

Sarah Orne Jewett Reviews

Contemporary Commentary on her published books

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Sarah Orne Jewett Press

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Introduction

Over 25 years of developing the Sarah Orne Jewett Text Project, I have had occasion to collect most of the contemporary reviews of her books and most of the commentary on them in her correspondence. Undoubtedly, there are interesting items in both categories that have not come to my attention, but I am confident that I have collected most of this material. This volume brings together my accumulation of contemporary commentary on the books that she published.

One book is not included here, because I have found no commentary on it. The short story, *An Empty Purse: A New England Tale for Christmas and Holiday Time* was published as a paperbound booklet by the Merrymount Press in 1905.

For this volume, I have streamlined the presentation from SOJTP, reducing the number of notes and making most typographical corrections silent. This will be especially noticeable in the selections from correspondence. More formal and fully annotated transcriptions may be examined currently at SOJTP, "The Correspondence of Sarah Orne Jewett":

<http://www.sarahornejewett.org/soj/let/Corresp/1-correspondence.html>

In these texts, I use [brackets] for editorial commentary and {braces} for material I have added to improve clarity.

An invaluable source for the study of Jewett's reception is "Maine Stream: A Bibliographic Reception Study of Sarah Orne Jewett" (2005), a dissertation by Kathrine Cole Aydelott, University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository, Sarah Orne Jewett: Bibliography, 1, which is available here: <http://scholars.unh.edu/aydelott/1>

Deephaven 1877

"Announcements." *The Christian Union*, 15, 1877, p. 277.

Miss Jewett's "Deephaven Sketches," which have been among the most readable of the "Atlantic's" contents within the year, and which have scarcely any equals in their peculiar vein, will soon be published in book form by J. R. Osgood & Co. No more charming volume or more honest word-painting can possibly be preparing for the reader.

"New Publications." *New York Times*, (28 April 1877), Supplement, p. 8.

Deephaven is a prolonged study of some New-England seaside port, like New-Bedford or Portsmouth, which has had former glories of West Indian or whaling trade, and now abounds in women, old sailors, and boys. Kate Lancaster and the author are friends of the variety that is always "going round" to see the one the other. Kate writes a note to the authoress, and then:

"I showed this note to my aunt, and soon went round very much interested. My latch-key opened the Lancasters' door, and I hurried to the parlor, where I found my friend practicing with great diligence. I went up to her, and she turned her head and kissed me solemnly. You need not smile. We are not sentimental girls, and are both much averse to indiscriminate kissing, though I have not the adroit habit of shying in which Kate is proficient. It would sometimes be impolite in any one else, but she shies so affectionately."

After further suspense we are let into the momentous secret. These two young persons are actually not going to Europe or Newport or Lenox for the Summer. No; they are going delightfully and refreshingly to an old house in Deephaven to observe the habits of small seaside boys, angular country folk, and decrepit fishermen, and even to lure from the sides of wharves that prickly and very indigestible fish called a cunner. It need hardly be said that the tale is not a thrilling one. Such well-regulated young women do not even need a yachtsman with a brown moustache to enliven their Summer. They go to a dreary circus performance, and listen to the prudently circumspect yarn of the superannuated sailor, gossip about the musty remains of good society still lingering in the ancient town, and indulge in other harmless amusements. In fact, if condensed considerably, the book would read well in letters, and at the manuscript stage; it is by some mistake, doubtless, that it got into print at all.

Detroit Free Press (Michigan), (31 May 1877), p. 3.

"Deephaven," by Sarah O. Jewett, is a fascinating little volume, most of which has appeared in the *Atlantic*. It will ornament the satchel of many a summer tourist, and return, if at all, with perceptible marks of affectionate usage.

"Our Book-Shelf," *The Cottage Hearth* - 4 (June 1877) 146, by F.R.

In the preface to this charming little book, the author says she has often been asked if Deephaven may not be found somewhere on the map of New England, and she answers the question by saying that the place and the people are but remotely, if at all, connected with the real and actual. We think no one can read the book without believing, for the time at least, that Deephaven is an actual place, and Mrs. Kew and Captain Sands actual personages, so completely has the author invested them with an atmosphere of reality.

Some of the sketches have already appeared in the *Atlantic*; and as they appear in the book, which can hardly be called a story, they form the experiences of two girls, Boston girls, spending a summer in the quiet, old-fashioned fishing town of Deephaven.

The book is very quietly and simply written, and partakes more of the character of familiar letters from some friend, who tells you of all that goes on in the isolated town, and of all the quaint characters with whom she becomes acquainted, rather than of anything "bookish."

It is essentially a *nice* book; the kind of quiet, delightful reading which you would choose for a summer afternoon under the trees, in the shadow of a ledge of rocks upon the beach of some other and equally charming Deephaven.

"Miss Jewett's Deephaven." *Atlantic Monthly* 39:236 (June 1877), 759.

-- The gentle reader of this magazine cannot fail to have liked, for their very fresh and delicate quality, certain sketches of an old New England sea-port, which have from time to time appeared here during the last four years. The first was *Shore House*, and then there came *Deephaven Cronies* and *Deephaven Excursions*. These sketches, with many more studies of the same sort of life, as finely and faithfully done, are now collected into a pretty little book called *Deephaven*, which must, we think, find favor

with all who appreciate the simple treatment of the near-at-hand quaint and picturesque. No doubt some particular sea-port sat for Deephaven, but the picture is true to a whole class of old shore towns, in any one of which you might confidently look to find the Deephaven types. It is supposed that two young girls -- whose young-girlhood charmingly perfumes the thought and observation of the whole book -- are spending the summer at Deephaven, Miss Denis, the narrator, being the guest of her adored ideal, Miss Kate Lancaster, whose people have an ancestral house there; but their sojourn is only used as a background on which to paint the local life: the three or four aristocratic families, severally dwindled to three or four old maiden ladies; the numbers of ancient sea-captains cast ashore by the decaying traffic; the queer sailor and fisher folk; the widow and old-wife gossips of the place, and some of the people of the neighboring country. These are all touched with a hand that holds itself far from every trick of exaggeration, and that subtly delights in the very tint and form of reality; we could not express too strongly the sense of conscientious fidelity which the art of the book gives, while over the whole is cast a light of the sweetest and gentlest humor, and of a sympathy as tender as it is intelligent. Danny is one of the best of the sketches; and another is *The Circus at Denby*, which perhaps shows better than any other the play of the author's observation and fancy, with its glancing lights of fun and pathos. A sombre and touching study is that of the sad, simple life so compassionately depicted in *In Shadow*, after which the reader must turn to the brisk vigor and quaintness of Mrs. Bonny. Bits of New England landscape and characteristic marine effects scattered throughout these studies of life vividly localize them, and the talk of the people is rendered with a delicious fidelity.

In fact, Miss Jewett here gives proof of such powers of observation and characterization as we hope will some day be turned to the advantage of all of us in fiction. Meanwhile we are very glad of these studies, so refined, so simple, so exquisitely imbued with a true feeling for the ideal within the real.

The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature, Science, and Art 25 (June 1877), p. 760.

In this dainty and unpretentious little volume the author professes to give some of the more noteworthy features of a summer spent in a secluded and decayed old fishing hamlet on the New England coast; and if they are not a *bona-fide* transcript of actual experiences and observations, they are certainly a very

remarkable instance of imaginative realism. The mouldering but picturesque village, the rotting wharves and dilapidated houses, the deserted harbor and surf-beaten light-house, the gray desolation that broods over the rugged coast and exhausted country, the general society of the place with its eighteenth-century class distinctions and its complacent self-sufficiency, and the sharply differentiated individual characters that seem to develop themselves more completely among a seafaring folk than elsewhere -- all these are portrayed with pre-Raphaelite fidelity and minuteness of detail, and yet with a graciousness of sympathy and a delicacy of touch that seem to impart a poetic atmosphere to the whole. Not the least pleasing feature of the work is the amiable disposition of the author not to seek mere amusement from her contact with unusual people and quaint social conditions, but to comprehend and appreciate them; and while there is humor in the sketches of a very genuine kind, it is not the satirical and cynical humor now so much in vogue, but the humor of Lamb and of Hood -- the humor which is likely to bring a tear to the eye as well as a smile to the lips. The reader will often find himself laughing *with* the quaint and almost grotesque characters introduced, but never *at* them; and even while he laughs he will be conscious that his sympathies are appealed to quite as effectively as his risibilities. We know of few books that illustrate so truly and attractively the great law of human fellowship -- the fact that, in spite of all differences of rank, of station, of education, and of surroundings, a man is a man, actuated by the same feelings, inspired by the same hopes, and touched by the same sorrows.

"Deephaven" is neither a story, nor a series of descriptive essays, nor a mere collection of character studies; but it possesses the charms of all, and offers something enjoyable to well-nigh every class of readers.

Editor's note: In a letter of 28 July 1877, Jewett wrote to Theophilus Parsons about this review: "I wish you would look at one in the June Eclectic if you ever come across that number -- for it was such high praise -- and praise that went to my heart -- and will make me try to come up to the high-water mark which the writer seems to think I have reached, and which I certainly think I have not."

Saturday Review (June 30, 1877), p. 811.

. . . a collection of tolerably clever social sketches of New England life and character, under the title of *Deep Haven*;

Catholic World 44, (January 1887), 561-2, by Maurice F. Egan.

Miss Sarah O. Jewett's *Deephaven* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is a series of quiet studies of life in a New England seaboard town. It has many charming bits of humor and tenderness; and the description of the old house at Deephaven is worthy of Hawthorne, with a touch of womanly sentiment. Among the contents of faded Miss Katharine's *escritoire* - "There was a box which Kate was glad to find, for she had heard her mother wonder if some such things were not in existence. It held a crucifix and a mass-book and some rosaries, and Kate told me that Miss Katharine's youngest and favorite brother had become a Roman Catholic while studying in Europe. It was a dreadful blow to the family; for in those days there could have been few deeper disgraces to the Brandon family than to have one of its sons go over to popery. Only Miss Katharine treated him with kindness, and after a time he disappeared without telling even her where he was going, and was only heard from indirectly once or twice afterward. It was a great grief to her. 'And mamma knows,' said Kate, 'that she always had a lingering hope of his return, for one of the last times she saw Aunt Katharine before she was ill she spoke of soon going to be with all the rest, and said, 'Though your Uncle Harry, dear' -- and stopped and smiled sadly; 'you'll think me a very foolish old woman, but I never quite gave up thinking he might come home.'"

From Jewett's Correspondence

The trail of Jewett correspondence for her first book is fairly long, beginning when she was working on the first part of it, "The Shore House" for separate publication in 1873.

12 July 1873 to Horace Scudder

The Shore House, which Mr. Howells has.... I believe the only thing told me he found fault with was that I did not make more of it -- 'The characters were good enough for me to say a great deal more of them'. But I don't believe I could write a long story as he suggested, & you advise me in this last letter -- In the first place, I

have no dramatic talent. The story would have no plot. I should have to fill it out with descriptions of character and meditations -- It seems to me I can furnish the theatre, & show you the actors, & the scenery, & the audience, but there never is any play! I could write you entertaining letters perhaps, from some desirable house where I was in most charming company but I couldn't make a story about it. I seem to get very much bewildered when I try to make these come in for secondary parts. And what shall be done with such a girl? For I wish to keep on writing, & to do the very best I can. It is rather discouraging to find I lose my best manner by studying hard and growing older and wiser! Copying one's self has usually proved disastrous. Shall not I let myself alone and not try definitely for this trick of speech or that -- & hope that I shall grow into a sufficient respectability as the years go on? I do not know how much real talent I have as yet -- how much there is in me to be relied upon as original & effective in writing. I am certain I could not write one of the usual magazine stories. If the editors will take the sketchy kind and people like to read them, is not it as well to do that and do it successfully as to make hopeless efforts to achieve something in another line which runs much higher?

