

When the grandchildren remember that their grandfather's name is Ben and their grandmother is named Precious, they realize that he has been telling them a true story of his own life.

The romance of the long ago lingers about stories like "Ben's Chimney Baby." The golden glow of legend has covered over the rough places in the incident; and the spell of time has enhanced its importance and charm.

The Sentimental Treatment

From 1900 to 1945 a considerable amount of sentimentality appears in Mormon periodical fiction. Although sentimentality is usually thought of as a form of romanticism, 30.

Ibid., p. 22.
I prefer to consider it by itself because of the frequency with which it appears in Mormon fiction and because of its importance in this study.

I consider it of significance that the sentimental treatment is slightly less noticeable in Mormon fiction after 1920 than it is before that time. Although a number of Mormon stories both before and after 1920 reveal sentimentality, a larger percentage of stories having such a treatment appear before 1920 than since that time.\footnote{31}

William Thrall and Addison Hibbard in \textit{A Handbook to Literature} define sentimentality in this way:

\begin{quote}
The term is used in two senses important in the study of literature: (1) an over-indulgence in emotion, especially the conscious effort to induce emotion in order to analyze or enjoy it; also the failure to restrain or evaluate emotion through the exercise of judgment; (2) an optimistic overemphasis of the goodness of humanity.\footnote{32}
\end{quote}

Philo M. Buck Jr. in \textit{Literary Criticism}, has this to say about the sentimental treatment:

\begin{quote}
The sentimental exploits a ready and popularly prepared theme for its particular and popularly predictable thrill. Hence the things we grow sentimental over change with our fashions, for we respond to them, not because of the vital urge of the experience itself, but because a social habit has already prepared the way for the responses and the thrill is in vogue.\footnote{33}
\end{quote}

\footnote{31. Out of 256 stories written before 1920, twenty-seven stories (10.5 percent) are dominantly sentimental in treatment. On the other hand, twenty-five stories (seven percent) out of 350 written since 1920 are sentimental.}

\footnote{32. William Thrall and Addison Hibbard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 399.}

\footnote{33. Philo M. Buck Jr., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 52.}
The sentimental treatment is evidenced in Mormon fiction in a number of ways. It is found in situations in which emotion is excessive, in connection with such subjects as the joys and tears of parenthood, poverty, memories of bygone days, characters of pathetic helplessness, death, and impending death. The subjects are ready-made and stereotyped and, as a result, they are much over-used. Throughout the period of this study it seems to be the vogue to shed copious tears over deathbed scenes and pathetic situations and characters.

The Joys and Tears of Parenthood

"Christmas Eve in Paris"34 by Lydia A. Alder is representative of stories that sentimentalize ready-made situations such as the joys and tears of parenthood. It is a story that contains more emotion than its subject warrants. Simple subject matter surcharged with an excessive emotional seasoning causes the story to seem exaggerated and untrue to life.

The story is of a mother who enters a great cathedral one Christmas Eve and kneels down to pray.

In her hands she firmly holds a few parcels ---all that her store of means will allow for the coming morrow, which should bring joy into the world---love and happiness for some, but only tears and memories for others. Why is the

world thus divided? Why should the same thing bring both joy and pain? Alas! it was ever so, since the portal of Eden closed on the first wanderers, and the cold, barren world met their anxious view—the stern world where the glad Christmas bells never had rung.

As the woman prays, she thinks of her son, wishes that he would come home this Christmas Eve to be with her. She gets to her feet, totters, falls. At once she is surrounded by people.

A man standing in the crowd of onlookers peers down at the woman, recognizes her, springs forward, and bending down beside her, calls her mother and chafes her hands.

"Mother!" he whispers, "Mother!" "What a lovely dream," she faintly says. "I dreamed my boy was here." "He is, mother, he is!" cried the stranger. "Only look upon me, your own boy." Love, the inspirer of life, quickens her pulse, and she hears the blessed word, "mother."

"At last, at last!" she cries and clinging to him, bursts into happy tears. It was Christmas day, and joy had come into the world.

Poverty and Pathetic Characters

Poverty and pathetic characters receive sentimental treatment in such stories as "In the Third Watch of the Night" by Homer M. Price. This is the story of a subnormal orphan boy, who waits patiently at the railroad station every evening in the hope that he will find his mother, but he never finds her. The story plays upon the

35. Ibid., p. 207.
36. Ibid., p. 210
reader's emotions by picturing the pathetic figure of the orphan boy and his tragic death.

An old baggage man tells the traveler about Ben Spillman, a poor, mentally-weak orphan, who was deserted by his mother many years before. Though a kind man adopted him, Ben continues to wait and watch each night for his mother, trusting all the while that she will come "in the third watch of the night as the scriptures say."

Ben, who adores his foster father's daughter, Bessie, transfers his adoration to Bessie's little daughter after Bessie marries and becomes a mother. Tragedy strikes one night as Ben, Bessie, and Bessie's child wait at the railroad station. The little girl slips away from Ben and runs onto the tracks in front of an oncoming train. Ben leaps and knocks the child out of danger, but the train catches him, dragging and mangling him severely.

He lingers for a time, but death is near. His last words are the statement that he is reunited with his mother and that the long, lonely years of waiting for her to return are over. Surrounded by weeping friends, he dies.

"For two hours he lay that way, with his head in my lap, and the mother, Bessie, a bendin' over him. Finally his eyes opened, and the old crazy look wuz all gone. He saw her thar a hoverin' over him, and cryin', and we heard him say, very low, 'Kiss me, Bessie,' and Bessie just kissed him again and again and told him how sorry she wuz. He looked very contented, and said, between his gasps for breath, 'Don't be sorry. I would have
died any time in the last twenty years for you, or for—one—you—loved." Then his eyes closed again, and we watched and waited a way long into the night.

"'Bout the third watch he stirred and tried to get up, sayin' excited like, 'The train's comin' with my mother. She's comin' back. Thar it comes; don't you see it? It's stoppin' now; they are comin' out of the coaches. Look! She said she'd come,' and with his arm uplifted, 'She's come!' Then the poor old heart beat out and he sank back limp and lifeless."38

Ben's last words are typical of the words spoken by other dying people in stories having a sentimental treatment. The emotion-charged deathbed speech is a favorite means of inducing the reader to cry. But Ben, without his deathbed speech, is a sentimental character, for he is the sort of person for whom the reader feels sorry. His character "type" is a favorite in Mormon sentimental stories.

The Deathbed Scene

A popular scene in Mormon stories having the sentimental treatment is the deathbed scene. The emotions attending such a climactic moment in an individual's life provide writers with the opportunity to exaggerate and overemphasize the situation. "The famous last words" of one who is dying very frequently are sentimentalized in Mormon stories.

Representative of stories presenting the sentimental deathbed scene, "The World's a Stage"39 by James Sickles Hart is the story of a comedian who aspires to be a serious

38. Ibid., p. 255.
actor. He is, however, forever "typed"; nevertheless, he persists in his determination to play a serious role.

A little girl lying upon her deathbed expresses the desire to see her "Prince Charming" before she dies. The comedian, by playing the part of "Prince Charming," gives much happiness to the little girl and satisfies his long cherished desire to play a serious part.

This, a concluding passage in the story, contains an example of the sentimentality in the story.

"She won't see the bandages," he muttered, "guess I'm alright now."
"God," he prayed, "I've never been much good to anyone, but please grant me this. Let me be on time for my cue--amen."

He stepped carefully into the sleeping girl's room and coughed slightly. With a start the little swollen eyelids flickered open. For a moment a puzzled frown mantled her brow, then in gladdened tones she cried out.

"My Prince! I knew you'd come. I knew you'd come."

Silently and tenderly Dad gathered the little wasted body in his arms, where she nestled contentedly, then with a gentle sigh and a wistful smile, she dropped off into that soft sleep from which there is but one awakening.

The Humorous Treatment

William Thrall and Addison Hibbard in A Handbook to Literature define wit and humor as follows:

... the "swift play and flash of mind," and is expressed in skillful phraseology,

40. Ibid., p. 46.
plays upon words, surprising contrasts, paradoxes, epigrams, comparisons. . . . Humor implies a sympathetic recognition of human values and deals with the foibles and incongruities of human nature, good-naturedly exhibited.41

The humorous treatment is evidenced in a number of ways, being manifested in the way that a thing is written, about whom and what it is said, and with what viewpoint it is set down. The humorous treatment, as I refer to it here, is confined to sympathetic humor only. Satire and unsympathetic humor have no place in this section.

The humorous treatment is evidenced in Mormon fiction in some of the following ways: (1) by a happy and often-times surprising ending; (2) by a conflict which progresses in a pleasant way to a satisfactory conclusion; (3) in eccentric or discomfited characters placed in incongruous situations; (4) in clever, light criticism or comment in regard to human traits of character that are universal (We all like to laugh at ourselves on occasions); (5) by a style of expression that is light, brisk, gay, and clever.

The humorous treatment appears quite regularly in Mormon periodicals of the period of this study. This is in direct contrast to conditions that prevailed prior to 1900, when only one truly humorous story was found in Mormon fiction.42

42. Goan Clark, op. cit., p. 60.
Out of the many stories of Mormon authorship (Continued)
A slightly larger number of humorous stories are found in Mormon periodicals since 1920 than before that time. The rate of change is small, but it indicates a slight growth in humorous fiction through the years.43

The Happy Ending and the Pleasant Conflict

A story that is typical of other stories having a happy ending and a pleasant conflict is "Jason's Revenge"44 by Albert R. Lyman. It also provides the reader with sympathetic insight into some of the universal traits of humanity.

Jason Black, a poor cowhand, is beaten out in a contest with Budd Park for Ophelia Berg. Bashful Jason is no match for bold, dashing Budd, and so he voluntarily withdraws from the contest and goes to the range.

But Ophelia, liking Jason, writes him a note inviting him to call to see her. Budd intercepts the note and, instead of delivering it to Jason, keeps it. One day Jason accidentally discovers Ophelia's letter among Budd's things. When Jason confronts him with the accusation that he has stolen the letter, Budd admits his guilt and asks to be

42. (Continued) that I have read I have found but one strictly humorous tale. It has the didactic quality also, but this is intermixed with the humor until we cannot separate the two.

43. Approximately 3.5 percent of the stories appearing before 1920 are humorous. This percentage has increased to 6.5 percent in stories written since 1920.

44. Albert R. Lyman, "Jason's Revenge," The Improvement Era vol. 9, (September, 1906), p. 357.
forgiven. Jason agrees to forgive him on condition that he mend his ways, start attending church regularly, read a number of good religious books, and participate in the activities of the church.

Budd lives up to his promise. And, as a result, he becomes a good, clean-living man. Ophelia marries Budd, and Jason finds a good girl for a wife.

"Jason's Revenge" and other stories like it give sympathetic insight into life and present glimpses of incidents in life that prompt smiles of understanding. Such stories do not invite laughter, for they are not "slapstick" comedy. Rather, they are designed to cultivate understanding and sympathy in the reader in regard to his fellowmen.

The Eccentric Character and the Clever Style

"An Adventure in the Life of Mr. Horatio Algernon Hardcastle, Burglar,"45 by Everett Spring is representative of Mormon stories having eccentric and unusual characters, and of stories told in a clever, light, gay manner. It is also representative of humorous stories having surprise endings.

The opening paragraphs of the story offer an example

of the style in which the story is told: bright, clever, smile-inviting, with a touch of irony in it. There is little doubt in the reader's mind after the first paragraph as to where "a salubrious part of the country for a couple of years, all expenses paid" is. And before the reader has progressed far into the story, he, with a smile, becomes aware of the nature of Mr. Hardcastle's vocation.

Mr. Horatio Algernon Hardcastle, more intimately known as "Hardy," was by nature both methodical and industrious, yet there was something lacking in his makeup.

A touch of genius, a little of originality, and he might have gone far—might even—who shall say? have climbed to the slippery heights of company promotion. But the unkind fates ordained otherwise. Partly by force of circumstances, partly from preference, he had in early life adopted the same line of business as his father before him. He used the same tools, the same cautious though antiquated methods, and at times met with similar reverses.

The last of these had resulted in an enforced residence in a salubrious part of the country for a couple of years, all expenses paid.

He left that pleasant and healthy retreat on a bright day, shaking the dust from his shoes, metaphorically speaking, as he passed the entrance gates. 46

Following his release from prison, Mr. Hardcastle pursues his old vocation as energetically as ever. He picks out a particular house inhabited by two wealthy ladies and proceeds to burglarize it.

46. Ibid.
To Mr. Hardcastle's chagrin, a man, whom he takes to be a member of the household, enters and interrupts him. The man, whose name is Woodward, takes Mr. Hardcastle's spoils away from him, lectures to him on the value of honesty in every phase of life, and, giving him twenty dollars, dismisses him.

Mr. Hardcastle thanks Mr. Woodward and scurries from the house. After he has gone, Mr. Woodward sets to work.

A quarter of an hour later the lamp in the room was extinguished, and Mr. Woodward, suitcase in hand, also emerged from the window. It seemed heavy, and avoiding the gravel drive, he trod softly and delicately on the bordering turf.

"A clumsy fool," said he, "a very clumsy fool—amateurish to a degree; but what I really wonder is, who does the house belong to?"