21 March 1875 from William Dean Howells

Your paper ["Deephaven Cronies"] is perfectly charming. You've worked in the old material skilfully, and the new is good. You've got an uncommon feeling for talk -- I hear your people. And I have had a better laugh than I've enjoyed for many days at the lecture on True Manhood. But wasn't it too bad? I feel as if I had delivered it.

5 August 1875 from Horace Scudder

I must obey my impulse to tell you how delighted I am with Deephaven Cronies in September Atlantic. It is the real thing and I hope you will not mind what I or any one else may have said to the contrary, but go on writing in just this way, until you give us not another Cranford, but something just as agreeable and just as idle.

24 August 1876 to Theophilus Parsons

... I do try never to lose sight of my work and what I wish to make it. I am not contented with anything short of the best, and I can see how you are discontented with those Deephaven sketches. I wish I could always write things that would do people good and that I could always have a meaning underlie everything else as I did in Miss Sydney and the Dull Christmas, but

those successes seem to come rarely and you may be sure I take fast hold of plans like them. I want to say a word about Deephaven though, and particularly this one you have just read ["Deephaven Excursions"]. The first sketch I know has nothing in it beyond mere entertainment -- but I felt a much deeper interest in the others -- they are both 'true' and I know you would have felt better satisfied with the 'funeral sketch' if the authorities had not left out a few paragraphs which I wrote carefully and which held for me the meaning of that pathetic breaking-up of a pitiful family. I don't remember it very accurately now, but I know I said something about our lives having two sides and although we might be apparent failures in this world still there was a chance that life had been a grand success. And I said how few in this world poor or rich touched satisfaction, and how this man's hopes and wishes might all have been realized in a decent sort of farm and a thousand or two dollars in the bank, -- and I said that when his wife died his world had come to an end, as it were, and he was bewildered and discouraged and could not fight so hard and so useless a battle as life seemed to him. There was something, too, (which followed the man's saying that he had 'gone' -- when the funeral had left the house --) about the invisible world's being so near -- but I can't remember that at all. I was very sorry when I found these things had been left out, for (to me) they gave more character to the sketch. In writing the sketch of Miss Sally Cutts the most touching thing to me was her perfect faith in God, and her being so uncomplaining when (to 'worldly' eyes at least), she had lost everything. I do like writing such stories as these of real lives -- and I think there is no reading which interests me so much. I learn from a life more than from preaching and you don't know the lessons I get every week from the country people whom I see and talk with. -- It seems to me if I lived in a city, all the time with the same set of people, I should like knowing the way people felt and thought out of my set and particularly country people and simple people who are a great deal out of doors and know nothing about 'society'. -- I suppose it is because I feel this so strongly that I have enjoyed 'Deephaven' -- And yet the pleasure of making a study of life, does not compare with the consciousness that one has known a life well enough to see where one may help to unravel a snarl, or to make it interesting and worth while, where it seemed dull before; -- and to bring more purpose, and the thought of God oftener -- to help the life to be a more Christian life. --

14 September 1876 to Horace Scudder

This is all in York [Maine] which reminds me of my dear Deephaven though that was 'made up' before I had ever stayed overnight in York, or knew and loved it as I do now -- Since the Shore House* was written I have identified Deephaven with it more and more -- Still I don't like to have people say that I mean York when I say Deephaven.

24 April 1877 to Theophilus Parsons

I don't know that my chief thought in Deephaven is very evident -- but I think I tried most to show the truth of what 'Kate' says on page 244 -- that success and happiness are not things of chance but of choice -- and they might so easily have had a dull summer. It was certainly not at all the kind of place that most young ladies would enjoy for their summer's campaign -- but didn't they have a good time! And there is another thing. I wished to show how interested they became in the town's people, and how interesting these people were. I am so sorry for girls who are shut up in their own set of society. I should be so glad if anybody had a better time in the country this summer because she had read Deephaven!

8 May 1877 from Helen D. Sewall

As I am not a writer for that public organ known as the Press, and can not spread your praises abroad by forestalling public opinion in that way, allow me to have the satisfaction of whispering in your ear how much I enjoyed your Deephaven* sketches and admired the kindly, sympathetic spirit with which their author views the world. It is all just as real as can be, and helps one toward that perfection of living, the "finding" good in everything, which, I trust, may always in large measure be yours.

2 June 1877 to Ida Agassiz Higginson

Deephaven is not the result of careful study during one "summer's vacation," as some persons have thought, but I could write it because it is the fashion of life with which I have always been familiar. I think no part of New England can possibly have kept more of the last century's way of thinking and speaking than this -- Berwick itself is growing and flourishing in a way that breaks my heart, but out from the village among the hills and near the sea there are still the quietest farms -- where I see little change from one year to another -- and the people would delight your heart. ---- And as for the sailors; I have always known them. Nobody know how I love the sea, and many of my

friends have been and are sailors in either the navy or the merchant service and until a few years ago we had much to do with ships. When I was a child the captains used to come to see my grandfather and I thought if I could go off on a voyage I should be perfectly happy --

Deephaven seems as real to me as Berwick or Newport. I know all the roads and all the houses there, and I believe I could answer all the questions about it that anyone could ask --

8 June 1877 to Theophilus Parsons

I think it would have been better to have put in a little more 'moralizing' and I should do it if I wrote another book of this kind. For myself, I like best to have the moral in the story -- to make the character as apparent as I can, as one feels instinctively the character of the people one meets. I always feel as if when I say anything directly as if it were awkward and that if the story itself doesn't say it, it is no use to put it in afterward. I think this is a mistake with me often times. I should be sorry to miss doing good because I carried out my fancy and pleased myself in the fashion of my writing. I hoped Deephaven might do two things -- the first to help people to look at 'commonplace' lives from the inside instead of the outside -- to see that there is so deep and true a sentiment and loyalty and tenderness and courtesy and patience -- where at first sight there is only roughness and coarseness and something to be ridiculed. And beside this it seems to me that such a life as I told about in Deephaven is so much pleasanter and more real, than what one calls 'society life'. I think so many girls I know care so little for outdoor life, and its pleasures and see so few of its beauties. And do you know I made 'Kate' say that she can see how easily they might have had a dull summer -- only they chose not to have it? -- I meant to teach that if I could.

24 July 1877 from John Greenleaf Whittier

I must thank thee for thy admirable book "Deephaven." I have given several copies to friends, all of whom appreciate it highly, & I have just been reading it over for the third time. I know of nothing better in our literature of the kind though it recalls Miss Mitford's "Our Village" and the Chronicles of Carlingford.

7 July 1878 to Anna Laurens Dawes

There is one of the fishermen whom I like dearly and we got up before four o'clock and went out with him about four miles to see him set and draw his trawls. ... We put out about half a mile of lines and waited half an hour and pulled it up and found fish of all sorts and kinds -- some I

never had seen or heard of before. I'll tell you who our fisherman is -- the man whom I call "Danny" in Deephaven. He told me several summers ago about his having a pussy cat on board a schooner and I enlarged upon it at my own sweet will! It is romance about his loneliness: he has a wife and a young boy whom I like -- a quiet pleasant fellow like his father, though he's not lame and doesn't wear a red shirt, as yet! He has been making me a little fishing boat with all the rigging complete which you shall see some day -- and he rejoices that his father is going to take him one of these days to Kennebunk to see the ship yards. Last year when I was here his mother was living somewhere else and I always thought that she was dead. He seemed such a lonely little fellow and he used to go out after lobsters in the darkest nights all alone. I have grown intimate with Mrs. Hatch this year but I have known "Danny" or George, that's his real name, for a long time.

Deephaven 1893

The American Hebrew, (3 November 1893), p. 22.

... Deephaven by Sarah Orne Jewett. Holiday edition. From new plates, with about fifty illustrations from designs by Chas. He. and Marcia O. Woodbury. Carefully printed, and with an original and striking binding after designs by Mrs. Henry Whitman

[See also 17 November 1893, p. 86.]

The Hartford Courant (7 November 1893), p. 5.

An exquisite holiday edition of Sara[h] Orne Jewett's "Deephaven" is that just published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Its cover design and binding in silver and green is rich, novel and artistic, while the illustrations by Charles and Marcia Woodbury are delicious for delicacy, faithfulness, yet suggestivity. This work, written twenty years ago by Miss Jewett, has become a classic, and, in its line of rural New England character study, has few superiors in American literature. The author writes a most graceful and interesting preface to the edition, which costs \$2.50, and can be had at Belknap and Warfield's.

New York Tribune, (9 November 1893), p. 8.

The sketches of New-England provincial life, which Miss Sarah Orne Jewett gathered together some years ago under the title of "Deephaven" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), are far from losing their interest with the passage of time. The reader who takes up the new edition (sympathetically illustrated by Charles and Marcia Woodbury) will find it hard to tear himself away from its pages, full of an old-time quaintness, humor and sadness. The old New-England life which has almost disappeared under the whelming tide of immigration will soon be found only in this book and in a few others like it.

The New York Times, (20 November 1893), p. 3.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have ready a new edition of Sarah Orne Jewett's "Deephaven." It contains an interesting preface by the author on the twenty years of age of her work, and a delicately expressive series of illustrations by Charles and Marcia Woodbury. The glossy paper, type, head and tail pieces, and the dainty

binding were learnedly harmonized in the mechanical production of the book.

Detroit *Free Press* (Michigan), (20 November 1893).

Sarah Orne Jewett's "Deephaven," which was written twenty years ago, appears in a new edition, beautifully bound in green, white and silver and copiously illustrated by Charles and Marcia Woodbury. A great many crudities of style may be remarked in this volume which are not perceptible in the author's later works. "Deephaven" was written not without object, for just at that time the New England town in its rural simplicity was being obliterated, and in its growth taking on all the airs of a large city. Mrs. Jewett's idea was to preserve an ideal of the New England village as it was then. Deephaven cannot be found on the map, but it is intended to be a type. The story, if it can be called a story, is that of two Boston girls who go into an old mansion in Deephaven to spend the summer, and it is of their doings that the author has to tell, their explorations around the beautiful, picturesque country, and their boat rides on the sea, their visits to the lighthouse where Mrs. Kew, who was their particular friend, held sway. The village folk are described with a keen appreciation of their foibles and the narrow point of view which circumstances forced them to hold. "Deephaven" is good reading, shows careful observation and ability to read human nature. It is published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, and sold by Macfarlane.

Vassar Miscellany, Volume XXIII, Number 3, (1 December 1893), by A. L. C.

A summer with a friend by the sea. Such an outline -- alluring to any imagination -- Sarah Orne Jewett has chosen, filling it in with her delicate suggestive touch, and using as a background a simple, old fishing town on the New England coast. It is difficult to analyze the charm of *Deephaven*. The reading public of today rebels against description except as an accessory, is growing weary of local color, and hesitates whether to pronounce in favor of a plot or a pastel. Yet the reader who may have selected *Deephaven* as "a good book to dip into," finds himself loath to skip a page, even while he acknowledges that the descriptive element predominates, that the "atmosphere" is perfect, and that there is nothing to suggest either a pastel or a plot.