He turned out of the gate, lit a third cigarette (A characteristic of his kind—Editor) and strolled nonchalantly on his way, whistling a gay little tune.47

The ending surprises the reader, for Mr. Woodward does not, on first acquaintance, appear to be a thief. Mr. Woodward has thoroughly outwitted Mr. Hardcastle, and he has done it so expertly that he makes the other thief seem a fool.

The humor of the story rests on Mr. Hardcastle's self-assurance and the ease with which Mr. Woodward outwits him. Mr. Woodward's suavity contrasted with Mr. Hardcastle's artlessness invites smiles and laughter.

47. Ibid., p. 812.
The Humor in Living

There is a smile for the reader in such stories as "A Sheet of Music" by Anne Spencer Warner. "A Sheet of Music" presents a glimpse of some of the smile-prompting situations to be found in everyday life. It is humorous for the reason that it lays bare human characteristics that are universal through all time. The expertness with which Freda, the wife, maneuvers her husband is unique and praiseworthy.

Freda and Bill's marriage is not the great adventure they had dreamed it would be, for they never get to spend any time at home together. Freda, in an effort to solve their problem, buys some popular songs and places them on the piano. She knows that Bill likes to sing.

Bill comes home, finds the music, and begins to sing. He leaves home with reluctance that night. Freda, noting his interest in the music, is gratified and pleased. She reasons that now she has found the solution to their problem.

The Realistic Treatment

Although realistic tendencies are present in the Mormon fiction of the years 1900 to 1945, few Mormon stories can be said to be entirely realistic. Realistic characteristics, however, become slightly more numerous in stories after

1920 than before that time.\textsuperscript{49}

Realism may be defined as:

A manner and method of literary composition by which the author makes a definite effort to present actuality as he perceives it, untouched by idealism or romantic coloring. Usually realism is considered simply as a manner of writing, a manner relying very largely on the use of infinite detail, honestly and truthfully interpreting life, and as free as possible from subjective writing and prejudices. It has been called the "truthful treatment of material" by one realist. . . . It is opposed to romance, which is concerned with the bizarre and heroic in that it is "simple, natural, and honest" . . . realism should be psychological in its approach to character.

. . . All one need grant the realist is license to go farther afield for his details than the pleasant meadow in which the romantic picks daisies.\textsuperscript{50}

Realism in the Mormon fiction of this study manifests itself in a number of different ways. The fact that a story ends unhappily may be an evidence of the realistic treatment, as may the "usual" rather than the "unusual" in settings and characters. Psychological insight into a character's thoughts, a pessimistic attitude toward life, and a critical approach to mankind and his institutions are other realistic tendencies that can be identified in the Mormon fiction of this study.

\textsuperscript{49} Eleven out of 256 stories written before 1920 seem to contain realistic characteristics. Twenty-one out of 350 stories written after 1920 contain realism. Some 4.3 percent of the stories written before 1920 contain realism; 5.8 percent of the stories written after 1920 are realistic.

\textsuperscript{50} William Thrall and Addison Hibbard, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 357.
The Unhappy Ending

The mere fact that a story ends unhappily is not, of course, certain evidence that it presents a realistic treatment. Many sentimental stories end on an unhappy note, as do a number of romantic stories. But an unhappy ending that is free of false emotional coloring and is set forth accurately and in only the barest details can be said to have realistic tendencies.

A sentimental story elaborates over an unhappy incident and a romantic story colors over unsavory details. But a realistic story presents the facts without attempting to interpret or to enlarge upon them. The hero dies amid a flood of noble words and tears in a sentimental story; he dies without undue pageantry, ostentation, and show in a story that is realistic.

"Driftwood"51 by Barbara Miller is a typical sentimental story with an unhappy ending. A youthful criminal has drifted back to his boyhood home, and now that he is nearly there, he discovers that he does not have the courage to go on. Instead of going to his old home, he sends his hobo companion to ask for food.

The criminal's companion recognizes the youth as a man who is wanted by the police, but he refrains from betraying him after he sees the boy's mother and notes her kindness.

The two men continue their wanderings in opposite directions.

Such a story is surcharged with emotion and sentiment. What appears at first sight to be a realistic story about a boy who has gone wrong, turns into a recital of a sentiment-saturated deed of kindness on the part of a hardened wanderer whose heart has been touched by a woman's kindness. Memories of home and mother fill both men. Their hearts are heavy as they trudge on.

In contrast to this type of unhappy ending, "Vengeance Is Mine"52 by Orville S. Johnson ends unhappily, but without undue elaboration or excessive sentiment. It is a story of a white man who insists on avenging the deaths of some white people by killing a few Indians. In the fight that follows, the white man is killed and the Indians escape.

Some realistic elements are visible in a story entitled "The Gale Girls"53 by Annie Pike Greenwood, even though the story ends on a romantically hopeful note. "The Gale Girls" is the story of what becomes of the three Gale sisters--Fanny, Lurania, and Addie.

Addie, the beauty of the family, marries a drunkard, whom she supports for years until he dies. Lurania, the plain sister, marries a man for his money and is unhappy.

Fanny achieves fame as an actress, but finds life empty and pointless.

The greatest failure of the three girls is picked-on Lurania, whom the author in the early chapters of the story has pictured as a perfect Cinderella type and who logically should have been the sister who finds happiness and success. But she most unromantically marries a man for his money and is very unhappy.

The author of course, arranges it so that the story ends on the conventionalized happy note: Lurania and Addie go into the catering business together, and Fanny retires from the stage and marries her faithful lover.

The story is significant, however, for the fact that the three girls do not find life a golden-hued adventure, nor are their struggles magnified to make them into martyrs and heroines. They find, instead, that life is very real and not always a brave and gallant adventure. To this extent, it is realistic.

**Pessimism and Psychology**

Pessimism, of course, may be found in connection with the romantic and sentimental treatments, but a dark and hopeless outlook upon life many times is associated with the realistic treatment. Psychological penetration into the thinking and feelings of a character very often is an evidence of realism, for it is the sign of an attempt to
interpret that character as an individual rather than as a type.

Expressions of deep pessimism and an example of psychological probing into character are observable in the story, "Beckoning Roads" by Dorothy Clapp Robinson. Romantic elements are present in the story, of course, as in all Mormon stories.

"Beckoning Roads" is the story of Nancy and Pete, who are engaged to be married as the story opens, but who are married only after each has faced the world alone and has come to know that they are meant for each other. Because he does not feel that he is able financially to support a wife, Pete refuses to get married. Nancy, angry and hurt, gets a job and begins to go with other men.

The death of her father calls Nancy home. And here she resumes the old relationship with Pete, eventually coming to see that he is the one she loves. Pete, recognizing that postponement of their marriage was a mistake, finally feels confident enough to venture into marriage.

A good deal of pessimism fills this depression-time story. This pessimistic feeling and thought is evidenced in such descriptions as the following of Nancy's poverty-stricken home:

Although twilight was kind to it, the house, like Nancy's old sweater, was faded to an indeterminate color. It had been built with the idea of building on next year, or the next at the most. The addition had materialized into an abortive lean-to that hugged the length of the original two rooms. The yard was bare, but against the house clumps of phlox were beginning to show signs of life. Trees, to the west of the house, refused to change the drab color scheme. They had been set out when the place was new, but discouraged by the lack of water, they had stopped growing and now their only excuse for being was to hold the ends of a clothes-line in place. 55

Nancy's rebellious, ambitious brother, Dale, voices his pessimism and his critical attitude toward life. He speaks bitterly to Nancy's invalid father in these words:

"What do you expect me to do? You could take up a homestead. Even Pete was lucky enough to buy a relinquishment. But what can I do?" His voice rose to an irritating tension. "Just what can I do? I can't go to school. I can't get work and if I stay on this lousy dusted until kingdom come I'll never clear enough to make a payment on a real place.

"My future," he spread his arms in a condemnatory gesture--"This, and reading the same book over and over to keep from going cuckoo. Even a radio that won't work. Unless," his voice turned nasty, "I get married and have a bunch of kids to break the monotony. I'm glad Pete has nerve enough to not do it." 56

Nancy, filled with doubts as to which man to marry, is in an automobile accident. The author's description of her feelings and thoughts are an attempt at psychological

55. Ibid., p. 142.
56. Ibid., p. 189.
probing into her mind and heart. These are realistic tendencies because they help to individualize her.

Ahead was the canal and a turn in the road. She should slow up. No use! Up the bank, careening wildly over the bridge and around the curve... on two wheels... Nancy was in a room with no windows and but one door. There was no air. She rushed through the door to find herself in a similar room but smaller and more stifling.

Panic-stricken, she rushed out into another and another, each one smaller and more stifling than the last. She threw up her arms for protection but the walls closed upon her. One hit her shoulder. Another was crushing her chest. Then from the suffocating intensity she heard voices. From far away someone said, "Hold it while we pull her out." Her chest was free, but the dark room was closing in again.57

Such realistic tendencies, while not numerous, are present in the Mormon fiction of this study. Not one story of the ones that I have read for this study can be said to be entirely and predominantly realistic. But the realism is there in certain stories in forms similar to those that I have pointed out.

The Juvenile Treatment

In spite of the fact that many children's stories present romantic, humorous, and didactic treatments, the majority of Mormon stories for children have a distinctive treatment that I designate as juvenile treatment. The

57. Ibid., p. 695.
chief distinguishing characteristic of this treatment is a concern for children and the activities and interests of children.

Stories employing this treatment are addressed to children of all ages. Simple language and the most superficial descriptions are contained in stories designed for young children. The language used and the plots of the stories become progressively more complex as the ages of the children for whom they are intended increase.

Stories presenting this treatment are light and rapid moving, containing much dialogue and action, and presenting simple, varied, and transparent plots. Stories having the juvenile treatment invariably have happy endings and are addressed to children. They are not written from an adult point of view, as were many early Mormon children's stories.

**Stories for Young Children**

"Mama's Scrubbing Cure" is representative of the stories addressed to small children. It reveals a special treatment in that the language employed is the simplest, the details are exaggerated for effect, and the plot is simple and easy to understand, for the details of the story are drawn from the life which a small child knows and understands.

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The story begins this way:

It was such a sweet little mouth! No one would ever dream that naughty words could come out of it. But somehow or other they did; and they kept coming faster and faster until Garry's poor mama was in despair. She had talked, and scolded and scolded, and even spanked, and not a single bit of good did it do.

Finally she hit upon a brand-new plan, and made up her mind that the very next time she heard her little boy say anything wrong she'd try it, and I'm sorry to say that she didn't have very long to wait; in fact, it was only until the next morning. He was out in the yard playing "horse" with Jimmy Burling. Suddenly mama saw him throw back his head, and heard him say something that made her feel just dreadful.59

Garry's mother, deciding that she must take some action at once to cure him of saying bad words, washes his mouth out with soap. Garry kicks and spits and sputters and afterward he sulks, but his favorite food at dinnertime convinces him that he is not so angry as he thought he was.

Garry remembers from this time on to avoid saying naughty words.60

59. Ibid.
60. "The Sale of David" by Frances Bent Dillingham, The Children's Friend vol. 12, (August, 1913), p. 423, is another representative story revealing the juvenile treatment. It is the story of Eliza, who becomes tired of tending her little brother, David, sells him for ten dollars to a kind lady, discovers that she misses him, and so goes back to the lady and begs to have him back. The kind lady gives David back, but she warns Eliza to never try to give away or to sell anything she loves—God's blessing to her.

The story, like "Mama's Scrubbing Cure," is written in the briefest, plainest, and simplest possible manner. The plot is superficial and obvious and the chief characters and the issues involved are of the age level of the children for whom the story is intended.
Stories for Older Children

Stories meant for older children have more complicated plot and action patterns than stories for young children. They are also told in larger and more mature words and sentences, and they are concerned with the actions and problems of older boys and girls. Many stories for older children are addressed quite definitely either to boys or to girls, but a considerable number of stories are meant for children of both sexes. A characteristic of all children's stories is the absence of sadness and brutality of any kind in the working out of their plots.

Ko-i Chito, the Indian Boy\(^6\) by Harrison R. Merrill is representative of stories having the juvenile treatment and meant for older children. It also is an example of a story addressed to Mormon boys.

Ko-i Chito, an Indian boy, receives the claws of Nita the bear, the tail of a fox, and a colorful bow to symbolize his near approach to manhood. Carrying these gifts, he leaves his lodge to hunt, is captured by an enemy warrior, and in time is adopted into the enemy tribe.

But though his captors are good to him, Ko-i Chito does not forget his own people, and when the opportunity presents itself, he runs away. After undergoing a number of experiences and hardships, Ko-i Chito, now developed

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into a courageous Indian warrior, returns to his people.

A passage illustrating the point of view from which the story is told follows.

After supper Ko-i Chito lay on a skin by the fire and with his hands under his head watched the stars peek their way through the mysterious sky. He wondered if one of them might be Ko-i Chito, his own father, and -- his mother, both of whom had long ago gone to the happy hunting grounds. He wondered if they knew and cared about him. 62

The language employed in the story is simple, yet it is not so simple as that used in "Mama's Scrubbing Cure." Brutality and bloodshed do not have a place in the story, and the plot is simple and readily understandable. The story, like other stories having the juvenile treatment, relies principally upon action. The story ends happily, of course.

Conclusions

As a summation of the points I have made in this chapter, I list the following conclusions:

1. The didactic treatment is the treatment most often encountered in the fiction of the period.

2. Rivaling the didactic treatment and oftentimes found in conjunction with it, the romantic treatment is prominent.

3. The sentimental treatment is encountered in a

62. Ibid., p. 69.
number of Mormon stories. Of significance is the fact that a smaller percentage of stories since 1920 reveal evidences of the sentimental treatment than before that time.

4. The humorous treatment is represented in Mormon periodical fiction and seems to be making certain small advances.

5. Realistic tendencies are visible in the fiction studied.

6. Children's stories are written from the viewpoint of the children to whom they are addressed and are designed for children of every age level.
CHAPTER V

THE LITERARY TYPES REPRESENTED IN MORMON FICTION

Within the Mormon fiction of the years 1900 to 1945, two chief literary types are represented: (1) single issue stories; and (2) continued stories. Single issue stories appear in one issue of a periodical and are told completely in that one issue. Continued stories are told in several numbers of a periodical and are divided into chapters or installments.

Single Issue Stories

Mormon periodicals between 1900 and 1945 contain numerous examples of the following kinds of single issue stories: prose tales, short stories, short short stories, and allegories. Almost every Mormon story of one issue in length can be classified as one of the above types.

Definitions of the prose tale, the short story, the short short story, and the allegory abound and examples of them are numerous. It is a part of my purpose in this

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study to measure typical Mormon single issue stories along-
side definitions of the different literary types.

It is well to remember, however, that the forms of
short fiction are not fixed and rigid. They are constantly
shifting and changing, and no two stories are ever exactly
the same in nature. Purpose and theme, treatment and
author, all combine to give each story a distinctive indi-
viduality of its own.1

The Prose Tale

The literary type designated as the prose tale is repre-
sented in large numbers in the Mormon periodicals of the
period.

Benjamin A. Heydrick defines the prose tale in this
way:

The tale is a form of story in which no one
element greatly predominates. As compared with
the short story, it loses in definiteness, but
it gains in breadth. It must not be inferred
that the tale is a form of art inferior to the
short story, it is merely a different form.2

Clayton Hamilton in A Manual of the Art of Fiction
has the following to say about the prose tale:

But it must be admitted frankly that brief
tales have always existed, and still continue
to exist . . . Professor Baldwin, after a care-
ful examination of the hundred tales in

2. Benjamin A. Heydrick, ed., Types of the Short Story,
Boccaccio's "Decameron," concluded that only two of them were short-stories in the modern critical sense, and that only three others approached the totality of impression that depends on conscious unity of form. If we should select at random a hundred brief tales from the best contemporary magazines, we should find, of course, that a larger proportion of them would fulfill the definition; but it is almost certain that the majority of them would still be stories that merely happen to be short, instead of true short-stories in the modern critical sense. Yet these brief fictions . . . are none the less estimable in content, and sometimes present a wider view of life than could be encompassed within the rigid limits of a technical short-story.3

The tale, then, is a story form that is lacking in unity of impression and is not constructed according to definite pre-outlined specifications as the short story is. It is simply a story written for the purpose of what it has to say without special concern for the manner in which it says it.

The chief distinguishing characteristics of the tale are these: (1) It fails to give unity, totality of impression to the reader; (2) it is rambling and episodic in construction; (3) it lacks planning in organization and structure; (4) it fails to bind action and characterization together into a unity.

A considerable number of Mormon stories can be said to be or to approach to be prose tales, for many of them lack or are weak in the coherence and unity of impression that

are the chief distinguishing characteristics of the short story. A good many Mormon stories give multiple impressions rather than a single impression to their readers, for most Mormon stories aim, first, to teach; second, to entertain.

A representative prose tale in Mormon periodicals is "The Greatest Victory" by Willard Done. Before identifying its characteristics as a prose tale, I should perhaps suggest what the story is about.

"The Greatest Victory" is the story of two men, Hugh Elwood and Edgar Belnap, rivals for the love of beautiful Edith Gresham. The issue of Mormonism is involved in this love triangle, as Hugh Elwood, for political reasons, is the avowed enemy of the Mormon elders laboring in the vicinity. Edgar Belnap, on the other hand, believes in their teachings and is their most vigorous defender.

Hugh Elwood wins the coveted judgeship toward which he has been working for many years. But Edgar Belnap gains the heart and hand of lovely Edith Gresham, and together they accept the Mormon religion.

To the onlooker, Hugh Elwood appears to have everything that life can possibly offer. He knows differently, however; the love of the girl he wants can never be his, and, almost involuntarily, he recognizes that Mormonism

is a true religion in which he will never be able to share because his political success rests largely upon his opposition to Mormonism.

Worldly success belongs to Hugh Elwood, but he is right when he terms Edgar Belnap's "the greatest victory."

**Multiplicity of Impressions and Disunity**

The following diverging issues are involved in "The Greatest Victory": a defense of Mormonism; a criticism of political corruption; measurement of the integrity of the individual; the question of what constitutes happiness; a struggle for the love of a beautiful girl.

With such a large number of important issues with which to contend, it is small wonder that the author fails to achieve the singleness of effect requisite to the literary type, the short story. The result is a loosely woven story in which a unifying element is weak or is entirely lacking. As a consequence, portions of the story are episodic, and digressions from the thread of the story for the purpose of teaching are numerous.

The following speech by Edith Gresham is typical of the didactic insertions that are made into the story at different times:

She told of the noble lives and exalted teachings of the abused elders; of the risks assumed by their defender. She asked for justice on their behalf and his. "And I, Judge Elwood," she said, stepping to Belnap's side, "proclaim myself a convert to their
faith. Though friends desert me and fortune fail me, and calumny follow me as it has followed them, here and now I accept the gospel of our Lord, and agree to abide the results. To this man, the brave defender of the faith and its advocates, I publicly pledge my love and loyalty."

Another representative prose tale in the periodical fiction of the Mormon people is a story entitled "The Coat of Mail" by Ida Stewart Peay. This is the story of a young man going East to school and of an old Mormon doctor who warns the boy, his future son-in-law, that he must wear a moral "coat of mail" while living in the East in order to escape the evils of the people of the world. The boy, figuratively speaking, wears a "coat of mail" and returns home as clean morally as when he left it.

This story, like "The Greatest Victory," is a prose tale rather than a short story because it is not a unified story. The "what" and the "why" of the story overshadow the "how" of it. The passage that follows is an example of the lengthy didactic speech, a form of digression, that helps to mar the unity of "The Coat of Mail."

"Yes, my boy," reiterated the gentleman, "a coat of mail that will not permit anything or anybody to break down your habits of life or your ideals or standards... You see, it is this way, east in the big colleges they don't seem to have the same standard of manhood that our schools uphold. There, if a man is bright, honest, and ambitious, he is considered available for the highest honors, no matter what his personal indulgences may be, provided he

5. Ibid., p. 508
doesn't carry them to excess . . ."6

A story by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll entitled "The Crucial Test"7 is yet another example of the prose tale, the literary type that is most abundant in Mormon periodicals of the period. "The Crucial Test," like the two stories previously referred to, contains lengthy digressions from the main portion of the story.8

Rambling Structure

"The Greatest Victory" and the other stories to which I have referred in the previous paragraphs of this chapter do not follow the methodical and orderly plan of construction that distinguishes short stories as literary creations.

8. "The Crucial Test" is the story of a Mormon student named Philip, studying in the East, who meets and falls in love with a non-Mormon girl named Margaret, daughter of a prominent writer. Philip proceeds to give Margaret a glimpse of the doctrines of the Mormon Church under a disguised form, and the girl readily grasps at his teachings as truths.

But when she discovers that he has been teaching Mormonism to her, she demands that he choose between his church and her. Philip chooses to stay true to his Mormon beliefs, and Margaret, loving him and knowing that Mormonism is true, chooses to marry him.

A lengthy digression in the story occurs at the time Philip takes Margaret to his church and lets her know that he is a Mormon. The church services are described in considerable detail.

For example, the services begin with the singing of "O My Father.", The speaker prefaced and illustrated his remarks with excerpts from Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality," Nephi Anderson's Added Upon, and a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox entitled "A Girl's Faith." The texts of the song, the poems, and the story are given word for word.
As a result, they seem to wander.

For example, "The Greatest Victory" devotes considerable space and time to describing and discussing the Mormon missionaries and their problems, shifts to Hugh Elwood and his political dishonorableness, elaborates on Edgar Belnap's superiority as a man, then is concerned with Edith Gresham and her problem of which man to choose to marry. The first portions of the story seem to be concerned in the main with the problem of political graft and corruption; in the closing sections the emphasis is upon the issue of Mormonism and the missionary cause.

A large number of Mormon stories lack in complete singleness of effect and show signs of digressions and episodic, ununified structure. Practically all single issue stories in Mormon periodicals of the period would be classified as prose tales rather than as short stories were I to stipulate that every short story must possess complete unity of impression. I prefer, however, to place only the stories that are extremely disconnected and rambling in structure in the division classified as the prose tale. I classify the stories having minor digressions and a small lack of unity as short stories, along with a certain small percentage of stories that seem to achieve real unity.

The Short Story

Edgar Allan Poe specified that the short story must be
a literary creation fashioned with care and designed to achieve a unified, preconceived effect. Every word, he said, should contribute to the final effect, giving, in the final result, a singleness of impression.9

James Dow McCallum offers this definition of what a short story is:

We may say that characteristically the short story is an imaginative narrative consisting of a series of incidents drawn from one situation and creating upon the reader a singleness of effect. We may say further that these incidents are so arranged as to show the action progressing through a climax to a denouement as the result of the interplay of opposing forces upon each other, this interplay springing from qualities of character inherent and natural to the participants.10

The ideas expressed above and other definitions of the short story as a literary type emphasize the following points:

1. The short story gives unity of impression.

2. It traces the action from the beginning of the

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In 1842 in reviewing Nathaniel Hawthorne's tales in Graham's Magazine, Poe enunciated for the first time the principles which he himself observed in his short story writing—closely woven plot, extreme concentration of details, definite unity of action, and, above all other considerations, singleness of effect. Today these principles have gained such common acceptance that they are studiously observed by the writers of short stories in all modern languages.

story, through a climax, to a satisfactory conclusion.

3. The characters in the story act consistently with their personalities and backgrounds.

4. The short story reveals a conscious attempt to fashion an artistic thing.

"Clipped Wings"\(^{11}\) by Florence Hartman Townsend is representative of the short stories found in Mormon periodicals of the period. It tells the story of Walter and Marta, who are married and live on a farm. Marta is content to stay on the farm, but Walter longs to fly, as he did before he was married.

Because he knows that Marta does not want him to fly, Walter begins to fly in secret. She, aware that he is flying, decides that she will conquer her fear of the air and learn to be a pilot herself. She realizes that the preservation of their marriage depends upon their getting a common interest.

At last the day comes that Marta lets her husband know that she too has learned to fly. Walter, shocked and shamed, recognizes what a good companion and helpmate that Marta is. He makes up his mind to give up flying, realizing at last that he can surrender some of his desires to help out their marriage just as well as Marta can.

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Singleness of Effect and Unity

"Clipped Wings" achieves a considerable amount of singleness of effect. The sole subject of the story is the problem of the preservation of a marriage. Almost every word, character, and idea is related to this single, dominating subject.

Digressions from the story for didactic purposes are reduced considerably over the number found in stories such as "The Greatest Victory." The lengthy didactic speech has been replaced by an implied form of didacticism, this circumstance contributing substantially to the unity of the story.

The structure of the story does not seem to be rambling or episodic. Event follows event, each emerging logically out of the previous one, until the story arrives at a climax—Walter's discovery that Marta is enough in love with him to seek to learn to fly in order to preserve their marriage. A denouement in which the leading characters all achieve happiness follows the climax.

Keeping the subject and the purpose of the story in mind, the author proceeds to relate how Marta decides to learn to fly because she knows that Walter is flying secretly and because she is anxious for their marriage to be a success. Because neither Marta nor Walter share their secrets with each other, relations between them are strained for a time. Then Walter finds out the truth.
Because Marta has been such a courageous and lovable wife, Walter, recognizing her great love, decides to show his affection for her by abandoning his flying.

Actions Emerging out of Character

"Clipped Wings" presents some psychological insight into character, and, as a result, the events in the story seem to emerge logically out of the characters' personalities and the interplay of these personalities. It is, in this respect, unlike a majority of Mormon short stories. Superficiality in characterization seems to me to be one of the principal weaknesses of Mormon stories of the period.

The following passage illustrates some of the insight into character given in "Clipped Wings." It is a narrative, objective approach to character, true, but it is an attempt, and a fairly successful one, to explore the thinking and feeling processes of the characters in the story.12 This passage describes the thoughts of Walter and Marta during the time that Marta is secretly learning to fly and Walter is flying in secret each day.

And each was more than a little hurt and withdrawn, and trying not to show it. Walter reasoned that Marta knew about the flights and if she would show the faintest interest he would gladly make a clean breast of it, but, so long as she acted like this—. And wasn't she doing even worse, running away

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three times a week, he knew not where? And if she were doing it just to get even, why then maybe they were even at that.