The chronicle of bright keen days alongshore, and evenings *à deux* before a driftwood fire in the old Brandon house," is so

easily, so carelessly told, that one suspects as little as in an essay of Charles Lamb, the consummate art. The character of Kate's great-aunt, Katharine, whose dead presence seems to linger in the stately rooms, is indicated only by subtle suggestions -- the old ship letters "tied with very pale and tired-looking blue ribbon," in her *écritoire*; the "antiquated piano," which she had used to play, sitting by herself when it grew dusky in the west parlor; the recollection in the hearts of her neighbors of the proud old woman's kindness.

It is a book of impressions, rather than of description -- yet the reader cannot but perceive the absence of all striving after effect. Sincerity alone can give such simplicity and naturalness to the aspect and life of Deephaven. The people are individuals, not types. Surroundings and events are hardly novel, but Miss Jewett's individuality and her keen observation give a charm to cunner-fishing, or a traveling circus.

She confesses to "an instinctive, delicious interest in what to other eyes is unflavored dullness." In this interest, this breadth of sympathy, lies the power of the book. "It is wonderful, the romance, the tragedy, the adventure, which we may find in a quiet, old-fashioned country town!" The pathos of "In Shadow" and the account of Miss Chauncey, -- a sweet, half-crazed gentlewoman, the last of her race -- is characteristic of the author's best work.

The aim of Deephaven is to show the true relationship between the life in the country and in small villages imbued "with the spirit of the past," and the town-life, which represents the modern, progressive element. "Human nature is the same the world over," and Miss Jewett has proved that one may be of Boston, a Bostonian -- and yet delight in "loyalty to the tradition of its ancestors," the primitive, placid life of old-fashioned Deephaven.

The Writer (Boston, MA) 6 (December 1893), p. 227.

Since "Deephaven" was first given to the public in book form, in 1877, Miss Jewett has written many books that have helped to give her a place among the best known writers of the country. Although "Deephaven" was her first book, however, and was written almost in her girlhood, it is altogether one of the best pieces of work that the author has ever done. Its absolute fidelity in description of New England life and character, its fresh humor, its delightful portraiture of the two girls whose summer stay in Deephaven is the foundation of the story, and the touching pathos of the minor passages make it a distinct feature in the literature of New

England, and give to it a peculiar charm. The story is well worthy of the attractive holiday dress now given to it by the publishers. This new edition is not one of the old style "holiday books" designed chiefly for show as an ornament upon the parlor table. It is a beautiful library edition, carefully printed from new plates, fittingly illustrated and strikingly bound. The use of the Mayflower in the original design upon the cover was a happy thought. The illustrations, about fifty in number, are in keeping with the spirit of the book, and, like the story, they are faithful pictures of New England scenery and life. Mr. and Mrs. Woodbury have done admirable work, and it has been reproduced with admirable skill. Those who have known "Deephaven" in the past will read the book again with new delight in this new edition, and those who have never read it until now are fortunate indeed, since their first enjoyment of the story will be heightened by all the aids that the modern bookmaker's finest art can give.

William H. Hills

New York *Times*, (18 December 1893).

... Sarah Orne Jewett's "Deephaven," with illustrations, by Charles and Marcia Woodbury, whose love of their subject is delicately impressed in every touch of their exquisite pictures of personages and natural scenery.

The large-paper edition ... bound in a happy combination of white and sage-green boards, printed on handmade paper, with its illustrations on Japan paper, is a triumph of bookmaking.

The Atheneum 3459 (February 10, 1894) p. 178.

Deephaven, by Sarah Orne Jewett, seems to be a reprint of a book published some years ago in America -- a reprint for which the gratitude of English readers is due to Messrs. Osgood, Mellvaine & Co. The author informs us in the preface that her object was to create a sympathy between city people and the inhabitants of out-of-the-way country villages, by making them understand one another's points of view; and certainly, so far at least as arousing interest in the old-world inhabitants of decaying villages is concerned, Miss Jewett has been most successful. Deephaven is supposed to be a seacoast town, which was once busy and thriving, but has now, through embargoes and the like, fallen into irretrievable decay; naturally it is peopled to a great extent by old salts full of weather-lore and of interminable yarns about their voyages. The talk of these men is quite the best part of the book: their discursive, half-deprecating, half-assured manner is admirably

rendered, but perhaps nowhere quite so well as in the chapter where Capt. Sands gives his views on second-sight. The old women of Deephaven are hardly less delightful with their trite maxims and pious ejaculations; indeed, it is wonderful that with very similar ways of talking they should all be so well discriminated: if a preference is to be assigned to any it must be to Mrs. Patton, the charwoman, whose character is thus pithily summed up by her neighbor Miss Dockum: "Good consistent Church-member; always been respected; useful among the sick." The two Boston-bred young ladies who are the heroines of the book are the least well done; they are sometimes rather tiresomely childish and "high-schooly" (if the phrase may be allowed) in their behavior, or in their asseverations that they do not mind their frocks being spoiled; but one gets reconciled to them in the end, as they manage so excellently to draw out all the other quaint characters. Most of the illustrations really illustrate the letterpress, and in themselves are good.

The American Hebrew, (27 April 1894), p. 7.

From sunny France to Puritan New England is quite a leap; but, with the fairy want of imagination, and under the guidance of so charming a cicerone as Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, we are quickly transported there. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have published a holiday edition of *Deephaven*, one of the earliest works from Miss Jewett's gifted pen. Even in the short lifetime of this book, the provincial life of New England has gone through many changes. Cities have grown, crowded towns and open country have been drawn into new relations with each other. This book preserves some of the phases of New England life and character which are gradually fading away, and which have never been better portrayed than by Miss Jewett. Although Deephaven cannot be found on the map, still there are many such places that will occur to the reader's mind as types of what Deephaven was, and in the simple New England village there occur incidents and a display of human nature, showing that nature is the same the world over. For a book descriptive almost with photographic effect of the quaint characters to be found in a New England seafaring town, one would have to look very far for the superior to Deephaven and the situations are so fascinating that the artists, Mr. and Mrs. Woodbury, have found ample scope for fifty illustrations, which admirably realize the very atmosphere of the book. The cover is an original one, being decorated with the Mayflower, an appropriate symbol for a book of New England life. This new

edition will charm all Miss Jewett's old friends, and make her hosts of new ones.

The Critic 20 (December 9, 1894) p. 375.

Any illustrated edition of Sarah Orne Jewett's "Deephaven" would be welcomed, as any other new edition would be; but the drawings by Charles Herbert and Maria Oakes Woodbury, in the edition under review, are so pretty and appropriate as to add considerably to the reader's pleasure. There is no mistaking the character of the scenery or the persons depicted. Nowhere but in New England will one find these sunlit village, streets, rough roads, rotting wharves, jolly old sea-captains, mackerel-salters, widows and gravestones -- for even the latter look jolly, with their dates of birth and deaths so very remote from one another. In her new preface the author adverts to the fact that when the book was first published, the summer movement from city to country had but just begun; since then, there have been many changes, mostly for the better, but the types have not changed very much, and "Deephaven" is still an accurate picture of the out-of-the-way New England village. The new edition is bound in a very pretty cover of white, dark green and silver. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

From Jewett's Correspondence

10 March 1893 to Louisa Dresel

About Deephaven: ... although I had not read Deephaven for a good while I felt as if I had come to be the writer's grandmother. I liked it better than I expected. It is the girliness in it that gives it value, but I must be thinking about a new preface -- which will say a few things to the modern reader! It is curious to find how certain conditions under which I wrote it are already outgrown. The best thing that can be done for the inhabitants of a State, says Plato, is to make them acquainted with each other -- and my little story was written (in the main) by a girl not much past twenty, who nevertheless could see that city people who were beginning to pour themselves into the country for the summer, had very little understanding of country people. It is very different now, isn't it? I wish I could write such a preface as George Sand used to write for her country sketches!

22 May 1893 to Frederick Mercer Hopkins

When I was writing the Deephaven sketches not long after I was twenty and was beginning my Atlantic work, it was just the time when people were beginning to come into the country for the summer in such great numbers. It has certainly been a great means of broadening both townsfolk and country folk. I think nothing has done so much for New England in the last decade; it accounts for most of the enlargement and great gain that New England has certainly made, as if there had been a fine scattering or sowing broadcast of both thought and money! But twenty years ago city-people and country-people were a little suspicious of each other -- and, more than that, the only New Englander generally recognized in literature was the caricatured Yankee -- I tried to follow Mrs. Stowe in those delightful early chapters of *The Pearl of Orr's Island* in writing about people of rustic life - - just as they were. Now there are a great many stories with this intention, but twenty years ago there were hardly any. 'Human nature is the same the world over' but somehow the caricature of the Yankee, the Irishman, the Frenchman takes its place first and afterwards comes a more true and sympathetic rendering.

Play Days 1878

The Atlantic monthly 42: 254, (December 1878), by Horace Scudder.

-- The qualities which made Miss Jewett's *Deephaven* so agreeable could not fail to appear in any book which she might write for children, and *Play Days* is characterized by the same temper of gentleness and good-breeding which gave distinction to the earlier book. We are old-fashioned enough to like good breeding, with all that the homely, significant word intends, and we like its mark in *Play Days* because it is so genuine and native. It is, we hasten to say, not modeled upon the type which we recognize instantly in the literature which young English masters and misses receive with apparent docility. There is not a governess in the book. There is no lad there either, -- that singular being whom Chauncy Wright so well described as "a boy with a man's hand on his head." There is no slang introduced for the purpose of shocking the governess or older sister, and giving the boy who uses it the reputation of an abandoned swearer and awful example; in effect, that conventional good-breeding which is founded on class distinction, and not on Christian democracy, is refreshingly absent from *Play Days*. The element which we find there is conspicuous also by its contrast with the noisy, ungrammatical, and boisterous type of young America which gets recognition enough in books for young people. The suggestions are of home life and the sweet sanctity of a protected childhood. Even the pathetic and lovely story of Nancy's Doll makes the misery of poverty to be but the dark background on which to sketch one or two golden figures; and *The Best China Saucer*, which comes as near as any to the conventional type of moral tales, is relieved by a grotesque humor and a charity which never fails. There is a refinement in the book which is very grateful, as we have said, but it does not take the form of a disagreeable fastidiousness. The humor is always spontaneous and simple, and not above a child's enjoyment; *The Shipwrecked Buttons* shows this in a very charming manner, and is the cleverest story in the book, from the originality of the frame-work, in which a number of little stories are set. There is a facility of writing which possibly misleads the author, for while all the stories are written with apparent ease, the writer does not always distinguish between what is essential to the story and what is mere graceful decoration. If Miss Jewett always had a story to tell, her charm of manner would add to the agreeableness of the story; but her interest in writing sometimes leads her to

forget that children want a story, and will be indifferent to many graces which please a writer. A more positive story would add greatly to the pleasure which Miss Jewett's book gives, and we trust that she will cultivate the power of invention. She needs the development of that side of a story-teller's gift to make her work singularly good; it is too good now not to be better.

Saturday Review. (January 25, 1879), p. 126.

Play-Days is a collection of lively stories of and for children.

Saturday Review. (February 22, 1879), p. 254.

Play-Days is a child's story-book likely to suit the readers for whom it is intended.

From Jewett's Correspondence

12 November 1878 to Theophilus Parsons

As for *Playdays* -- Mr. Osgood wished to bring out something of mine this fall and I hesitated between a collection of grown-up stories and this. People have always seemed to like these and I have been urged a great many times to put them together. At any rate I think -- though they don't take any high flights of fancy or eloquence -- they have nothing in them to do children harm. I meant there should not be and I tried to make them stories of everyday life and possible things! Some of them I wrote years ago and all of them have been printed before. I have always remembered with so much pleasure that you liked one of them: "Patty's dull Christmas."*

New Orleans Daily Picayune (Dec. 15, 1879) p. 7.

Old Friends and New 1879

The Literary World 10 (Nov. 22, 1879) 381.

Another volume from the pen that wrote *Deephaven*, with the qualities which made that so attractive; the same simplicity and freshness, keenness of insight, delicate humor and exquisite descriptive power. It is a rare gift to be able to write a good short story; it is an equally rare one to be able to use the materials which lie close at hand - at everybody's hand. To do this requires tact and skill, as well as an observing eye and nicety of discrimination, and, moreover, such breadth of sympathies, such a "fellow-feeling" for one's kind, that the events of the most common matter-of-fact life seem worth the telling; and all this Miss Jewett has. She is not only one of the sweetest and most charming of writers, but her pages have all along suggestions helpful towards a kindlier and higher way of living; not tacked on in the shape of a moral at the end, but running through them like a golden thread. These sketches are, "A Lost Lover" (which is a little prose idyl), "A Sorrowful Guest" (reminding us of Hawthorne's fancies), "A Late Supper" (one of the good short stories above referred to), "Mr. Bruce," "Lady Sydney's Flowers" (containing a whole sermon in brief), "Lady Ferry," and, last, one of the *Deephaven* experiences, called "A Bit of Shore Life," which is as good as it can be.

Good Company 4 (Nov. 3, 1879) p. 287-288.

It would be wholly a work of supererogation, if one should undertake to tell the readers of *Good Company* what delightful companionship they might find in the stories of Miss Jewett. In this last collection of them they will greet some "old friends" - "A Late Supper," and "A Sorrowful Guest," being among them -- and make some new ones not less pleasing than the old. Miss Jewett will have an audience somewhat less numerous than some of the other story tellers, but she will have an audience whose quality will be of the finest, and whose admiration will be of the heartiest. The purity of her sentiment, the unstrained felicity and naturalness of her style, the thorough likableness of all the people to whom she introduces us, all conspire to render her stories about as nearly perfect in their way as anything in this world ever gets to be. With which uncompromising sentiment the critic may as well take himself off, before he is tempted to some other enthusiastic utterance.

The title of this volume covers a series of stories, more or less melancholy, which will doubtless please very sentimental people.

The Nation. 29 (Dec. 25, 1879) p. 444.

'Old Friends and New' is a collection of Miss Jewett's stories, most of which have already appeared in the magazines. They are all gracefully done, and 'The Lost Lover' and 'Madame Ferry' may be especially commended for the delicate fancy they illustrate.

Saturday Review. (Dec. 27, 1879) p. 806.

Miss Jewett's *Old Friends and New* is a miniature collection of brief and graceful stories.

Scribner's Monthly 21 (Dec. 1880) 323.

IT is a highly commendable practice for a young writer to begin by studying his acquaintances and the social conditions of his own immediate neighborhood. A genuine talent is sure to find material, even where nature is most unpicturesque, and humanity, to the superficial eye, most barren of interest; for it is the depth and acuteness of the writer's insight, rather than the character of his subject, which primarily determines the value of his work. It is this obvious genuineness of Miss Jewett's slight and delicate sketches which redeem them, as a whole, from the commonplaceness into which they occasionally lapse. They are so manifestly the results of actual observation that they almost impress us as personal confidences, and make us ashamed of being caught napping. "A Bit of Shore Life," for instance, which, like several of the other sketches, is told in the first person, is, to all appearances, autobiographical, and betrays the most intimate knowledge of the modes of thought and the ways of life in New England. The fisherman's little boy, with his old manners and serious, practical talk, is a delightful study, and the description of the auction and the visit to the two dreary old maids give us glimpses into the very heart of New England. The other sketches in the volume, perhaps with the exception of "Mr. Bruce" and "A Lost Lover," impress us as being too feeble to endure long the light of permanent publicity. They are written, however, with considerable vivacity, and in irreproachable English, but their substance is so slight that the reader may be excused if he yields to the temptation to skip.

Some of them -- as, for instance, "Miss Sydney's Flowers" -- have a very juvenile air, as if they were originally intended for publication in a Sunday-school paper.

Atlantic Monthly 45 (May 1880), 685-6, by Horace Scudder.

Miss Jewett has already begun to appropriate an audience, and may, if she choose, whisper to herself of her readers as a clergyman openly speaks of his people. The womanly kindness which pervades her writings gives her readers a warmer interest in them than the mere weight of their literary quality might command. Yet we shall not be hasty to separate these elements of her work, but accept the pleasure which it gives, and, confessing her claim upon our regard, compare her latest book with her previous one, rather than with an absolute standard.

Deephaven, as our readers will easily remember, was a series of sketches, in which there was no development of plot, but a rambling description of life in a New England fishing-village, caught together by the simple device of bringing into the village two city girls of refinement, who occupy an old mansion, and sally forth from it on their voyages of discovery. The charm lay chiefly in the sympathetic delineation of character, and in the pictures of homely life seen from the side of this fresh, unspoiled, and reverent girlhood. The two young summer visitors at Deephaven won upon the fishermen and their families in the real life of their visit, as they do upon readers in the scarcely less real life of the book; and while they call upon us to look on this simple seaside picture they are not conscious that it is they who have most of our thoughts. Nothing could be purer than the relation between young and old which Deephaven disclosed.

In *Old Friends and New* the same charm reappears. The book is a collection of seven stories, some of which first saw the light in the pages of this magazine. We name the titles that our readers may recall those familiar to them: *A Lost Lover*, *A Sorrowful Guest*, *A Late Supper*, *Mr. Bruce*, *Miss Sydney's Flowers*, *Lady Ferry*, *A Bit of Shore Life*. One of them, at least, *Mr. Bruce*, appeared before the *Deephaven* sketches and is a lively piece of girlish fun, refined and agreeable, but immature, and hardly worthy a place in the volume. The stories, written and published at different times, have a singular and apparently unintended agreement in one theme. As in *Deephaven*, so in these disconnected stories, there are two *foci* about which the circle of events is described, the young maid and the old maid. Here, as there, it

is the life of the old as seen by young eyes which is delineated, and in nothing is the sweet reverence of youth, as portrayed in Miss Jewett's writings, more profoundly shown than in the frequent and touching pictures of old and lonely age. Miss Horatia Dane in *A Lost Lover*, Miss Catherine Spring in *A Late Supper*, Miss Sydney in *Miss Sydney's Flowers*, Lady Ferry in the story of that name, old Mrs. Wallis in *A Bit of Shore Life*, -- all these are portraits in Miss Jewett's *Dream of Old Women*, and with womanly chivalry she has taken under her special protection those whom the irreverence of youth has most flouted. Her old maids, moreover, are not pieces of faded sentimentalism; she has shown them in their dignity and homely truthfulness, but she lets us smile quietly with her at their quaintness.

The motive of love as a passion between the young is almost wholly absent from these stories, and as excursions among other emotions and principles they have a certain originality, due in part to this abstemiousness. Yet since no strong motive of any kind is called in, the stories remain chiefly sketches, studies, episodes. We shall not quarrel with Miss Jewett for not doing something else than what she has done; she has acquired already a greater firmness of touch in these pencil sketches, and the skill with which the pretty story of *A Late Supper* is worked up indicates that she may yet succeed in the more difficult art of making her characters act for themselves. At present they cling to her skirts, and she leads them about with her. *Cranford* is often mentioned in comparison with *Deephaven*, and there are points of likeness: in some respects *Deephaven* comes closer to nature, but perhaps that is because it is nearer home; yet *Cranford* has what *Deephaven* lacks, an individuality apart from the author. The figures are projected more boldly, because drawn by the hand of one who was primarily a novelist. In *Deephaven* and in these later sketches, the author has not yet felt the confidence which would enable her to withdraw her direct support from her characters. She cautiously holds, for the most part, to the form of the story which permits her to be present during most of the action. We suggest, as a practical experiment in story-telling, that she avail herself of the method which is sometimes used in Mr. James's stories, where one of the characters, not identified with the story-teller, is charged with this duty. It might gradually strengthen her in an ability to conceive of a story which had its own beginning, middle, and end, and was not taken as a desultory chapter of personal experience.

From Jewett's Correspondence

12 December 1879 from Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward

I thank you for your book which I have read through with great enjoyment. I found most of the friends were "old" to me after all but none the less welcome for that.

You have often been told what a quiet and finished touch you have. I need not repeat the story. Shall I tell you one thing I would like to see you do?

When you brought Mrs. Fields the roses there was a red one hidden among the protecting white. Once -- the day I met you -- I saw the flash of the red rose in your quiet face.

God makes both kinds and many people love the white better -- learn its lesson better -- if the other is there contrasting -- Give us sometime "the red red rose". And believe me to be with real thanks for the pleasure of receiving your book from yourself and with real appreciation of its high and calm and fine quality,

30 December 1879 from John Greenleaf Whittier

I am glad to get thy charming book from thy own hand. I have read "Deephaven" over half a dozen times and always with gratitude to thee for such a book -- so simple, pure, & so true to Nature. And "Old Friends & New" I shall certainly read as often. When tired & worried I resort to thy books and find rest & refreshing. I recommend them to every body, & every body likes them. There is no dissenting opinion; & already thousands whom thee have never seen love the author as well as her books.

Country By-Ways 1881

The Critic 1 (Nov. 5, 1881) pp. 304-5.

It is hard to analyze the charm of Miss Jewett's work. It is a subtle charm; flavor rather than shape; essence rather than body; not that the body lacks substance or the shape is faulty; but when one has weighed and considered all that is to be accredited to her for excellence of form, and for substantial aim and thought, their sum all told - though it is by no means small - does not seem adequate to explain the pleasure one has in reading all she writes. Perhaps genuineness comes nearest being the name of her secret; and her genuineness is truly genuine. It is as far as possible removed from that counterfeit article which is becoming so common in modern literature, and is one of the most exasperating affectations of the day; the thing which is to true genuineness and simplicity of style what cant is to religion, and which too often succeeds, as cant does, in so catching the words and the tone of the thing is feigns and imitates, that the world is deceived and led into doing it reverence for a season. It parades puerilities of detail with an elaborate and evident intent and consciousness; as if one said, "Go to! I am realistic, and now I will be simple." It spins out sentimentalisms, mawkish and endless. It travesties the daily speech and behavior of all people it professes to describe; travesties them even while using their very language. There is no better example in American literature today of the excellences which are opposed to these vices than Miss Jewett's work. Her portraiture of New England characters and scenes are inimitable; and her reproduction of New England dialect - so far as it is a dialect - is marvelously accurate. We do not know another writer who has done it so well. Mrs. Stowe, who is usually credited with giving it in perfection, often intensifies its peculiarities, and always exaggerates the proportion of oddly pronounced words in any given conversation. Even Mr. Howells does not always escape this error; neither does Rose Terry Cooke, whose New England stories are truer to the life than Mrs. Stowe's. All these writers draw their characters too much from exceptional men and women; persons who would be thought, even in New England, to have a "drefful queer way o' speakin'." But Miss Jewett's New Englanders are New England's own; there are tens of thousands of such in every State. She must have looked and listened with almost preternatural acuteness to have thus early in her youth caught so exactly the turns of sentences; the idiosyncrasies of thought as well as of phrase; the slurrings of

syllables, transmuting of vowels, and loppings of final letters, which make the New England speech a vernacular. Another of the accessories to the pleasantness of Miss Jewett's sketches is the unexpectedness of some of the out-door thoughts that she tells so naturally. Speaking of wild creatures, she says: "Taming is only forcing them to learn some of our customs; we should be wise if we let them tame us to make use of some of theirs." And apropos of a musk-rat that she sees hurrying into his hole to sup on mussels, she says: "I do not think people are thankful enough who live out of the reach of beasts that would eat them." In the charming paper, "River Drift-wood," is this sentence: "One sees the likeness between a harborless heart and a harborless country where no ships go and come." This is a poem.