Marta reasoned that Walter knew she took the car and spent every other afternoon away from home, and if he weren't so wrapped up in his own selfish pleasures and interests he would ask her where she went and she would gladly tell him, but since he pretended not to notice and didn't so much as mention it, why--13

On the other hand, "The Greatest Victory," representative of many Mormon stories, makes little or no attempt to explore a character's feeling and thoughts. Its author simply records the exteriors of the appearance and conduct of his characters.

The sentences that follow comprise an attempt to reveal the feelings and thoughts of a character in "The Greatest Victory." Hugh Elwood has just asked Edith Gresham to marry him, and she has told him "No." The approach to a description of Elwood's incredulity and surprise is from "without" rather than from "within." Elwood's actions, not his feelings, are described.

To his astonishment she kindly, but firmly rejected his offer, telling him that prospects or the lack of them would make little difference in the case of true love.

In his surprise and disappointment he lost all self-confidence. He trembled with emotion. "May I not hope?" he pleaded. "Is there someone else?"

Before she could reply, her father came on the porch, and Edith made a frank statement of the situation. He took his daughter's hand

and gently led her toward the door. 14

A Conscious Literary Form

There is evidence that stories such as "Clipped Wings" possess conscious literary forms. Stories like these, a minority in Mormon periodicals, reveal the unity, coherence, orderliness, and artistry that are characteristic of the short story literary type.

Stories written in the manner of "Clipped Wings" are not just stories that picture several events and a number of characters for the purpose of teaching a moral lesson or of demonstrating the truths of Mormonism while relegating the story-telling function to a position of secondary importance. They follow a definite plan in their telling, are artistic creations, are written to please and to impress the reader. 15

15. Another story that is representative of the short story literary type is "Lilac Lure" by Lella Marler Hoggan, The Improvement Era vol. 20, (April, 1933), p. 207.

This is the story of a woman named Margaret who loves Philip Norton, the sweetheart of her youth who is now a blind widower. The opportunity is Margaret's of marrying a wealthy man, but because she still loves Philip Norton, she refuses all offers of marriage and makes every attempt to help Philip, endeavoring to keep her identity a secret.

As if by a miracle, Philip regains his lost sight, and Margaret then willingly consents to be his wife.

The story is noteworthy for its unity of effect and artistic excellence. Digressions from the story are rare. The single message presented in the story is this: Choose your companion in marriage for love rather than for money.
I regard it as significant that stories that can be termed truly short stories are more numerous in late issues of Mormon periodicals than in early issues.16

The Short Short Story

After about 1935 the literary form known as the short short story made its appearance in Mormon periodicals. The short short story is really nothing more than a lengthened anecdote, consisting of not much more than a simple plot and containing little or no attempt at characterization.

Short short stories have been popular and are popular in Mormon periodicals for the reason that they are convenient devices for presenting moral lessons in a few words and within a small amount of space.

James Dow McCallum has this to say about the short short story:

In recent years, the so-called short short stories have become popular. These "short shorts" are twenty-five hundred words at the most; usually they are shorter—and usually they are without any distinction whatever. Nine out of ten are merely elaborated anecdotes that depend for their effectiveness on a surprise ending. Handicapped by the space limit, the author can merely outline a plot, and plot alone seldom results in a powerful story.17

16. Out of 225 stories written before 1920, thirty-eight (or twelve percent) seem to possess the characteristics of the short story. On the other hand, 143 out of 322 stories written since 1920 (about forty-four percent) seem to possess the qualities of the short story.

A typical short short story is "Grandma's Boy"\textsuperscript{18} by Marjorie Griffith. "Grandma's Boy" has a bare and simple plot and covers a brief span of time, thus achieving considerable singleness of effect. It, like a majority of short short stories, has a surprise ending, a device that has become attached to the short short story probably for the reason that some "lift" is needed to put across a plot of such extreme brevity. And like most other short short stories, it contains little or no attempt at characterization.

The story is about a boy named Freddy whose grandmother insists on managing his life. Freddy, however, begins to feel rebellious. He determines to decide for himself what secretary to hire and what girl to marry.

Grandma, nevertheless, insists that she be allowed to select Freddy's secretary. And it is upon these provisions that she agrees to furnish his law office for him.

Grandma has her way all right. She chooses Freddy's secretary—a girl who must be pretty, capable, and engaged. But she unwittingly chooses the one girl Freddy wants her to. Grandma finds one girl who is pretty, capable, and engaged. But what she does not know is that the girl is Freddy's fiance.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} Marjorie Griffith, "Grandma's Boy," \textit{The Improvement Era} vol. 40, (June, 1937), p. 357.

\textsuperscript{19} The surprise ending is much in evidence in "Grandma's Boy." The author does not reveal that the girl who is hired is Freddy's fiance until the last sentence in the

(Continued)
The Allegory

The literary form known as the allegory is represented in the Mormon periodicals of the period. By the term, allegory, I mean stories that seek to put across a message or thought by means of the personification of abstract qualities such as John Bunyan did in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. 20

Mormon allegories are extremely transparent and readily understandable. Their messages are simple and easy to grasp. The characters and settings in these allegories invariably possess designations resembling Bunyan's Giant-Despair, Help, Faithful, Faint-Heart.

"Rumalcowiskeyhole" 21 by Annie D. Palmer is a representative Mormon allegory. The title, a compounding of "rum," "alcohol," and "whiskey," has an allegorical significance.

The allegory, which is an attack upon the evils of

19. (Continued) story. The story concludes in this way:

She (Grandma) wouldn't have beamed so much if she'd known everything. In fact, Joan was the last person she would have hired.

Joan was engaged all right. But she was engaged to Freddy.

Ibid.


The New Century Dictionary defines allegory in this way: Figurative treatment of one subject under the guise of another; a presentation of an abstract or spiritual meaning under concrete or material forms; a symbolic narrative.

drink, begins with these words:

Rumalcowhiskeyhol was the fiercest and most powerful of all the monsters. With a glance of his evil eye he could cause strong men to totter and even fall and wallow in the filth of the streets. With the heat of his fiery breath he could waste their substance and reduce to pauperism every soul dependent thereon. With the bellowing of his ghoulish voice he could strike terror into the hearts of brave men insomuch that they would drop their weapons nor attempt to defend their own. Nor was this all. Rumalcowhiskeyhol's back and dragon-tail were covered with shining scales that dazzled men's eyes; and if at any time the monster were hard pressed he had but to drop a scale in the way of his pursuers and immediately they left off fighting him to search in the mire for the glitter of the scale.22

All but the strongest and bravest men are powerless against this dreaded monster, the personification of the evil of drink. Morrion, the King's son, in an attempt to overcome Rumalcowhiskeyhol, is overcome. Many other men fall victim to the monster's might.

Then Landon, the lover of Isa, the King's daughter, volunteers to lead an army against Rumalcowhiskeyhol. Landon trains his army for many months, preparing his men to withstand the deceptive wiles of the evil one.23

22. Ibid.
23. First he had drilled the thought into their souls that they were always to look toward heaven when they came within range of the evil eye. Next he had trained them to close their lips and cover their nostrils against the fiery breath, and with heart and soul to sing their glad song of victory to drown the bellowing of the monster's voice. And against the lure of (Continued)
At last, when Landon and his armies are ready, they attack Rumalcowwhiskeyhol. Their preparations have been good, and on every hand they are overwhelmingly successful. Rumalcowwhiskeyhol is defeated and destroyed; Morrion and other captured warriors are freed. The kingdom rejoices. And amid the rejoicing, Landon and Isa are married.

**Story Cycles.**

It is characteristic of Mormon stories to appear in cycles or series. For instance, five or six stories may be written in the space of three or four years about a single character or group of characters. Usually such stories culminate in some such event as marriage or immediate success.

As examples of what I term story cycles, I point to the "Jed" and the "Cuthbert" stories. The "Jed" stories written by Ida Stewart Peay²⁴ tell the story of an orphan

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²³ (Continued) the shining scales they had been warned until every one of them knew that rather than stoop to pick one from the mire, he would suffer his strong right arm to hang stricken at his side.

--Ibid., p. 825.

²⁴ Stories in the "Jed" cycle are:


boy, Jed, who is a problem child until his teacher, Miss Amy Bleeson, motivates him to desire to attend school. Jed attends the Brigham Young Academy, makes an outstanding scholastic record, and in time becomes a member of the faculty. His happiness becomes complete when Miss Amy Bleeson consents to become his wife.

The "Cuthbert" stories by Estelle Webb Thomas are25 concerned with the humorous adventures of a Mormon "Henry Aldrich" named Cuthbert. Cuthbert's experiences are typical of those of any gawky adolescent.

**Continued Stories**

Represented in the Mormon periodical fiction of the years of this study are such types of continued stories as the following: (1) the novel; (2) the episodic adventure story, a story that is tied together by a single character and structurally is like a "picaresque" tale; (3) the "travel talk," a story that takes the reader on a journey and makes the incidents and the characters subordinate to the descriptions; (4) the frame story, a story form that

25. Stories in the "Cuthbert" series are:

makes use of a central situation to tell other stories.

The first-named group of stories is the most numerous type in Mormon periodical fiction.

The Novel

An approach to a definition of the novel is usually made by noting the ways in which the novel differs from the short story as a literary type.

The novel differs from the short story chiefly in scope. Since the novelist paints on a wider canvas, he is not compelled to compress as is the teller of tales. He may include forty or fifty characters (as did Dickens or Thackeray) whereas the short story-writer must confine himself to three or four; he may interweave major plot with three or four or five minor conflicts, whereas the story-teller does well to handle one line of interest subordinate to his major plot; he is not so limited by the matter of unities, since time and place may be much more freely expanded in the greater space at his command.

Two qualities of the novel, other than plot and characterization, must be cited. The novel is a form of fiction and as such it is imaginative. No matter how realistic the manner, how historical the material, the imaginative conceptions of the author are always woven, as woof or warp, on the background of truth to nature and truth to history and truth to life. Again, the novel is based on human experience.

The novel, then, aside from a few usual qualities such as plot, characterization, imagination, and portrayal of life, is too many-sided to be fixed in this sketch, or indeed, in any formula.

The Mormon periodical novel is a product of imagination and is based upon human experience. It is longer than the short story, presents a larger number of characters than the short story, weaves together a number of minor conflicts grouped around a major conflict, and is not so bounded by the limits of time and place as is the short story.

Many Mormon novels, however, are no more than lengthened versions of short stories, for essentially their plots are simple and the characters about whom the stories revolve are few—perhaps two or three in number.

An extreme to which a number of Mormon stories have gone is to relate a series of adventures about an individual, the leading character serving as the sole link to connect them. I prefer to discuss this type of continued story under another heading for the reason that these stories are quite numerous in Mormon periodicals and are of significance in this study.

Some of the characteristics of the Mormon novel are as follows: (1) didactic digressions in all but a small number of stories; (2) suspense-provoking chapter endings; (3) little complexity in plot, but events that are linked together by the principle of cause and effect; (4) shallowness in the development of character; (5) numerous and extravagant descriptions, particularly descriptions of
nature; (6) few characters.

Plot Construction

"On the Trails of Timpanogos"27 by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll is a representative novel of the period. It is the story of nature-loving Frances Fredericks who meets an Eastern engineer, Horace Ballard, converts him to the Mormon Church, and falls in love with him.

Complicating the plot is Frances' good friend, Gordon Creer, a talented young artist and a herder of sheep, who meets and falls in love with Horace Ballard's sister. A central incident in the story is concerned with a quarrel between a rough miner named Bill and Gordon Creer. Horace Ballard is drawn into the altercation after Bill burns Gordon's tent down and attempts to put the blame on Horace. When Horace Ballard accuses Bill of starting the fire, the treacherous miner shoots him, wounding him severely.

Involved in the story, as well, is Horace Ballard's conversion to the Mormon Church. As a result of his conversion, he and his Mormon-hating uncle quarrel bitterly. Horace's first antipathy toward the Mormons and the reason for his hatred of them are ties that help to link the story together. Horace's sister has joined the Mormon

Church a few years previous to the opening of the story and Horace has disowned her. Now the sister and the brother are happily reunited after Horace chooses to become a Mormon and marry Frances, and Edna, his sister, marries Gordon Creer.

Structurally, "On the Trails of Timpanogos" is a well-knit story. The main plot and the several minor plots are joined together by such ties as the brother-sister relationship and the Mormon issue. The events of the story seem to emerge out of one another, happening because of events that come before them.

By means of artificial mysteries, coincidences, and very obvious foreshadowings, the author arouses the reader's interest. For the most part, the story, like all other Mormon novels, is easy to understand. An example of the foreshadowing technique and the transparent nature of the plot is found in the mystery of Horace's extreme hatred for the Mormons and the secret of Edna's relationship to Horace. The reader begins to sense, long before any revelation is made of it, that Horace and Edna are brother and sister.

Edna says at one time:

"I was just wishing," Edna began, slowly, her voice, as well as her face filled with yearning and wistfulness, "that my brother was here. I feel sure that in a place like this he would--"

"You have a brother? How happy and glad you must be. Gordon Creer is the only brother I have ever known."
"I had a brother," Edna repeated remorsefully. "But—oh, some day I want you to know all about it. But I—I can't talk about it today." Again something in the girl's grey eyes sent a startled pang through Frances' heart, brought a vivid picture before her mind of a man sitting on a rock on the top of the mountain telling her about a little sister he had lost. Could it be? The girl caught her breath. But no, it was impossible.28

Didactic Digressions

Mormon novels characteristically are loose and rambling structurally. Digressions appear in practically every Mormon story.