There are many sly touches of humor in Miss Jewett's stories, as indeed there could not fail to be, seeing that her stories are studies from New England life. But the humor is always put in in the under thread, so that only a keen ear and eye will know how humorous it is; just as in old silvery brocades the silver is often kept in the under threads, and only those who understand and love tapestries know where the sheen comes from. Of this order of humorous touches is her mention of the New England spinster, who, at the age of sixty, fell in love with an aged clergyman.

"She began to feel uncomfortably self-conscious and to insist upon it to herself that she took no interest in the man whatever. She openly said (feeling all the time that she might be sorry for it) that she did not consider him gifted in prayer; but even this bold treason did not keep her heart from fluttering at the mention of his name. She married the clergyman and they were both profoundly grateful for the chance that had brought them together. Dear Miss Becky! She often thought that her life had been most wonderfully ordered. Everything had happened just right, and she did not see how it was that all the events of life, other people's affairs and things that seemed to have no connection with her, all matched her needs and fitted in at just the right time. If she had come to Brookfield the year before, she was sure that she would have had no temptation to stay there, though she and Mr. Beacham did seem to have been made for each other. Mr. Beacham would have said that it was the unfailing wisdom of Providence; but she wondered at it none the less, and was very grateful. Perhaps her life would seem dull, and not in the least conspicuous or interesting to most people; but for the dullest life, how much machinery is put in motion, and how much provision is made! While to its possible success the whole world will minister and be laid under tribute."

New York Times (Nov. 14, 1881) p. 3.

-- *Country By-ways*. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. -- Five pictures of New-England, with three stories of New-England life, make up this book. The author has the happiest conception of those peculiarities of New-England landscape, and with her one can float most delightfully down the Piscataqua, deck the boat with cardinal flowers, or fill the blue and white ginger-pot full of daisies. Books in this particular mode are often attempted, ever since Thoreau tried his master-hand, but they sometimes tire. The writer of "Country By-ways" is not only vigorous in her method of painting what she sees, but evinces exceeding delicately in the handling of her topics. The plaint of the "Mournful Villager" is a charming reminiscence of child life. In "An Autumn Holiday" a most charming story is told, and the exact words of two country gossips are given. One must smile over the vagaries of poor Daniel Gunn, who, being of weak mind, thought himself to be his sister Patience, and once went to meetin' in woman's clothes. "He'd fix'd himself nice as he could, poor creatur': he'd raked out Miss Patience's old Navarino bonnet with green ribbons and a willow feather, and sat it on right over his cap, and he had her bead-bag on his arm, and her turkey-tail fan." Daniel imitated the woman exactly, only "that he took off his bonnet all of a sudden, as if he'd forgot it, and put it under the seat - like he did his hat - that was the only thing he did that any woman wouldn't have done." "Andrew's Fortune," the history of a young man who expected a fortune, which did not come to him because the will was mislaid, is a well-told story. The book is remarkable for excellence of style and purity of language. "Country By-ways" is certainly a most charming New-England idyl.

New Orleans Daily Picayune (November 27, 1881), p. 2.

Miss Jewett is a sprightly, comforting writer. She is familiar with cattle and clover, green lanes and brooks. She makes common places attractive and common people interesting. In this volume is gathered "River Driftwood," "Andrew's Fortune," "An October Ride," "From a Mournful Villager," "An Autumn Holiday," "A Winter Drive," and other sketches.

The Literary World (Nov. 19, 1881), pp. 419-20.

This new collection of Miss Jewett's sketches, with the happy title, is not, as a whole, of so choice a quality as her previous work. Of the eight, the girls' story, "Good Luck," has evidently its place in order to help out the volume. "Becky's Pilgrimage," in spite of some capital touches, is hardly up to the writer's average. In "Driftwood" and "A Winter Drive" she indulges in little preachments which are not so natural to her as the descriptions - in which latter field she has had no superior. The moralizings are after a dainty fashion - she could do nothing that was not dainty, but as one reads one can hardly help the feeling that they are studied. They lack that spontaneity, that irrepressibility of things that *must* be said - which we have been used to expect in Miss Jewett's writings.

The other chapters are "An October Ride," full of those bits of outward life, not the most insignificant of which escapes her eye; "An Autumn Holiday," rounded off with a story; "From a Mournful Villager," deploring the extinction of certain types of New England village character and civilization; and "Andrew's Fortune," which is one of the best. There could hardly be a more perfect reproduction of New England country life than in this simple story. It is to such pages as these that one must turn, years hence, and not very many years either, to know what that kind of life was. Miss Jewett enters intimately into the feelings of the common people, and with rare fidelity and skill pictures everyday scenes and events. Whether or not her powers are limited to this range, whether she has equal ability outside of subjects with which her own personality is concerned, are at least questions which naturally suggest themselves to the reader.

Miss Jewett does not believe in the modern village improvement societies which do away with the front-yard fences:

People do not know what they lose when they make way with the reserve, the separateness, the sanctity of the front yard of their grandmothers. It is like writing down the family secrets for any one to read; it is like having everybody call you by your first name and sitting in any pew in church, and like having your house in the middle of the road, to take away the fence, which, slight as it may be, is a fortification round your home. More things than one may come in without being asked; we Americans had better build more fences than take any away from our lives.

We find occasional instances of careless writing in the pages of this little book. When its author can express herself in such crystalline prose as this:

Along the country road a short, stout-built woman, well wrapped with shawls, was going from her own home, a third of a mile back, to the next house, where there were already lights in one of the upper windows;

and this:

They were about the same size, and were cheerful old bodies, looking a good deal alike, with their checked handkerchiefs over their smooth, gray hair, their dark gowns made short in the skirts, and their broad little feet in gray stockings and low leather shoes without heels; how could she leave a sentence, standing by itself, in this way?

Not the sheltering shores of England but the inhospitable low coast of Africa and the dangerous island of the southern seas are left unvisited.

The meaning of which, whether taken as it stands, or in connection with anything else, we have tried in vain exactly to make out.

Cottage Hearth 7 (December 1881), p. 369.

This little volume will be welcomed by thousands of readers as a choice addition to their library, and will be found to be both fascinating and instructive. The author has the same wonderful power of description of whatever she meets with in her rambles that Thoreau possessed, and writes of it so charmingly that you forget your surroundings and find yourself accompanying her in her pleasant saunterings.

Her description of the little child's grave, with its simple stone, mossy with age, standing in the midst of a lonely pasture, with only the cellar of a house to show that a home once stood there, is very pathetic, and one feels better for having read it. Her delineation of character is perfectly true to life, and is very amusing and quaint.

Taken as a whole the book is as fragrant and fresh as a wayside flower, and as invigorating as a clear October morning.

The Sword and the Pen (8 December, 1881), p. 8, from an advertisement.

"The poetry of her sentiment, the unstrained felicity and naturalness of her style, the thorough likeableness of all the people to whom she introduces us, all conspire to render her stories about as nearly perfect in their way as any thing in this world ever gets to be." -- *Good Company*

"We find in them a certain kind of country life and scenery presented with delightful freshness and truth to nature. They belong to the most

refined order of literature, yet they have a fidelity that is at times almost photographic in their depiction of the quiet scenes and the rural characters which form their basis. Miss Jewett is a writer to be admire without reservation." -- *Boston Gazette*.

"Eight pen-pictures of New England rural life and character." -- *Providence Journal*.

The Nation (December 15, 1881), p. 479.

To have known these sketches already in the pages of the *Atlantic* seems to make them only the more welcome for their delicate discrimination, their gentle appreciation of the old New England character. Miss Jewett not only makes us intimate with the roads and lanes, the wide woods and the old farms beyond the Piscataqua, but the sketches read like a loving memorial of a generation that is just passing out of our sight. Such a memorial is needed, for it is so easy to outline in the rough the stern and homely traits of New England life that too many will never know its tenderness and its beauty. That reflex wave from beyond the Hudson River whence comes, as Miss Hewett shows, the typical "American," will soon sweep away the old traditions and the old characteristics. The style of the book befits the subject. Perfectly plain and without pretension, it still never falls *simplicité* and *simplesse*. If we are sometimes conscious, as in 'River Driftwood,' that the description is something long, for all that we are won to read on with the same restful feeling with which one listens to a strain of sweet music repeating itself again and again.

The Independent 34 (March 30, 1882) 11.

. . . Sarah Orne Jewett has achieved for her self an enviable reputation in American literature, and each new book that comes to us from her leaves with us the impression that she has not yet touched the high level of her capacity. *Country By-Ways* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) is certainly a very delicious book to read. It deals with very simple life, but looks at it with the eye of a poet and a humorist. These sketches are pictures of a grand old life, now passing from the earth, by one who knew and loved it and has the power to describe it. Much has she seen of it, too, in her Berwick home, and as she drove over the highways and by-ways, with the honored physician, her father, to whom this book is dedicated. Many of these sketches must be portraits. Had we lived in Berwick, we could tell who the grand old lady was that entertained a child with stately kindness, sweetened with

cakes in "hearts and rounds," on a silver tray, and with a small glass of wine. The grace of saying things is in the book, with a plenty of humor and a power of seeing in whatever comes up at least one thing and perhaps many things more than others. What have we had lately more delicious than the story of the poor, crazy Captain Gunn, who was right enough in the morning, but after dinner went "off the hooks" entirely and imagined himself his deceased sister. After all, the charming thing in the book is its New England flavor and the love and reverence with which Miss Jewett lays her dainty hand on the old homesteads, half-abandoned in the country, and makes the very stones of the tumbled-down walls eloquent and poetic. Nothing escapes her eye and nothing fails to get its value in her subtle weighing, not even the little, cold cider-apples in the grass, "with one side knurly and one shiny bright red or yellow cheek, . . . wet with dew and a black ant running anxiously over them as you turn them round and round, to see where to bite." Who has drawn a finer picture than this? "The house was low and long and unpainted, with a great many frost-bitten flowers about it. Some hollyhocks were bowed down despairingly, and the morning glory vines were more miserable still. Some of the smaller plants had been covered to keep them from freezing, and were braving out a few more days; but no shelter would avail them much longer, and already nobody minded whether the gate was shut or not, and part of the great flock of hens were marching proudly about among the wilted posies, which had stretched their necks wistfully through the fence for all Summer."

Atlantic Monthly 49 (March 1882) 420-21.

It is perhaps a little forced to call Miss Jewett's sketches a book of travel, yet the reader will find their value to lie chiefly in the skill with which the writer has applied a traveler's art to scenes which lay within easy reach of her own home. Here are the observations of minor incidents, the catching of effects produced by side lights, the rediscovery of the familiar, the looking at a landscape from under one's arm. One is not sure that the sketch which he is reading may not glide gently into a story, or that the story may not forget itself in a sketch. Miss Jewett herself seems sure only of catching and holding some flitting movement of life, some fragment of experience which has demanded her sympathy. One of the stories, indeed, Andrew's Fortune, has a more deliberate intention, and we are led on with some interest to pursue the slight turns of the narrative; yet in this the best work is in the successive pictures of

the village groups in the kitchen and at the funeral. It would be difficult to find a formal story which made less draught upon one's curiosity than Miss Becky's Pilgrimage, yet one easily acquires a personal regard for Miss Becky herself. Miss Jewett's sketches have all the value and interest of delicacy executed watercolor landscapes; they are restful, they are truthful, and one is never asked to expend criticism upon them, but to take them with their necessary limitations as household pleasures .

Nevertheless, though we cannot persuade ourselves to criticize this work, we are impelled to ask for something more. Miss Jewett has now given us three volumes, besides the one for children, and has shown us how well she can do a certain thing. The sketches and stories which make up these volumes vary in value, but they are all marked by grace and fine feeling; they are thoroughly wholesome; they have a gentle frankness and reverence which are inexpressibly winning, when one thinks of the knowingness and self-consciousness and restlessness which by turns characterize so many of the contributions by women to our literature. It is only when we come to compare Miss Jewett with herself that we become exacting. She has transformed the dull New England landscape into a mossy rural neighborhood; she has brought us into the friendliest acquaintance with people whom we thought we knew and did not know; and now we want her help in knowing other and fuller lives; we are eager to have her interpretation of people who impress us at once as well worth knowing. We are sure that she will bring out what we could not discover by ourselves; but in our impatience we begin to fear that we are to meet the same people and visit the same houses when a new book is offered. Has not Miss Jewett visited all her neighbors, and would not a longer flight of travel give her new types?

That is the way with us. No sooner do we get these charming village scenes, for which we have been asking our writers, than we want something else. Well, our discontent is of Miss Jewett's making. She has opened the eyes of the summer boarder, and when the summer boarder goes back to town it is with a wish to take the friendly Miss Jewett in company. We wish that this light traveler would plume herself for a braver excursion. Possible we are asking too much, and the skill which executes these short sketches is conditioned upon their very limitations. Yet we heartily wish that this delightful writer would reserve her strength, and essay a larger work. To fail in a long journey may even give one an access of power and dignity when resuming a stroll, and we value the fine moral sense and delicate sympathy of Miss Jewett so highly that we are reluctant to see her

gifts possibly diminish in efficacy by too close a confinement and too narrow a range.

From Jewett's Correspondence

12 June 1881 to Theophilus Parsons

Just now I am making up a book which is to come out in the fall -- called Country By-Ways. It is mostly sketches of country life -- and of my own country life. So far I have simply tried to write down pictures of what I see -- but by and by I am going to say some things I have thought about those pictures. I don't know whether the pictures or the meditations will seem truest, but I know that I have found out some bits of truth for myself -- and I know one other thing -- that nobody has helped me to think more than you have.

The Mate of the Daylight 1884

The Critic 94 (Dec. 8, 1883) p. 500.

The publication of a new volume by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett is a red-letter day in the annals of New England story-writing. Miss Jewett has caught the spirit of New England in its pleasantest mood. The men and women she paints are not the hard-fisted, money-loving 'Yankees' of the unsympathetic story-writer, but the simple-hearted, hard-working, quick-witted village-folk, who live and die in their native places, but whose sons and daughters go west and grow up with the country. The first story, 'The Mate of the Daylight,' from which the book takes its title, is a 'longshore tale, and is (if we may say so) fresh with salt breezes. We recommend Miss Jewett's stories to foreign, particularly English, readers, for a true picture of New England pastoral life. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

Independent 35 (Dec. 27, 1883) p. 11.

The Mate of the Daylight, by Sarah Orne Jewett (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) takes its title from the first, and, perhaps, the best, of the stories in this new publication. To those who have read her most charming and characteristically New England "Country By-Ways," this book will lack something. The breezy freshness and full up-springing life that filled the first is not found in this; but, on the other hand, the range of subjects is greater and the characters more varied. The old sea captains in the opening story, telling their long yarns, sitting at the door of the fish-house, in their busy idleness, watching the mist coming in, and the fishing boats, scudding before the wind, bring with them the smell of the sea. We see them and become interested in their bits of gossip, when, suddenly, their tale is told, and Miss Jewett carries us off to a farm-house in the Spring time, where, as she says, "the frogs were lifting up their voices in all the swamps, having discovered all at once that they were thawed out, and that it was time to assert themselves"; when "a faint tinge of greenness suddenly appeared on the much-abused and weather-beaten grass by the road-sides, and the willows were covered with a mist of greenish gold." Here was the home and here was lived the life of a "Landless Farmer." Miss Jewett goes a little out of the line of her former characters to introduce a new species to us, not nearly as likeable as those she generally portrays; in fact, a villain in a small way. But she cannot endure him long. He runs his career and disappears, to give place to

"Miss Debby's Neighbors," where we feel more at home, and where, if we may allowed to say so, the author does also. And with reason; for in this story all the brightness and cheeriness of the people we met in the "Country Byways," translated out of the good old New England days, come back, and the simple story is told in the naturalness of style that is the charming characteristic of Miss Jewett.

Literary World 15 (Jan. 12, 1884) p. 12.

Eight of Miss Jewett's recent sketches make up this small volume, dedicated to "A. F." (Annie Fields?) Besides the pretty idyl which gives the title, there are other two of her best pieces, delineating country ways and character, the men and women who figure in them being so true to life that one can almost point out their like in any rural neighborhood. Could anything be more real than the incidents and human nature in these two, "A Landless Farmer," and "An Only Son?" In these, as in "Andrew's Fortune" in a former collection, the author is at her best. Equally good in its way is "Miss Debby's Neighbors," a capital sketch, full of the genuine New England vernacular as it is actually talked, not made to order. The others are "A New Parishioner," "Tom's Husband," "The Confessions of a House-Breaker," and "A Little Traveller." Miss Jewett says:

Heaven only knows the story of the lives that the gray old New England farm-houses have sheltered and hidden away from curious eyes as best they might. Stranger dramas than have ever been written belong to the dull-looking, quiet homes, that have seen generation after generation live and die.

This leads us to ask why, as Miss Jewett knows New England common life so thoroughly, and has such an insight into motives and character, will she not try her hand at a long story, taking in the material of some provincial town, widening her horizon; and so in her strong and graceful way develop life-histories instead of incidents. She is always sure of a friendly public.

Nation 38 (January 17, 1884) p. 59.

Miss Jewett's stories need no commendation, but we delay a moment to mark them as another example, of which there are so few among the works of women, of that careful study which finds and brings out what we have to call the negative side of life. The world is accustomed to such positiveness and downrightness of fact and motive that it does not often realize the force of what does not happen - the meaning of *not doing*. Of the stories before us, "The New

Parishioner" and "The Only Son" are striking illustrations, and, at the same time, are by far the most interesting. Miss Jewett, moreover, has a style, in the true sense, a manner of expression, fitting and beautiful, and her own.

Overland Monthly 3 (January 1884), 111.

----Nothing could be more charming in its way than Miss S. O. Jewett's last collection of sketches, *The Mate of the Daylight*. To our mind, it is neither better nor less good than previous collections from her pen, but on the same plane of excellence; and it may very well be added that it is doubtful whether any higher plan exists in this sort of sketch writing. The two irresistibly charming traits of all these little tales are the fine insight and sympathy shown in dealing with provincial New England character, and the exceeding simplicity and grace of diction. Mrs. Stowe and Rose Terry Cooke both equal Miss Jewett, or even excel her, in life-like reproduction of New England speech and ways; but Miss Jewett's sketches show a keener sympathy with the New England heart. ----

The Saturday Review (January 26, 1884) 129.

. . . . and, *The Mate of the "Daylight"* are, in their several ways, fair average specimens.

The Dial 4 (January 1884), 230.

A few of the aspects of old-fashioned New England country life furnish the subject-matter of a volume by Sarah Orne Jewett, called, from the first of the eight sketches which it includes, "The Mate of the Daylight." They are sketches rather than stories, and it is as such alone that they are possessed of interest. The bareness, the crudity, the provincialism of the life which they picture is well depicted, although Howells has done it better. "Heaven only knows the story of the lives that the gray old New England farm-houses have sheltered and hidden away from curious eyes as best they might. Stranger dramas than have ever been written belong to the dull looking, quiet houses, that have seen generation after generation live and die." This is very profoundly true, but Miss Jewett has shown us little of it in this volume. She has not gone far below the surface, nor can we gain much insight into the deeper recesses of this life from a perusal of her work.

The Manhattan 3 (February 1884), 188.

Among writers of short stories in our republic, there are none who can approach Miss Sarah Orne Jewett in her special field. That field is New England characters and scenes. In these her touch has a felicity which is due to both nature and art. Some of her best traits are found in a little volume just published, entitled *The Mate of the Daylight and Friends Ashore*. There are eight stories in the book, of which the leading one, "The Mate," though excellent in its way, seems to us to have less of her peculiar charm than those which follow. It would be hard for her to make uninteresting any tale she might choose to tell, but the old sea captains with their yarns, though life-like, seem not drawn with that rare touch she displays elsewhere. Of the stories which follow, "Miss Debby's Neighbors," has all the brightness and breeziness of "Country By-ways," and surely a more delightful book in its way was never written. But all the others share with "Miss Debby" that sweet and simple style, so winning in its naturalness, so wholly free from affectation, and that admirable construction in which the narrator, an indubitable artist, manages so cleverly to conceal her art.

Cottage Hearth 10 (Feb. 1884), 62.

Miss Jewett's books all have a quiet, homely flavor, which renders them thoroughly good reading. The "Mate of the Daylight" is no exception to the rule.

Atlantic Monthly 53 (May 1884), 712-3, by George P. Lathrop.

Much less ambitious than any of these longer productions, the short stories which Miss Jewett has added to her former charming group reflect sundry quiet phases of American life with far greater precision. It is one of the difficulties of writing sustained fiction in this country that, society being in a state of flux, indeterminate and shifting, and there being no recognized theory as to its rules, structure, and movement, each novelist has to make his own theory. Thus every work of art becomes partly also an essay, giving the author's opinion as to how the society under his notice is framed; and as the whole matter is in dispute, it is hard for him or for any one to decide how near he is to the truth. Short stories, being less complex, escape that problem, and in few are the advantages of immunity so well employed as in Miss Jewett's. One can scarcely imagine anything that should approach more closely to real occurrences than these do. People are introduced, sitting in their

quiet New England houses, or living along-shore, with as little preparation or grouping as if we had come unawares upon the originals themselves; a single incident suffices for the machinery and everything proceeds so exactly as it would in fact that when the quaint, veracious talk, the hopes and fears and little quarrels or joys centring upon that incident, have all been detailed, the story comes to a close because it could not go on without becoming a different story. This method would never do for a novel; and yet it includes a vast deal of refined art little "composition" as there may seem to be about it. The modest sketches and studies which it produces are based on long and sensitive observation; they require delicate and ingenious imagination. Miss Jewett connects in the mind of an old amid a bit of twisted stick, grotesquely like a man's stunted figure, with her discarded lover, come back in mature years; when the renewed episode of sentiment has again faded away, the old maid feels lighter hearted because the wind had swept the suggestive stick from her window-sill. A Landless Farmer tells the tale of a humble New England Lear, who, after surrendering his farm to one of his daughters, is painfully neglected and snubbed until his wandering son comes home to his rescue. Finally, when the daughter is going away, she strips the house of nearly everything, and is scorned by her brother for even rummaging in the pork-barrel. "Well, I'm glad, I'm sure," says the magnanimous farmer-Lear. "I should n't want any child of mine to be without pork." The scale is small, the detail prosaic; but the effects are pathetic and humorous and true. An Only Son is the best piece in the volume; its motive of suspense and emotion is a good one, and the reverse, the utter absence of exaggeration, in the author's treatment intimate a purity of feeling like Björnson's. But it is in the conversation of her people that Miss Jewett's nicest faculty appears. The talk idiomatically, which is hardly dialect and does not become a stumbling-block. They express ideas of an exact fidelity to their quaint bringing-up. And all this is brought before one so gently and incidentally, that to read Miss Jewett is like listening to the casual reminiscences of a lady, say, in a fire-lit study; until the half-seen speaker gives place to the figures she calls up, and we find that there is a little drama going on. She has not sought the broader effects necessary to the novel; but, it is a thing to hope for that we may have novelists who shall use on a large scale, with stronger and more stirring situations, the same thoroughness and unstrained command of materials which in her work are so engaging.