"On the Trails of Timpanogos," like other Mormon novels of the period, contains didactic tendencies. An example of this is found in Frances' prayer, nothing more than a disguised form of moral preaching inserted into the story.

"Oh, God," she began, just as she might have spoken to her father. "How can I ever be mean, or selfish, or blue when I have all this? How can I care about Mary's silk dresses and Margaret's fine home and Dorothy's trips abroad? All those things seem so little and silly right now that I feel I would never care again; but I know I shall. Maybe it won't be tomorrow, nor this week, but I'm almost sure I can't stay full and happy, and contented with the big real things. Before I know it I'll be forgetting the sky, and the peaks and the flowers, and worrying about the dresses and hats and shoes I won't be able to have next winter when I go back to school."29

28. Ibid., p. 344.
29. Ibid., p. 660.
Suspense in Chapter Endings

Excellent examples of chapter endings designed to raise the interest of the reader to the highest possible point and to stimulate his appetite for next month's installment of the story can be observed in "On the Trails of Timpanogos."

Chapter One ends at the point that the crude miner, Bill—the villain of the story—is advancing upon Edna to attack her. Chapter Two closes at the moment Frances and Horace meet for the first time. Chapter Three ends at the time that Frances, alone on the Timpanogos glacier with Horace Ballard, has just informed him that she is a Mormon.

The following conversation brings Chapter Three to an end in an atmosphere of suspense.

He looked down at her in deepest scorn.
"A Mormon! By—. I'd like to strangle the whole bunch."
Frances stood up facing him, her eyes also flashing.
"And why, sir," she unflinchingly demanded, "would you like to do a thing like that?"
"Because," he fairly hissed, "A couple of their—- missionaries lured my sister from me into their rotten church."30

The passage below illustrates the method of concluding a chapter with a summary of the events that have occurred and a suggestion of what will happen in the next installments.

30. Ibid., p. 32.
At that very moment Frances was lying in her bed looking up at the stars with dry sleepless eyes wondering over and over why it should hurt her so much to find out that Horace Ballard was not what he seemed.

And down at the mining camp, in one tent miner Bill was gloating over the success of his plan, and how he had got even with the "gal" who had spurned him, the sheepherder who had kicked him, and the boss who had threatened to discharge him; while in a tent a few rods away "the boss" was walking restlessly up and down, wondering by turns how that match case came by Gordon Creer's tent.

None of them dreamed of the new character soon to appear in the little drama being enacted there on the trails of Timpanogos.31

Characterizations

Continued stories in Mormon periodicals contain few characters and reveal scant evidence of any probing beneath the outer surface of these characters. This is a characteristic of almost every novel I have read for this study. The stories seem to record only the exteriors of character.

As in the short stories, therefore, the events in a majority of Mormon novels seem to "just happen." An example of this is found in a long, rambling story by G. Milton Babcock entitled "Out of the World."32

A boat is slipping over a waterfall with the hero, Walter, aboard:

Little by little—inch by inch, it seemed—the craft bore to the south. The engine did

31. Ibid., p. 211.
not seem to be working smoothly. "Think we'll make it, Captain?" faltered Walter.

Sternly the order came in reply: "Put on life belts."

Ah! Resolutely the Captain swung the wheel to port, and the clumsy boat met the current prow on.

"Edith! We're going over the dam. Help! Help!" shrieked the woman. . .33

No insight whatsoever into character is shown in the description of the characters in the above incident. The exterior actions of the characters—the woman's cries of "Help! Help!" and the boy's inquiries of the captain—are the only glimpses into how they are reacting to their danger.

Furthermore, the incident from "Out of the World" does not seem to add anything to the development of character. Walter is substantially the same after the experience as he was before.

Although characterization in "On the Trails of Timpanogos" undoubtedly is more penetrating and effective than that shown in "Out of the World," the fact remains that in the former story it is extremely limited. The characters in "On the Trails of Timpanogos" lack in depth, and their personalities are simple and un lifelike. Either they are wholly good—as Frances, who loves nature because she detects God's presence in it—or entirely evil—like the evil-minded miner, Bill, who does everything that he ought not to do.

33. Ibid., p. 90
The motives prompting the characters to act seem to be elementary and simple. Revenge is Bill's motive; love prompts Frances; love of nature motivates Gordon.

Some attempt to make a character more complex is shown with regard to Frances. That she is not without weaknesses is demonstrated by this passage describing her fight against her baser impulses.

A half hour later Frances announced supper with outward calm, but inward turmoil; and later that night, she lay awake trying to convert her rebellious soul to that part of the old Mosaic law which commands, "Thou shalt not covet."34

*The Voice of the Intangible*35 by Albert R. Lyman, a continued story in *The Improvement Era* of 1912, 1913, and 1914, is a novel containing examples of good characterization, and, in particular, of psychological insight into character.

It, like most Mormon stories, is centered about a single character, a boy named Ben Roger, who learns to commune with nature and to love its voice—the voice of Deity speaking in the stillness. Ben's reactions to the voice of the solitude are told in passages that reveal the boy's heart and mind to the reader.

Besides the living, tangible things that moved and broke the silence in that faraway

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place—besides the bittern that cried at midnight . . . the great intangible something spoke in loud silence by day and by night. Its voice was louder still to ears that could hear no human voice . . . .

In the heated noon-day and the still midnight this Something spoke from "all around and all above." While Ben hunted faces in the crumbling embers of his evening fire or knelt reverently in his cave, he heard and felt the response without words. In the dark hours when he awoke and glanced at the shade of cliffs and trees around, he heard it still and sank peacefully to sleep by its soothing lullaby.36

Ben's fears, as well as his meditations and philosophic musings, give insight into his character. Ben, pursued throughout his lifetime by the threat of attack by a vengeful Indian, Soorowits, is at last confronted with the necessity either of killing Soorowits and forever regretting it or of not killing him and trusting to luck that the Indian will not find him.

Ben debates this problem back and forth, remembering the cowboy, Montana, who lives in fear because he has killed other men; recalling his father's words of advice and counsel; seeing, as in his dreams, Soorowits advancing, advancing.

And still he waited and listened as if in a trance—listened through the long moments it took those wild men to take a step—listened as if to the voices of eternity, with his finger on the trigger, the hammer raised, and the leaden contents of his rifle aimed with deadly precision at a human heart.

36. Ibid., p. 157.
The great Intangible Something of desert and mountain hovered over that gulch and spoke loud like a soul alarmed. It echoed the past—it echoed the words of lips stillled by death or by distance. In the tree-tops—behind him and around him a pleading sound:

"Oh my son! My son!"

"Oh kid, I done it! I done it! I can't fer-git it! I hear it in the winds of the night an' I'm weak as a woman." 37

Other Mormon novels reveal characteristics and techniques of construction similar to "On the Trails of Timpanogos and show evidences of characterization as various as the techniques revealed in "Out of the World" and The Voice of the Intangible.

Digressions for didactic purposes can be found in most novels, as can also plots that are transparent and uncomplicated. Most chapters in Mormon novels end on a high note of suspense and interest. Insight into character is limited in Mormon novels, but a certain amount of psychological probing is evidenced in them. 38

37. Ibid., p. 279.
38. "Fine Raiment" by Mary H. Woolsey, The Young Woman's Journal vol. 36, (January, 1925 to June, 1925), p. 7, is an example of a novel that presents a simple but unified plot and contains examples of didactic digressions and superficial characterizations.

It tells the story of three girls who choose to follow different paths in life. One girl lives a righteous life, marrying her childhood sweetheart and becoming a mother; another girl marries a man for his money and is unhappy; a third girl, denied opportunities for good times in her girlhood, sinks into sin and dies under tragic circumstances.

Involved in the story are the contributing problems of a robbery involving the families of two of the girls, a contest for popularity between two rival girls, and a love affair between the heroine and her sweetheart.

"The Merry-Go-Round" by Alice Morrey Bailey, The Relief Society Magazine vols. 28 and 29, (April, 1941 to February, (Continued)
The Episodic Tale

Consistently throughout the period of this study a certain number of continued stories in Mormon periodicals assume forms that are disconnected and lacking in unity. It is characteristic of a number of Mormon stories to assume something resembling the structure of a "picaresque" novel, a story joined together only by one or more characters who are involved in a number of otherwise unrelated episodes.

James Dow McCallum says this about such stories:

In general, there have been three types of unity in the novel; the unity of a series of related episodes; the unity of life; and the unity of action.

The first type of unity is sometimes called "picaresque" (from the Spanish pícaro, a rogue)

. . . An excellent example is the sixteenth century Spanish picaresque tale Lazarillo de Tormes. The story begins with an account of the birth and childhood of Lazarillo. Then comes the first episode, his service with a blind man. He runs away and enters the service of a priest. The priest throws him out of his house, and Lazarillo becomes a gentleman's servant . . . (He) in the seventh episode secures a government appointment, marries, and

38. (Continued) 1942), p. 235, contains examples of the psychological approach to characterization that is made in a few Mormon stories:

Alyn Fordyce tilted her violet hat over one violet eye and took stock of her possessions—gloves, crisp white linen handkerchief, and purse. Yes, she had everything, and she looked charming in the exclusive Mayone model suit. She could almost hear the envy in Bea McIntyre's voice: "Alyn, where in the world did you get that darling suit?"

-- Ibid.
lives happily over after.

It is clear that Lazarillo de Tormes has unity; all the episodes happen to one person. But they have no causal connection; one episode happens after the other, not because of it. Each episode precedes the next but it does not cause it. The episodes are beads, each separate, strung upon the thread of Lazarillo's life.59

Mormon writers do not and have not presumed to write about rogues, but they have made use of "picaresque" structure to relate stories about men and women who have made good in some endeavor. Mormon "episodic" stories relate the adventures of an individual, but, as in the "picaresque" novels, these adventures fail to cohere and to emerge out of one another. Quite often the only link joining the different adventures together is the chief character in the story.

A representative "episodic" story is The Castle Builder40 by Nephi Anderson. It is a didactic and rambling story, the incidents of which are joined together by the principal character, Harald. For entire pages at


Edwin Muir in The Structure of the Novel, New York City, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929, p. 37, has this to say about the picaresque novel:

The object of the picaresque novel is then to take a central figure through a succession of scenes, introduce a great number of characters, and thus build up a picture of society. There is an almost exact parallel to it in the young man who begins in poor circumstances and climbs vertically through all the social classes until he reaches the top.

a time, the author digresses from the thread of the story to teach moral lessons.

Harald, a poor Norwegian boy, goes to school, studies, and tries very hard to be a good boy. But it is difficult for him to advance, for his father is domineering and a poor provider, and class distinctions are quite marked in the community. Harald learns through bitter experience that the children who receive advancement and honor are wealthy children.

After he leaves school, Harald becomes a woodcutter, and later he joins the fishing fleet of his relatives in the North. A terrible experience in a storm on the wintry seas is a noteworthy experience in his life. Religiously, Harald grows through his associations with a friend and relative who later is frozen to death.

Following the visit of his sweetheart, Thora, to the Northland, Harald becomes convinced that he loves her. Another girl, a relative, has attracted his attentions, but now he loses all interest in her.

Structurally, The Castle Builder is an episodic account of Harald's experiences. Except for the fact that they concern Harald, these different experiences are entirely unrelated. Harald's school experiences, his woodcutting, and his fishing are episodes that are isolated from one another in most respects.

Thora and the love element persist, however, through
all the incidents and throughout the story. The love
affair— a very objective picture of which is given—is
a linking, uniting element that is necessary and of impor-
tance to the connected structure of the story.

But, except for Harald and the love story, The Castle
Builder is not composed of much more than a series of
adventure "beads," each adventure a unity in itself, each
adventure unrelated to the adventures that precede and
follow it.

"Herman's Reward"41 by Minnie Iverson Hodapp is
another story that is representative of the "picaresque"
continued story. It is the story of a boy named Herman
who is converted to the Mormon Church by missionaries,
migrates to America, and sets out, in spite of his crippled
arm, to earn money enough to have his mother join him in
America.

Herman has many experiences and endures a number of
hardships, each one an episode that is linked with other
episodes only by the fact that they all concern Herman and
his dream of bringing his mother from Germany to America.

After a time Herman earns sufficient money to send for
his mother, but at that time he receives word that she is
dead. Herman, now a respected member of the Mormon community,

41. Minnie Iverson Hodapp, "Herman's Reward," The
Children's Friend vol. 20, (January, 1921 to October, 1921),
p. 12.
finds happiness among his many friends.

Essentially, "Herman's Reward" is no more than a modified Lazarillo de Tornes. Herman's different experiences on the road to success are unrelated except for the fact that Herman is always the central figure in them and that they culminate in his success.

The big difference between "Herman's Reward" and Lazarillo de Tornes seems to be that, whereas Herman's different adventures all are connected with his ambition to obtain sufficient money to pay for his mother to migrate to America, Lazarillo's adventures are simply adventures that possess no unifying objective whatsoever. 42

The Traveltalk

I have previously pointed out (in Chapter III) that Mormon continued stories are often characterized by long digressions from the story for the purpose of giving the reader information of either a religious or secular nature.

Quite a number of stories contain didactic digressions for the purpose of presenting information about people, places, and things. "Expatriation" by Hugh J. Cannon is typical of stories containing isolated passages of

42. Approximately the same number of stories written before 1920 as after 1920 possess episodic structures. Of some fifty-nine stories read for this study, eighteen seem to me to be definitely "picaresque" stories. Ten of these stories were written before 1920 and eight since 1920.
information of a didactic nature.

"Expatriation" takes the reader to Hawaii, where the hero and heroine of the story pause long enough to go on a tour of the Hawaiian Islands. They ride to Pali, where the wind blows so swiftly as to almost sweep a person off his feet. They see fruitful fields of sugar-cane, rice, and pineapple. They visit a pineapple factory "capable of canning fifty thousand cases, more than half a million cans, of pineapple daily." And, last of all, they take trips to the Island of Hawaii and the great Kilauea Volcano.43

A few Mormon stories seem to be written for no other purpose than to communicate information to the reader about people, places, and things of interest. In such stories, didactic elements overshadow the plots, and the characters are puppets upon the stage of the settings which the writers are determined to outline and explain to the reader. I term such stories "traveltalk" stories.

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43. G. Milton Babcock's story, "Out of This World," contains passages presenting information of interest to the reader. The travels of Walter, the hero, are related in this way:

He followed generally the course of the Old River Road which, in Revolutionary times, connected Albany with Saratoga, and on which General Burgoyne proposed to march to Albany. Next came Cohoes--as famous for its knitting mills as Troy for its collars. In Waterbury, a mile farther, Walter stopped for a few minutes to watch the operations in connection with the construction of the new Barge Canal, an undertaking rivaling the Panama Canal.

--Ibid., p. 217.
A representative "traveltalk" story is "Romance of a Missionary" by Nephi Anderson. It is the story of the experiences of a Mormon missionary, Willard Dean, in England. Willard Dean's missionary experiences and his problem of which girl to marry, his sweetheart back home or an English girl to whom he is attracted, comprise the plot of the story.

But the missionary experiences and the love story are of secondary importance to the author's purpose of giving effective glimpses of the English countryside and the English people. As is often the case with stories of this kind, photographs of English scenes are scattered through the story.

The following is a typical passage from the story:

In one of the first letters which Willard sent home from London, he described it thus: "London is a low, flat, ugly, groveling thing, spreading out over the green countryside on every hand, reaching out its grisy limbs over the beautiful earth."

Again, a little later, he said: "London is not a city--it is a world by itself, or at least it has that appearance. I suppose that London contains people from every country on the globe. London hardly needs the light of heaven--I am told that it doesn't get much of it during the winter--for it seems an all-and-self-sufficient thing in itself, going on without the aid of sun or moon or stars, wrapped up in its own busy-going affairs day and night."

Willard was disappointed in the Thames. He saw it first near the Houses of Parliament, and

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found it to be a sluggish river with very little life on it save a few freight barges.  

Such passages fill "Romance of a Missionary." Although the character, Millard, figures prominently in every action and description, he seems to be nothing more than a convenient point of view from which to present the reader with pictures of the English countryside and something of the "local color" of the people.

The Frame Story

A few frame stories are found in Mormon periodicals of the period. By the name, frame story, I mean stories that relate one or more stories within the framework of an outer story.

"To Seek Their Fortunes" by Josephine Spencer, a representative frame story, tells the story of a group of girls meeting on the first anniversary of their graduation from school. To this core situation, each girl contributes

45. Ibid., p. 423.
46. "Miladi" by Katherine Arthur, The Young Woman's Journal vol. 11, (January, 1900 to November, 1900), p. 8, is another representative "traveltalk" story. It is the story of a girl and her brother and his bride who go to England, write home about it, meet old friends, and visit the historic and beauty spots of England. Although the story seems to be nothing more than a lesson book, a certain amount of gospel teaching and a love story are included in it.
a story of what she has done during the year that has past. Each girl's story comprises a chapter in the story, each chapter capable of being regarded as a short story were it not for the situation into which each is introduced.

Some of the girls' experiences are as follows: Miss Winter, the teacher, got married; Pauline taught home economics in a rural school; Beulah tried in vain to arouse the interest of country people in classical music; Poppy helped to solve a burglary mystery.

Ruth and Bella laughingly describe their escapes from designing men; Litty tells of her marriage and of her home in California; Erna tearfully relates how their schoolmate, Cecilia, gave her life for the advancement of social work.

Ella writes from Europe of her experiences, and Addie, in a letter from Canada, tells what she is doing. Mary describes her fight to overcome fear; Dora tells of her art studies and describes Dalby Trine, a man whose philosophy of life appeals to her.

As the reunion comes to an end, the girls agree to meet again a year from that time and repeat the storytelling experience.

Conclusions

I have arrived at these conclusions in regard to the literary types to be found in Mormon periodicals of the period:
1. Of the single issue type of story, the prose tale is the most numerous in the pages of Mormon periodicals.

2. Of significance, however, is the fact that the short story as a distinct literary type seems to be more numerous in Mormon periodicals after 1920 than before 1920.

3. The short short story and the allegory are represented in Mormon periodical fiction.

4. The largest number of continued stories in Mormon periodicals are stories resembling the novel, stories possessing unity and coherence.

5. The "picaresque" or episodic story appears in Mormon periodicals. Such stories are distributed in about equal numbers throughout the period of this study.

6. "Traveltalk" and frame story types of continued stories are represented in Mormon fiction.

7. It is a common practice for Mormon stories to be arranged in series or cycles.
CHAPTER VI

SOME GENERALIZATIONS REGARDING MORMON FICTION

The fiction pieces found in Mormon periodicals between the years 1900 and 1945 lend themselves to generalization in certain respects. In other ways, of course, the stories are as various in their characteristics as there are writers and styles of writing.

It is my purpose in this section of my study to note some of the characteristics of the fiction I have studied, attempting to arrive at generalizations in regard to (1) the ways Mormon stories begin and end; (2) the procedure in the development of plot; (3) techniques of character development; (4) methods of describing settings; (5) the stylistic qualities of Mormon fiction.

Some repetition is bound to occur in this chapter because many of the points which I make have already been noted in chapters previous to this. But I feel that these generalizations are helpful and are necessary to a true picture of the fiction that I am surveying.
The Beginnings and Endings

The way in which a story begins determines to a considerable extent the attitude the reader will have toward the remainder of the story. This is true because the beginning of a story establishes the mood and gives the first impression of a story. And, similarly, the closing sentences of a story give the reader the final impression of what he has read. For these reasons, the beginnings and endings of Mormon stories are of importance.

The Beginnings

Ways in which Mormon stories begin are numerous and varied. The stories I have read for this study, however, lend themselves to generalization to the extent that they can be said to have beginnings that present the germ of the story's message, attempt to arouse the reader's interest, and introduce the leading characters, the settings, and the essential facts about the story.

Among the most common devices for beginning Mormon stories are (1) a conversation between two or more characters, and (2) a description of the physical setting. Information essential to an understanding of the story is presented in such beginnings as these.

The opening sentences of the short story, "The Double Agony"¹ by Susa Young Gates, are typical of the opening

lines of other stories that begin with a description of the physical setting.

The long rooms were blazing with light and color and buoyant motion as Alec Martin stood a moment at the wide hall entrance gazing with bounding pulses upon the fascinating scene. The exquisite blending of color in the robes of young women so charged his eyes with delight that he did not look with disfavor upon the low bodices. His eyes were losing their one-time swiftness of condemnation for such displays.²

In addition to giving a picture of the setting, the author has succeeded in placing a hint as to the probable didactic message that the story will present: Avoid evil worldly ways and practices. The leading character, Alec, is also pictured on the scene, and the point of view from which the story will be told is established.

"Smoky Summer" by Otis L. Burton, referred to elsewhere in this study, offers a beginning in which the essentials of the story are presented and the interest of the reader is aroused by means of a conversation among characters in the story. In this beginning, as in the beginning of "The Double Agony," leading characters are introduced, the probable message of the story is hinted at, and the beginnings of the plot are established.

"Ah, come on Bill, take one," urged good-natured Stan Woodard as he temptingly held the package of cigarettes out to William (Bill) Clark.

² Ibid.
"Naw, thanks just the same," answered Bill, but his voice lacked its usual conviction. 3

The Endings

Mormon single issue stories and continued stories usually try to do one of two things or both in their concluding sentences: (1) picture the situation satisfactorily settled and the participants in the action happy and content; and/or (2) re-assert the moral message of the story and interpret it for the reader.

It seems to be characteristic of Mormon stories to end with a description of nature in a state of peacefulness and restful beauty. The purpose of such an ending seems to be to give the reader the impression that the events in the story have resolved into a satisfactory conclusion and that now happiness can reign supreme. Descriptions of the sunset hour are favorite ways of ending Mormon stories.

"On the Trails of Timpanogos" by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll presents a typical "restful nature" ending.

And then, hand in hand, they left the tiny lake shimmering there at the foot of the gleaming glacier. Slowly the twilight deepened and night spread her soft blanket over the old, old trails of Timpanogos and their new-found joy. 4

Descriptions similar to the one given above are often-times found in single issue stories. In the story, "Lilac

Lure" by Lella Marler Hoggan, for example, descriptions of a beautiful garden and a peaceful hour come both before and after the story proper.

The soft dusk was heavy with the sweet odor of lilacs. Clusters of the purple-tinted blossoms drooped gracefully from the luxuriant arbor nearby. A little trailing breeze stirred the leafage lightly, and spilled perfume extravagantly across the vine-covered porch. The garden was bathed in a silver shimmer of white moonlight. From out the shadows came the chirp of a night bird calling to his mate. A muffled twitter sounded in reply. The night was entrancing.5

A "moral tag" coming at the conclusion of a story is characteristic of much Mormon fiction. Such a "moral tag" re-emphasizes the points that are made in the story.

The following "moral tag" is found in a story by Charles F. Steele entitled "The Strange Case of Robert Kenyon,"6 the story of a supposedly wealthy man, respected and honored, who dies a spiritual and financial bankrupt because he has concentrated all his life upon gaining material possessions rather than on doing good. Now at his death he possesses nothing. The story concludes with this statement:

Here our story ends. It has a message. Robert Kenyon appeared to the world to be a man of financial stability. He could "get by" as long as he lived. But death overtook

him. And he was not prepared—to die. He was a financial and spiritual bankrupt. Death was the farthest thought from Robert Kenyon's mind that fateful December night. But death came and it found him—unprepared.7

The Development of Plot

I assume as a basis of my discussion of the plots of Mormon stories and the methods of plot development that the majority of stories have plots that are improbable; that is, that they are romantic plots and that romantic devices, characters, settings, and situations are much in evidence.

Movement and Proportion in Plot

Characteristically, movement in plot development in Mormon stories is slow and by a gradual process. Digressions for the purpose of teaching and somewhat lengthy descriptions of settings and characters help to make this the case. Consequently, there are sections of many stories that "drag," in which interest is lacking.

A slow and painstaking building-up process is followed by a rapid summarization near the end of the story in a number of the stories that I have read. In a number of stories, entire chapters are devoted in their early sections to descriptions and introductory incidents; the final chapters of such stories, however, are extremely

7. Ibid., p. 342.
abridged and rapid-moving.

"A Silver Girdle"8 by Claire W. Noall is an example of a story having this kind of plot development. It tells how Tom Reynolds and his family, ruined by the financial crash of the 1930's, go to their ranch, Timber Toes, in the Uinta Mountains of Utah and set up a dude ranch.

But Tom Reynolds's creditors insist that Timber Toes rightfully is theirs; this he denies. The creditors take the matter to court, and Reynolds, fighting for his family, attempts to find Ming Low, a Chinese trader, who knows that Reynolds is the rightful owner.

Six chapters of the story arc concerned with laying the foundation for the court battle and with describing the process by which Reynolds's daughter, Eileen, comes to love a young forest ranger named Brent. The remainder of the story is told in four paragraphs.

When the case was heard in the county seat, Preston testified that a man like Reynolds was a God-send to the country, and that his daughter was another. Morley testified as to the integrity of the man he had known so long. But the sensation of the day was Ming Low.

Tom hadn't found him. But a young Ute brave had. . . .

Ming Low had gone to the coast in a rickety old Ford. He insisted on coming home that way. But he arrived--he said his say in Chinese-Indian--Feather-from-the-Sky interpreted--and the court believed. Adams released his

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claim— and Eileen turned rancher. She agreed with Brent— forestry and ranching might be closely related.9

A characteristic of many Mormon stories is to abridge climactic, rapid-moving portions of the story, giving only general impressions of the moment, then returning after that moment is past to a more detailed statement of what is taking place.

An example of this, the abridged climax, is found in the following passage. An enraged bull is attacking Walt’s little boy. The details of that moment are recorded only as the fleeting impressions Walt has of what is happening.

Walt never remembered clearly what happened then. There were Gray and his men on horses. There were screaming women and Doctor Joe and a still little figure on a white bed.10

Such an arrangement of plot causes the plot to be disproportionate and leaves the reader with a sense of lostness, as if the story has ended too quickly or something vital has been left out. Where abridgements are too extreme it leaves the reader with a feeling that the point of the story has been lost.