William Dean Howells comments on *The Mate of the Daylight* in "Open Letters."

... and I have just been reading Miss Jewett's last volume of sketches with exactly the keen delight with which one would meet her farmer and sailor folk in the flesh and hear them talk. Indeed, one does meet them really in her book; and it would be easy to multiply instances on every hand of the recognition of the principle of realism in our fiction.

From Jewett's Correspondence

18 January 1884 from John Greenleaf Whittier.

I have just got back from Amesbury where with the glass below zero I felt the lack of a furnace, though we kept four fires burning all the time and sometimes five. While there I re-read thy "Mate of the Daylight", and enjoyed it greatly. It seems like having thee in company.

A Country Doctor 1884

Boston *Daily Globe* (June 15, 1884) p. 14.

Out of the intense passion beneath New England life appears one of those tragedies most often unwritten, yet frequent and indicative of the troubled waters below. It is described with natural colors and manners, as, parenthetically, may be added of the entire story, which reproduces with striking fidelity the atmosphere and life of country Massachusetts, and, in a minor degree, that of New England. Born of this tragedy, and inheriting strong qualities, some of which tend to the grouping of tragical incidents again, is a young girl, with whose future the art of the writer is to deal. A country doctor, who is a beautiful creation finished and radiant, is the guardian spirit, and in his home watches her nature develop, and directs it to its highest accomplishment. Under his influence she grows into the fulfillment of her true destiny. It is a noble plea to women to rise above their generally-accepted conditions and to know themselves; and, understanding the part in human action they are best fitted to perform, to devote themselves bravely to it. The world is free to their talents and endeavor, and their noblest duty is to discover the one, and to unflinchingly prosecute the other; and the author pictures the saint-like consecration of such a woman. But nearer is the advocacy of woman's peculiar mission as a physician. Her doubts of her capacity, the opposition of public opinion, and the difficulties that society and love will present, are all shown and weighed in one woman's experience. We know of no author who so faithfully and eloquently has described the moral beauty of a physician's calling and relations to humanity. It becomes Christ-like in its best expression. But while this grand purpose animates and leads one enthusiastically, there are rare pictures of New England life, fine portraits of characters, gems of thought and an artistic construction, which make the story of notable strength and power. It is a work of great excellence.

The Congregationalist (June 26, 1884) p. 216.

A Country Doctor, by Sarah O. Jewett, is a most agreeable book. One hardly knows whether it is about Dr. Leslie or Nan, his charming ward, who follows in his steps professionally, and whose purpose to become a physician is almost, but not quite, overthrown by the pleas of a lover. The quiet, natural flow of the story, the positive and delightful individuality of its characters, and its wise and wholesome teaching upon a most important subject, render

it much superior to most literature of its sort. Miss Jewett has a positive genius for describing such places as Oldfields and Dunport, and such people as many of their residents herein mentioned.

Literary World 15 (June 28, 1884), p. 211.

We do not know whether Miss Jewett has written *A Country Doctor* in obedience to a spontaneous impulse or in compliance with the suggestion of her publishers or of some of her critics. The story is pleasant reading, like everything that we have hitherto had from her hand; but it cannot be said to be the revelation of any new or any greater power. It is simply an expanded sketch, characterized by the same agreeable literary qualities with which we have become familiar in her previous writings. There is not in it the material for a novel proper, and it makes no pretense to being such. It is quite free from "padding" of any sort, and within its limitations it is neatly finished. The young heroine's individuality is defined in lines of simple grace; the character of the elder physician is set before us with the reality of a portrait from the life, while their worthy neighbors, the inhabitants of rustic Oldfields appear in the truth of the mental and moral differences underlying the homely speech and unsophisticated manners common to them all. In Miss Jewett's writings there is always something to be prized beyond a refined and graceful style and a faculty of delicate perception; these are the evident outcome of womanly sentiment, and of a sincere humanity that finds its chief food for thought in the fact of the kinship and mutual dependence of men, high and low, wise and ignorant, strong and weak.

A Country Doctor is the third recent fiction by an American author which has had for its heroine a practicing physician. Yet there is little resemblance between the three. Mr. Howells's Dr. Breen is a clever and good young woman whom, the author makes it plain, has mistaken a temporary discontent with life consequent on an unhappy experience for a true calling to the physician's career, and who is lucky enough to discover the error in time to transfer her womanly activities to a strictly domestic sphere. Miss Phelps's Doctor Zay makes up her mind after a distressing mental conflict, that she can contrive to combine matrimony with the exercise of her professional abilities in a more limited area than she originally intended. Miss Jewett's Nan, avoiding sweeping theories and heated argument, and speaking with modest conviction only for herself and the few who resemble her, declares her decision to follow and abide by the sure prompting of nature.

We cannot leave *A Country Doctor* without one further word. However agreeable the cultured reader may pronounce it to be, he must add the qualification that it is, nevertheless, a less satisfactory literary product than most of the author's shorter works. The book, in spite of its added pages, remains but a sketch, and a sketch is never bettered by being extended beyond its natural limits; its best effect is mainly dependent upon its right proportion. Mr. James's best writing has taken the shape of sketches; *Madame des Mauves* and *A Passionate Pilgrim* are better pieces of work than *The Portrait of a Lady*. An author may no doubt be capable of producing both novels and sketches equally good in their way, but the qualities requisite for the one kind of writing by no means imply possession of those needful for the other. To write a thoroughly good sketch or short story is not an easy task, and it is not to undervalue the literary gift of an author who can do this to say that powers of another and a greater kind go to the making of a novel of the first order.

New York Times (July 7, 1884) p. 3.

We hardly know how to call this quite thoughtful work - whether it be a romance or a study - for it partakes somewhat of the character of each; but what one can most particularly appreciate is the charm of the book itself and those fine delineations of the manners, habits, and ways of thought of New-England people. The dramatic element the author possesses, as is shown by the introductory chapter, where Ad'line Prince, * crazed by her misery, hesitates for a moment whether she, with her child, will not seek relief then, again, nothing can be more touching than Ad'line's death, when, seeking the old farm where she was born, she goes to sleep "never to wake again in the world." The story runs as follows: Near Oldfields lives old Mrs. Thatcher on some small homestead. She has a daughter, Adaline. Adaline, who inherits some peculiarities of the Thatcher blood, has ideas above her station, is not contented with a prosaic farm existence, but goes to Dunport and becomes a factory hand. There she meets a naval surgeon, Prince, and marries him. Prince's family are bitterly opposed to the match. They hold their heads high in the old town of Dunport, occupying the best position. Ad'line quarrels bitterly with them and with her husband. The husband dies, and Ad'line, scorning the proffered aid of the Princes, disappears, with her child, Nan, and seeks her mother. Ad'line has in her misery taken to drink, and she and her baby are clad in rags. Mrs. Thatcher, the grandmother of Nan, takes care of her, and Dr. Leslie, who is an old friend of the family and the Galen of

Oldfields, becomes guardian of Nan. Nan is different from the other country girls. She knows she has aristocratic relatives, and is always drawing castles in the air. When Mrs. Thatcher dies Dr. Leslie takes Nan to his house. The vocation of Nan's father comes to the surface. She wants to be a doctor. Leslie humors her, and she begins her studies. She goes to Dunport and sees her aunt, a rather prim specimen of humanity, and the niece and Miss Prince become friends. In a hundred ways the country bred girl shows the good character of the Prince stock. Miss Prince, the aunt, has a protégé, George Gerry, and she wants Nan to marry him, but Nan, though she likes him and might love him, declines his proffered suit, believing that her vocation is to be a doctor. This is the somewhat bare outline of a story, which Miss Jewett has filled up with very careful shadings.

The character of Dr. Leslie is an exceedingly beautiful one, so full is it of human sympathy. He is a strong believer in heredity, and studies lovingly in little Nan Prince the development of his theory. The talk he has with an old college mate, Ferris, also a doctor, is, besides being cleverly philosophical, replete with the keenest appreciativeness of New-England:

"I tell you, Leslie, that for intense, self-centered, smoldering volcanoes of humanity, New-England cannot be matched the world over. It is like the regions of Iceland that are full of geysers. I don't know whether it is the inheritance from those people who broke away from the old countries, and who ought to be matched to tremendous circumstances of life, but now and then there comes an amazingly explosive and uncontrollable temperament that goes all to pieces from its own conservation and accumulation of force. * * * It is perfectly wonderful what this climate does for people who come to it - a South of Ireland fellow, for instance, who has let himself be rained on and then waited for the sun to dry him again, and has grubbed a little in a bit of ground, just enough to hint to it had better be making a crop of potatoes for him. I always expect to see the gorse and daisies growing on the old people's heads to match the cabins. But they come over here and forget their idleness, and in a week or two the east winds are making them work, and thrashing them, if they are slow, worse than any slave driver who ever cracked a whip lash."

Perhaps physicians themselves not given to reach outside of their professional text books might study this story with advantage. The author has much to say in regard to that "haphazard way of doctoring in which the health of the patient was secondary to the promotion of new theories, and the young scholar who could write a puzzling technical paper too often out-

ranked the old practitioner who conquered some malignant disorder single handed." The twin brothers, Jake and Martin Dyer, talking over their mugs of cider, and their wives, and old Mrs. Meeker, the village busybody, are all pictures taken from the life. As this is the first extended work of the author having elements of fiction in it, it is worthy of having a large circle of readers.

Note

This review contains a number of factual errors. The following have been corrected. Nan Prince's family name is changed to Price throughout; her home village name is changed from Oldfields to Oldham. A reference to Mr. Thacher's death probably should have been to Mrs. Thacher's death.

Dial 5 (July, 1884), 66, by William Payne Morton.

"A Country Doctor," by Sarah Orne Jewett, is one of the most satisfactory books of the season. The writer has not attempted to do more than lay fully within her power; and consequently has done most admirably a work for which her many studies and sketches of New England provincial life have so well fitted her. Upon its own plane and within its own limits the execution is almost perfect. Here we may find close and accurate observation, delicacy of touch, genuine discrimination, firm and sympathetic grasp of character, and instinctive refinement. The story, as we might naturally expect from the nature of the writer's previous work, is simplicity itself; but the fascination of its manner is such as to leave no desire for any greater intricacy of plot. Indeed, anything more intricate would not be in harmony either with the style or the type of life which it presents. It belongs to the class of novels with a purpose - the purpose in the present case being to serve as a plea for the adoption of the medical profession by women; and this purpose becomes just a little obtrusive towards the end of the story - a very little indeed, but enough so to slightly detract from the value of what would otherwise be a faultless piece of work. At all events, the choicest part of the book is the earlier half, in which this purpose is as yet hardly foreshadowed, and which portrays the childhood and early youth of the heroine in a way of which the full charm can only be felt upon such a careful and lingering perusal as the book well deserves.