Variety in pace, however, if employed with wisdom and moderation, should add to rather than take away from a story’s effectiveness.11 The examples I have pointed out

9. Ibid., p. 12.
11. Cleanth Brooks Jr. and Robert Penn Warren in (Continued)
above and other stories like them represent extremes in the matter of pace and proportion.

**Plot Structure**

The plots of Mormon stories converge upon a high point of interest, a focal point at which the leading character receives his reward or punishment. The climax is important, but most stories do not end there. A "moral tag" and a statement of what happens afterward usually follow the climax.

A short story entitled "Footprints" by Orville S. Johnson contains structural characteristics that are representative of those of many Mormon short stories. "Footprints" is the story of a hunter, who tracks a deer that is being pursued by a cougar. A game warden sees the tracks of the deer, the cougar, and the man, and follows them.

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11. (Continued) *Understanding Fiction*, New York City, F. S. Crofts and Co., 1945, p. 593, have this to say about pace in fiction:

In regard to speed, we may think along these lines: summary is faster in rendering an action than is narrative; narrative tends to be faster than full rendering in terms of scene; . . . scene tends to be faster than analysis; and so on. Almost all stories involve a combination of these methods.

If the author relies on one method too exclusively the pace tends to become monotonous. The changes of pace, which really represent changes in emphasis and may represent changes in distance, tend to sharpen the reader's attention.

In a climactic moment, the deer leaps away from the cougar and runs at the man. The man shoots the deer, then turns to face the cougar. The warden arrives just in time to save him from serious injury or death.

The climax of the story is passed, but, as in many Mormon stories of the period, the author proceeds to relate what happens afterward. The warden and the hunter skin the deer and the cougar, and the warden tells the hunter that he knows he killed the deer only as a means of self-protection. He gives the hunter the cougar skin and tells him to collect his bounty on it.

A sizable number of the plots of Mormon stories are episodic in structure; that is, incidents in one part of the story are only dimly related to incidents in other parts. Didactic digressions, faulty characterization, and a rambling, unbusinesslike approach to material are reasons for episodic plots.

The entrance of the author into the story to express his personal views is a characteristic of a considerable number of Mormon stories. Similarly, Mormon writers like to include in their stories debates between Mormons and non-Mormons in which the Mormons are consistently the victors.

The following speech of defense for Mormonism's principles is typical of speeches found in Mormon and non-Mormon debates in Mormon fiction. This particular speech
comes from a story entitled "The Crucial Test" by Elsie Chamberlain Carroll. Speeches and debates similar to this help to contribute to the episodic structure of many Mormon stories.

"You must realize that polygamy is a thing of the past in our church, but it served its purpose well. In our pioneer days it was necessary for a rapid increase in population in order to carry on the work of a driven people. Polygamy provided that, and let me assure you, sir, there was nothing unholy in the practice. No people can hold a higher, more holy view of marriage than do the Latter-day Saints. They marry for time and all eternity. I'm sure that polygamy, as practiced by the Mormons would be a blessing and an uplift to humanity in many places in the world today. O, sir, it is a false notion you have when you think polygamy is another term for licentiousness. I wish I could take you into the homes of the few remnants of that practice that remain. You would find in those homes something you never felt before. It is love purified, by self-sacrifice and suffering." 13

The Development of Character

The characterizations encountered in Mormon periodical fiction are generally shallow and lifeless creations for the reason that the majority of Mormon stories contain little or no psychological insight into the human heart and soul. What little characterization that is shown is usually in the form of the author's comments about the characters. Rarely is it that Mormon authors create characters who

reveal themselves for what they are in their actions, words, and thoughts.

**Objective Characterization**

The following passage from "The Strange Case of Robert Kenyon" by Charles F. Steele is illustrative of the type of characterization that is found in most Mormon periodical fiction.

> He had never been much of a churchman. He gave religion no thought. He accepted as true the existence of God, also some sort of a life beyond the grave. Although he had been baptized a member of the Church he had never been active in its work. He looked upon the Church as a necessary fixture of society, but it meant little to him. Occasionally he donated to the Church funds, thus managing to keep his name on the records. It must be said to his credit, that he always encouraged his wife and daughters to attend divine service on the Sabbath, providing a handsome limousine for the purpose. 14

This is an objective, exterior approach to character, and as a consequence, it is less revealing than a psychological view would be. The above quotation contains only the objective facts about Robert Kenyon that only a person other than the actual character could know.

**Dialogue to Reveal Character**

Dialogue is employed in some periodical stories to help reveal character. Characters who possess eccentricities in their speech, such as frontiersmen and Westerners,

show it in the way they talk, as do characters who are noble, high-minded, and inspirational individuals whose words help or comfort or inspire those to whom they speak.

A character named "Old" Pete speaks the rough, elliptical dialect of a frontiersman in Elsie Chamberlain Carroll's "On the Trails of Timpanogos." "Old" Pete's manner of speaking tells the reader that he is unlearned and plain.

The following passage illustrates "Old" Pete's frontier dialect:

"I hear the little city gal's goin' t' stay right on livin' with Frankie and her Pa, always—that is, I guess it won't be fer long jodgin' from the pace her an' Gord's again' . . . ."
"But Miss Fredericks? What does she—--"
"Why, Frankie's tickled t' death. Ye know her an' Gord's always been jist like brother an' sister. . . ." 15

Words of counsel and advice help to reveal the stature of great men in Mormon periodical fiction. The following conversation between Ben Roger and his father in The Voice of the Intangible is one of many conversations that contribute to Mr. Roger's growth as a great man in the reader's eyes.

Fred Roger, Ben's father, speaks:

"Son, did it ever occur to you," asked the father, "that we are but acting out a program arranged for us a long time ago?"
"How do you mean?" inquired Ben. . . .
"I mean that there are certain turns and changes in our earthly career which seem to

be scheduled to come whether we will or not."

"Why, do you know of something scheduled for you?" Ben asked anxiously, finding voice and liberty for his pent up feelings.

"Yes, I think I do."

"What is it?" the son almost gasped. Something was coming, something different from anything yet.

"This is my last trip, son; I'll never cross Clay Hill again. . . . Well, as I suggested, there are turns and changes in our affairs which are arranged long ago. Our trip through the world was ordered to be just as profitable as it could be made by beginning at a certain time and place, passing through given situations, and then ending at a given time and under prearranged conditions. Sometimes we are told of the turn just ahead that we may make the most of it."16

Much about Fred Roger that the reader would not otherwise know is revealed in passages such as the one above. Fred Roger is more vividly revealed to the reader by this method than he could be introduced by the direct comments of the author. Unfortunately, most descriptions by Mormon authors are in the form of objective comments.

**Actions to Reveal Character**

The actions of characters may help in developing characterization. Actions, however, to be effective, must be more than the objective recording of what characters do. There must be motivation for these actions and proper understanding of character before these actions will mean much. Otherwise, the character's actions will be no more than

the movements of a manipulated puppet who does as he does because the author wills it to be so.

The following statement shows the type of actions that do not mean much because they are in no way connected with the individual's character and personality.

About a mile from the Guile's flowed the Hudson, and shortly after noon that day Walter and Elizabeth came "out of the world," and entered the fold of Christ. A thin coating of ice was on the water. Walter was baptized first, and, although the water was very cold, a feeling of joy and exultation possessed him that overshadowed everything else.17

Descriptions of Settings

Settings in Mormon fiction usually are described in quite extensive detail. These descriptions generally are definite in their details as to time and place and the outstanding characteristics of the scene. Descriptions in Mormon fiction are, for the most part, the author's own comments rather than the scene as it would be seen through a character's eyes.

Descriptions, too, have become somewhat conventionalized and are concerned with superficial and obvious things, such as sunsets and views from mountaintops. All too often these descriptions are emphasized at the expense of character and action, being indulged in for their own sake rather than

for the sake of the story.

Descriptions of settings in Mormon fiction characteristically are somewhat long; and in detail. Below is a representative description of a scene of nature in a grand and awe-inspiring mood.

The hour of midnight approaches. The sun sinks down behind the sea, yet it is as light as in the shade of noon-day. The breeze is gentle, and the sea is still, save for the shining swells which softly rise and fall. Then the sun comes forth again above the horizon. First appears its upper curved edge, then more and more it seems to rock up and down on the waves until it rises above the sea—a round, blood-red disk, making a shining path from the horizon to the boat, a path paved with shimmering blocks of purple and gold. The whole sea is now tinged with red light. The clouds around the sun are bathed in blood, and the crimson reflection is cast on hills and rocks, waves and boats. Thora's face is rose-colored, and her whole form is bathed in the same warm tint. The mountains and the distant islands are enwrapped in a trembling haze of red. It is a golden night. Its beauty enters the soul, and banishes fear and worldly sorrow. Care departs into the mellow atmosphere. Marth-troubles sink into this sea of peace, and are lost. Faith comes back—faith in man and faith in God. The world is no longer a gray, lifeless larva, but a full-grown butterfly, floating on its shining wings in the balmy air of summer.18

Local Color

Local color in descriptions of settings can be found in connection with most Mormon stories set in the Mormon scene. Mormon writers seem to take delight in setting

down with accuracy and fidelity descriptions of places and things both near at home and in exotic settings. 19

"A Silver Girdle" by Claire W. Noall presents several excellent examples of local color descriptions. The following contains elements of local color—description that enlarges upon local scenes and local customs.

Baldy's eastern face rises almost perpendicularly to a naked summit, but it dips to a well-forested and less precipitous base into the lapping waters of Mirror Lake.

These barriers raise a barrier which shuts out all access from the upper end of the valley of the Weber except by horseback, or shank's ponies. 20

Mormon writers characteristically attempt to present as much information about a local area and its people as they can. The following excerpt from Albert R. Lyman's story of the Navajo Indians, "The Native Blood," is illustrative of this.

The Navajo wrestle is a primitive contest of brute force to which its most enthusiastic followers had added no worthy improvement from ancient times. Mustele's son had kept that in mind when he had access to the mat in the

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Local Color is:

...A story which aims to give the atmosphere of a particular locality, we call a story of local color. It is not necessary that the scene be a foreign land; there are local color stories of city slums, of country villages, of school and college life. The essential thing is that stress is laid upon a faithful and detailed portrayal of the people of some particular locality, with their own ways of living, their standards of judgment, their speech, their customs.

Texas school. He recognized that fitness and training have huge advantage over fitness in the raw, and he had promised himself another meeting with the powerful B. B., at a time and place chosen to his own liking, it not forced upon him in a surprise moment against his wishes. But it had come; he had to meet it, and above all things he had to be game, as game as when he met it before, a boy only half recovered from a deadly disease. They sprang at each other and clinched. 21

A considerable share of Mormon fiction can be said to be local color writing. Mormon writers seem to like to include interesting facts about the people and the localities of whom they are writing. These "local color" facts are oftentimes interesting, but they tend to detract from the unity and strength of the stories in which they are found.

Stylistic Qualities

Mormon periodical fiction reveals the styles of many different writers. Style, as it is defined by William Thrall and Addison Hjoobard, constitutes a vague something that is the product of an author's individuality and the ideas he seeks to convey.

Style: The arrangement of words in a manner which at once best expresses the individuality of the author and the idea and intent in his mind. The best style, for any given purpose, is that which most nearly approximates a perfect adaptation of one's language to one's ideas...

Style, then, is a combination of two elements: the idea to be expressed, and the individuality of the author. It is, as Lowell said, "the establishment of a perfect mutual understanding between the worker and his material." From this point of view it is impossible to change the diction or to alter the phrasing of a statement and thus to say exactly the same thing; for what the reader receives from a statement is not alone what is said, but also certain connotations which affect his consciousness from the manner in which the statement is made.\footnote{22}

The styles in which Mormon fiction is told can be generalized under a number of different headings on the basis of such questions as these: From what point of view are the stories told? What kinds of vocabularies do the writers possess? Are figures of speech prominent and are they effective? Are the styles in which the stories are told swift, picturesque, flowing, transparent, involved, polished, tame, wordy, flat?

On this basis, I propose to discuss the stylistic qualities of Mormon fiction under the following headings: point of view and approach; vocabulary; figures of speech; overall quality.

Point of View and Approach

Most stories in Mormon periodicals are told from the point of view of an omniscient author and by an intermingling of dialogue, narrative material, and description.\footnote{22. Thrall and Hibbard, op. cit., p. 425.}
Quite frequently the first person approach to storytelling is encountered, for a considerable number of Mormon stories continue to partake of the nature of true experiences, once the most popular form of Mormon fiction.

It is usually said that first person narration, tends to make for greater credibility in that the mere affirmation, "I saw such-and-such," is more readily acceptable to the reader than a rendering without the support of what pretends to be first-hand testimony.23

Stylistically, Mormon writers are more proficient at expressing themselves by means of narration than they are in writing dialogue. And, similarly, the descriptions found in Mormon stories, although lengthy, are usually quite effectively set down.

Too often, however, dialogue material becomes for Mormon authors the excuse for "preaching" rather than for the advancement of the story. I have found lengthy and extremely didactic speeches in practically every Mormon story I have studied. This is a typical one.

"Your recent poverty-stricken condition must not daunt you. Your extremely humble beginning must not make you discouraged. What credit has one who is born into so-called wealth and honor? Of far greater worth is your condition, my boy, down here at the bottom of the ladder, with energy and heart to climb by your own and God's help to the top. Remember, He who became the greatest of all, first became the humblest and lowliest of all. The whole, vast upward region is before you.

"But, my boy, in all you do, trust in God. In all our trials, and you will have many, see beyond the sore present into the blessed future. Your faith must never forsake you. God is behind everything, remember that. Outside the air is dark, and the black clouds hang low over the earth, yet, if you think a moment you will know that out beyond, above the clouds, shines unhindered, the glorious sun. So it is with God and His providences."24

Such lengthy speeches more often than not sound like the author speaking rather than the character who presumably has the floor. Too frequently, these lengthy speeches represent digressions from the story for the inartistic purpose of preaching a moral sermon.

Narration, as it is presented by Mormon writers, is, on the whole, quite effectively written. Grammatical errors in them are at a minimum and the choice of words is usually commendable.

This is particularly true of recent Mormon narrative material. To be sure, there are examples of well-put narration at every time throughout the period of this study just as there are examples of poorly phrased narration. But, on the whole, stories of a later date seem to be more effectively set down than stories of an earlier date.

An excerpt from a story written in 1925 is representative of some of the weaknesses found in Mormon narrative material and, in particular, in narratives written before 1920.

A little later, in Phyllis' room, Maisie told her story: the story of a girl alone in a large city, unfitted for work which paid for hardly more than a meager existence; a girl, longing for pretty clothes to wear and places to wear them; a girl, feeling that life had been cruelly unfair, facing temptations--and slowly, surely, being drawn into the downward path, the path which, once begun, is so difficult to break away from, so easy to follow further. The story made Phyllis fairly burn with indignation, horror, and pity.  

In the first place, the passage carries about it the moralistic tone that hovers about most Mormon stories. And, in addition, the writer does not resist the temptation to enclose some didactic utterances of his own. The passage, too, seems wordy; repetitions, such as "a girl" and "the story" fill it.

A passage from a story written in 1894 illustrates, I think, the more effective style of narration that is more frequently encountered in Mormon periodicals of recent years. This narrative bit resists the temptation to moralize and to sentimentalize. It simply records the actions of a character, achieving in this recording an effective picture of the heart and soul of a girl heroine. The writer has chosen his words with an artistic effect in mind.

The passage is romanticized, of course, and it might be said to be characterized by a certain amount of wordiness.

The bus lurched to a stop. She smiled and said good-bye very pleasantly. Then, I saw

her going up the road in the rain. Her chin was up, and she walked with the spirited courage of a soldier. We rolled on, and I looked back. At the crest of the first hill, she seemed such a child in her pretty pink fascinator, and her gray raincoat seemed almost to blend with her surroundings, but her step was as spirited as ever, and she did not pause even a moment for breath. 26

Vocabulary

Mormon stories typically are phrased in simple, effective words. Rarely do the writers of stories resort to lengthy or technical terms, and when they do, they take pains to make these terms understandable.

When the choice lies between a complex word and a simple word, Mormon writers invariably seem to choose the simple word. This contributes to the ease with which the ordinary reader can read Mormon fiction. Mormon stories are addressed to the ordinary man, and so they are phrased in his words.

But the very simplicity of the words and the sentences in Mormon stories place a limit upon their range. Not all shades of meaning and feeling can be expressed in the simple terms used in Mormon stories. Realism, shades of scientific thought, and fine distinctions in meaning are missing from the Mormon writer's vocabulary.

Also, I note that a certain amount of monotony seems

to attend Mormon fiction because of the limited nature of its vocabulary. This is particularly true in regard to descriptions, which are conventionalized and patterned until much of their effectiveness is lost.

An example of the simple vocabulary that characterizes Mormon fiction is as follows:

"I died in Tunisia. It wasn't as I thought it would be. You see, I did get that promotion and a couple more after that. Once given the plan to push the enemy into the sea, we pressed forward with boldness. I learned that once.

"I always wondered what it would be like to really be shot. You don't feel it at all for a second. Something just spun me around, and everything went warm and dark and swimming for awhile. Now I'm all right again, only better than I have ever been before in my life. Several of the boys in my company are here, but we're so busy we don't get much chance to talk about old times. It gets a little lonesome sometimes though."27

In the above passage very few words appear that are over two syllables in length, and the words used are those the reader would use everyday himself. Typically, also, the sentences are not long and complicated.

All in all, in spite of a somewhat limited range of words, Mormon stories are well expressed. Simple, easy to understand words, and simple sentences characterize their styles.

**Figures of Speech**

Figures of speech do not figure prominently in Mormon

fiction, and those that are used are not always effectively put. The authors who put figures of speech to work indicate their inexperience by failing to be consistent in regard to their imaginative creations.

In the passage that follows, two tramps are pictured as "two black spots." But yet one of the black specks stops, "shading bloodshot eyes with a trembling hand," and discovers "the other man." This indicates a woeful lack of consistency and shows artistic inaptitude.

The railroad tracks stretched out till they converged and melted into the horizon. Above the yellow, seemingly endless fields of ripening grain, extending along each side, the heat of midday quivered and shimmered in a white glare, unbroken save by a bunch of willows here and there, or a marshy pool of stagnant water, with tall rushes growing rank upon its edges.

Several miles apart, two black spots, like huge ants, had crawled slowly along since daybreak, unconscious of each other. The foremost black speck halted, and shading bloodshot eyes with a trembling hand, gazed around searchingly and discovered the other man. Then, as though satisfied with his inspection, he crouched beside the hot track, his face hidden in his folded arms, that rested nearly upon his knees.28

This same weakness seems to betray other writers when they attempt to make use of figures of speech, indicating the artistic inexperience of many Mormon writers.

On the other hand, examples of the effective use of figures of speech and other devices are observable in the fiction of the period. Stories of a later date seem, on

the whole, to use these devices in a more effective way than stories written early in the period.

Battling with sobs that must not come up, blinking away tears that must not flow, Edna described the shadowy forms of children among the hollyhocks. Babies with flaxen curls making doll parasols of hollyhocks and hats of burdock leaves! A home that might have been hers and John's forever! Babies that might have blessed them! Peace in quiet ways! Angles among the clouds with eyes one's eyes might meet! God in the mountains, the stream, the moon, the meadow! —And this! They were inside a wretched room, cold and cheerless.29

The author of the above passage makes use of the memories and dreams of the past to draw a contrast with the dark reality of the present. The passage is effective and understandable; the contrast is made clear.

Artistically the second passage is superior to the first because it more effectively achieves its purpose.

Overall Quality

Mormon stories are marked by somewhat slow-moving styles. They progress leisurely from a beginning through a series of actions to a climactic point, and close with a somewhat lengthy conclusion. Characteristically, the plots of Mormon stories are transparent and uncomplicated.

It is characteristic of Mormon stories to be a trifle wordy and unpolished. Because of the drawn-out nature of

their endings, the stories seem to drag.

In general, Mormon stories are "tame." By "tame," I mean that they are consistently even in their interest appeal, never achieving an extremely high range of interest and suspense.

**Mormon Writing Programs**

In the preceding sections I have stated that Mormon fiction of a more recent date is superior in the manner in which it is expressed to that written early in the period of this study. I attribute this fact to the efforts of the editors of Mormon periodicals to encourage Mormon writers to study and to master better writing techniques. I also credit the schools and universities of the Utah area with worthwhile writing programs. Editors and teachers have encouraged and continue to encourage Mormon writers to develop more effective ways of communicating thought to others.

"Good writing is re-writing" one announcement in a Mormon periodical states. Another announcement reads:

Do you have the urge to write? Then here is a stimulus for you. The Improvement Era is in search of new, young writers of both poetry and prose. We want good work, which will measure favorably with that of accepted writers, and which will be worthy of standards held for all material appearing in the Era.

To aid some of you in knowing how to write, we suggest a study of books of the technique of story and poetry writing. In particular, we refer you to some books which will prove
With encouragement of this kind through the years, it is to be expected that the stories progressively would be better, more effectively told in recent periodicals than in those of an earlier date. And this result is evidenced in the fiction I have read in the following ways: (1) The short story as a literary type becomes more numerous through the years; (2) stylistically, Mormon stories of a more recent date are better written than those written earlier.

Conclusions

I have attempted in this chapter to bring out the following points in regard to Mormon fiction:

1. The beginnings and endings of Mormon stories are designed to arouse the interest of the reader and to create a lasting impression upon him.

2. The plots of Mormon stories are uneven in movement and are considerably disunited and episodic.

3. Characterizations in Mormon stories are shallow and weak.

4. Local color reporting characterizes descriptions in Mormon stories.

5. Generally speaking, Mormon stories are better written in periodicals of a recent date than in early periodicals. I attribute this fact to the writing programs sponsored by schools and periodicals of Utah and Mormondom.

6. The vocabularies of Mormon writers are simple but limited.

7. Inartistic blunders appear in Mormon fiction, but they are less apparent in recent fiction.

8. Mormon fiction is slow and uneven in movement, unpolished, somewhat "tame."
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, ESTIMATE, CONCLUSIONS

Summary

By way of summary of the facts I have discovered in regard to the Mormon fiction of the years 1900 to 1945, I would say that the greatest share of this fiction is didactic in purpose, of Mormon subject matter, and didactic and romantic in treatment. The majority of Mormon single issue stories are not truly short stories; they are, rather, rambling, leisurely moving prose tales. The major portion of continued stories in Mormon periodicals are, on the other hand, true novels in most respects, although many stories are episodic in structure.

Stylistically, Mormon stories are not strong. But there is evidence that the more recent Mormon stories are improved over early stories in the manner in which they are told.

Generally speaking, Mormon stories are correct grammatically, are simply told, and are readily understandable.
They reveal strengths in that entertainment as a purpose is apparently gaining ground, sentimentality is disappearing slowly, humor is increasing, and stylistic advances are being made.

Mormon stories show weaknesses in the fact that their themes, purposes, and treatments are patterned and conventionalized in the extreme. Similarly, structurally and stylistically, Mormon stories continue to be related in much the same manner as they have always been told.

An Estimate of the Literary Worth of Mormon Fiction

I have come to the conclusion that the greatest portion of the fiction written by Mormon writers and appearing in Mormon periodicals between 1900 and 1945 is not of great significance as a contribution to the literature of the world.

I believe that this is so for these reasons:

1. Mormon fiction, restricted as it is in purposes, themes, and treatments to didacticism, Mormon subject matter, and romanticism, does not touch life at enough points to make it intelligible to anyone but the tiny segment of humanity to whom it is addressed. For this reason, Mormon fiction is meaningless, or at best is of little significance, to the people beyond the bounds of Mormondom.

2. The themes and purposes of Mormon fiction are not of universal significance, for the reason that they deal
with superficials (the act of smoking a cigarette or a romantic affection for nature), do not extend beyond Morm-
mondom into the world of other men, and make little effort to probe into the heart and soul of man wherein universals are found.

3. Much Mormon fiction is removed from the actuality of life by a golden glow of unreality. Most Mormon fiction, therefore, fails to interpret life truly and to contribute much that is constructive to mankind's knowledge of himself.

4. Most Mormon stories seem to pursue a painstaking, plodding, and common course toward a predestined didactic goal. They, accordingly, fail to transport the reader "on wings of song" to high realms of thought. They do not scintillate with bright, new thoughts. Rather, they contain old ideas done over.

5. Although they are told in simple language and are correct grammatically, most Mormon stories reveal structural weaknesses, a want of unity, a need for closer, binding ties.

6. Fiction-writing among Mormon writers of the period too frequently has been a "job" rather than an artistic experience. Mormon fiction, therefore, is wanting in artistic excellence and a conscious desire and ability on the part of its creators to fashion a thing of beauty.
Wherein Mormon Fiction Has Strength

Not all Mormon fiction suffers from the weaknesses enumerated, but the greatest portion of it partakes of those characteristics which make it inferior as a contribution to the literature of the world.

Mormon fiction possesses hopeful, redeeming qualities, however. (1) The apparent gradual disappearance of sentimentality; (2) the noticeable increase in the number of stories having a purpose of entertaining; (3) the increase in numbers of stories possessing the characteristics of the short story literary type; (4) the apparent improvement that is evidenced in Mormon stories stylistically over the years; (5) the evidence that literary endeavors among Mormon writers apparently are becoming matters calling for studied effort and serious artistic purpose; and (6) the fact that individual writers of power are present among the writers of the period—Albert R. Lyman, Josephine Spencer, Elsie Chamberlain Carroll, Dorothy Clapp Robinson, and Harrison R. Merrill—all are evidences that Mormon fiction possesses hopeful qualities and strengths.

Mormon Fiction to Come—An Estimate

Fiction written by Mormon authors and appearing in Mormon periodicals will continue to be predominantly didactic in treatment and purpose and peculiarly sectional
in subject matter so long as the periodicals are the organs of thought of a religious organization such as the Mormon Church. Mormon periodical fiction likely will always be limited in the range of its subject matter and appeal. The didactic digression, the stereotyped theme, the chronic romanticism and idealism, and the superficial approach to life found in most of the stories of the years 1900 to 1945 will probably always be present in Mormon stories.

But the fact that the Mormon fiction of the present reveals some evidence of a conscious literary art gives hope for the periodical fiction of the years to come. Stylistically, mechanically, and structurally, Mormon periodical fiction undoubtedly will show advancement in the years to come.
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