The Critic 2 (July 12, 1884) p. 16.

Few authors have so assured a reputation of its kind as Miss Sarah Orne Jewett. The

genuineness of her work, the absolute photography of her quiet skill in delineating country life, the justness of her method and the perfection of its results, have been praised, we believe, without a dissenting voice. Nothing succeeds like success, and nothing dazzles like success. In view of this general verdict, we feel a self-distrust that makes us fain to drop the subject with some general remark to the effect that in 'A Country Doctor' (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) the world is blessed with another of Miss Jewett's admirable books. For it would be no hypocrisy; though we do not personally enjoy it, we are sure that her work is admirable. There is nothing in the world to find fault with, except the one fact that we cannot read it. It is not that the paragraphs of 'A Country Doctor' are long; Mr. James's paragraphs are long. It is not that it is all about poor people; we are very fond of poor people, especially of Mrs. Poyser. It is not because it deals with the country; we adore the country. It is not because the story is commonplace; for we read through 'An Average Man' from cover to cover. We do not know why it is - but we cannot read it. The facts, as nearly as we have been able to gather them, are these: A young woman who has married unhappily comes back to her native village to die, leaving a little child. The child is adopted by the village doctor, and in time becomes a doctor herself. Several of her friends gently try to dissuade her, but she gently perseveres, and closes the volume and the novel on its three hundred and fifty-first page with the exclamation: 'O God! I thank thee for my future!' We are perfectly sure that the many pages and chapters are crowded to overflowing with what are known as 'inimitable pictures' of New England life; but the life is so still, even when the neighbors are gossiping, that the description of it may well be called photographic.

The Nation 39 (July 31, 1884) pp. 96-7.

It is a positive pleasure to think how many young voices will be reading aloud Miss Jewett's delightful sketch of 'A Country Doctor,' this summer. We say sketch, for though the book has been heralded as a novel, it is as strictly a sketch as any of those which have won for her a now most enviable fame. Mrs. Burnett and George Fleming are the only names that could be placed before hers, or those who are now in the full tide of work. Both of these have had, in their lives and in their work, a large foreign element, while Miss Jewett's is as purely and finely New England as Whittier's poetry. Her instinctive refinement, her graceful workmanship, place her second only to Miss Thackeray. Her country doctor is unmistakably a

loving portrait from life. We like him and his friend all the better for a reminiscence of the Doctor May and the Doctor Spencer of thirty years ago. Not that they are in the least copies - only examples of the same type. By the side of Doctor Leslie is a most gracious figure, first a wayward child, then a girl of eager heart but steady will. So far as the story follows the thread of her fortune, and develops her character, it might be called a novel; but plot in the ordinary sense it has none. When, at the close, the heroine, "in an ecstasy of life and strength and gladness," said, "O God, I thank Thee for my future," she looked forward to no happiness of wife or mother, but to the profession - still unusual, though no longer isolated - for which she had patiently trained herself in medical school and hospital.

The fact that such writers as Mr. Howells, Miss Phelps, and Miss Jewett should within four years so carefully study what is practically the same subject, makes it worth while to compare their stories closely. Passing any question of relative literary merit, and taking them all as widely-read and much-liked books, there are remarkable points both of likeness and difference between them. In the first place, no one of the heroines works for her living. Doctor Breen "was rich enough to have no need of her profession as a means of support." Of Doctor Zay it is said "loftily" by the old lady, 'Doctor is quite independent of her practice.' Between Doctor Leslie and her aunt, Nan Prince is sure of a fortune. They are all beautiful. Mr. Howells gives us "the tender curve of her cheek, the soft round of her chin." Doctor Zay "was the eidolon of glorious health." "There was a sort of golden halo round Nan's pretty head." In costume and carriage they are all of the choicest. Doctor Breen only studied simplicity, but "she did not finally escape distinction in dress and manner." Doctor Mulbridge "grew more and more conscious of her elegance and style, now that she stood before him." Doctor Zay has almost a superfluity of violet muslin, of skin of seal and leopard; she has "a glorious poise," and moves "with a swift and splendid motion." As Nan walked up the broad aisle of St. Anne's Church, "the rows of heads all looked commonplace by contrast.¼ There was something so high and serene in Anna Prince's simplicity and directness." They are further alike, that each has had the best special training for her career that the time afforded. That they count two out of three for homœopathy may go for what it is worth.

As to motive, we come to marked differences. Dr. Breen turned to her study in the heart-sick reaction from the treachery of her friend, the faithlessness of her affianced. She is watching her first patient at Jocelyn's. Dr. Zay

"always had a taste for science, she inherited it besides." Her father was a physician, but died when she was only fifteen. She has practised four years in a Maine village. "She don't fall short of three thousand every year of her life," is the assertion. Nan's father, whom she never knew, was also a physician, but it was her constant sympathy, her affectionate admiration for her guardian, the "country doctor," which determined the restless longing of her finely-endowed nature toward the same career as his own. Either motive is a likely one, but the last is the more natural and more healthful.

Of three women, not one of whom is over thirty, it is hardly time to speak of conclusions. So far as they are known to the story-teller, Dr. Breen has married an able, active man; and, a childless though happy wife, she devotes her skill to the women and children in her husband's factories, "though the conditions under which she now exercises it certainly amount to begging the whole question of woman's fitness for the career she had chosen." Dr. Zay, upon the last page, yields to a lover whose expected fortune may make possible what he ardently promises, that she shall not give up her profession. Nan has had her opportunity, which she gravely, reverently puts by as a blessing which was not for her. "She had come to her work as Christ came to his, not to be ministered unto but to minister."

Once more a difference. Mr. Howells may not quite have intended it, but his heroine first turns to her lover in the profound dejection of the discovery of failure in herself - her heart, her strength are not equal to her demand upon them. Dr. Zay's lover gains his advantage when she is physically exhausted with a night of watching and a struggle with delirium tremens. Does this mean that neither would have yielded if she had been strong? Nan stands waiting in all the success of her hope. Yet Miss Jewett has felt obliged to supply even her with another motive than the love of her profession for refusing marriage. Nan believes that inherited tendencies bar her from it. "Qui s'excuse, s'accuse." Does not this amount to an agreement among the three that home and hope of children draw a woman more strongly than anything else can?

Space fails us for the inferences this extended comparison suggests. Supposed cases are not logical arguments: they are only illustrations; but when independent illustrations strikingly agree, it is more than an accidental coincidence. To put the case fully in all its bearings, Doctor Breen should be successful: Nan's lover should be a strong, masterful, yet tenderly sympathetic man. But the great fact remains, no one yet ventures to represent a woman struggling as most men struggle to gain a footing in the professions. No

one ventures to present her without the attractions that are distinctly feminine, and the want of which (that is, those that correspond) would be only a temporary hindrance to the man. There is a deep and -- considering the future -- an almost painful significance in the conviction, put concretely in Doctor Breen's case, implied throughout 'Doctor Zay,' and stated so plainly and so appealingly by Nan, that the duties of home, as falling upon the wife and mother, are incompatible with the practice of a profession. We believe all experience proves it, and what may seem examples to the contrary are either where the possession of wealth or powers so exceptional as to be outside all rules, have smoothed the way, or where the profession has been taken up after the home had been made, its traditions developed, its happiness secured.

As a last word, we suspect much that has been said of the theories in 'A Country Doctor,' and even our own analysis, have gone beyond the author's intentions. Such theory as it contains has grown out of the personages. It is not they who are fitted to the theory, as Miss Phelps's figures are. If there is at no point in the book the dramatic force of 'An Only Son,' recent fiction contains nowhere a picture of such gentle, measured sweetness as the reconciliation between aunt and niece at Dunport.

Overland Monthly 4 (August 1884) pp. 222-3.

Next on our list of novels comes one that calls for less notice than *The Fate of Mansfield Humhreys*: not because it is inferior, but perhaps even because of its excellence, which leaves little to be said except that it can hardly be found fault with. Miss Jewett's *A Country Doctor* is a tranquil and unemphatic little transcript of New England life, and as perfect in finish as everything from the same hand. It is at some loss of a certain freshness and characteristic quality that the humbler walks of life are left: the chief people in the story talk and act more "like other folks" than do the somewhat less sophisticated people among whom Miss Jewett is at her best; still, they are just as true to life. The heroine is the daughter of a factory girl and of a man of some wealth and social rank; is brought up among her mother's family and old friends - farming folk - under the guardianship of the good doctor, a man of real eminence in his profession though a village practitioner, who makes a doctor of her too; during her course in medical school she makes the acquaintance of her father's people, spends some time with them, shocks them by her medical studies, and refuses a lover, with some reluctance, chiefly

because she is more in love with her profession: and the book ends by showing her satisfied with her choice. This is the whole story. There is much gentle feeling in it, no passion, no "plot" or other special narrative construction; Nan's life is simply followed along through childhood and girlhood to the final decision of her profession. It contains Miss Jewett's opinion on the vocation question, to the effect that a profession and marriage are with women, unlike men, incompatible; that not all women have natural fitness for marriage, and those who have not should find another calling. Not even falling in love constitutes reason sufficient for marriage. Nan decides that, on the whole, if she gives up her profession for her lover she will regret it more than she will him, if she gives him up for her profession; and Miss Jewett approves her decision - and so, in fact, does the reader; if not theoretically, yet in feeling, for she seems a delightful and appropriate figure as a country doctor, and marriage quite incongruous with her. There is an inheritance of dipsomania that strengthens her decision against marriage, but it is not her main reason. There is much that will bear thinking about in Miss Jewett's view of the matter; and this is by a good deal the best thing on the doctor question yet put into fiction. The minor characters about Nan's home are the delightful Massachusetts Yankees of Miss Jewett's earlier stories, a type for which we cannot be too grateful to her. The distance between the conventional and the real Yankee becomes most evident on reading of these kindly people, thrifty yet generous. There are very few men and women between book-covers who live and breathe as these do in Miss Jewett's pages. One sometimes wishes that she would write something of life in its intenser phases among the class she knows so well (for they are a people capable of intensity); her charming method joined to matter of tragic weight should make a sort of New England Turgenjeff of her. But it is quite probable that her leisurely serenity and cheerful truth to life are partly due to her being incapable of weightier work; those who write with intensity usually do it at the cost of realism, of judgment, and of taste, unless they are very great writers.

Athenaeum 2966 (August 30, 1884) p. 272.

The publishers' advertisement of Miss Jewett's novel informs the reader that her plot is of unusual interest, and that she has wonderful acuteness of observation and a graceful style. They have, not unnaturally, taken too sanguine a view of Miss Jewett's powers. She does not yet know how to set about writing a novel. The plot does not fairly start till near the middle of the

book, more than a third of it being occupied with a series of scenes which have no necessary connexion. She shows the very common, but very grave vice of elaborate description in details which are of no consequences to the story, and the not less grave fault of making a story the vehicle for her ideas on things in general.

Saturday Review 58 (August 30, 1884) pp. 283-4.

As *Phoebe* fits the received ideal of the American novel the least satisfactorily, so *A Country Doctor* fits it the best. Miss Jewett's story has the slow movement and the uninterrupted introspection that we are wont to expect in the pages of Mr. James, Mr. Howells, Mrs. Burnett, Miss "George Fleming," Mr. Lathrop, and their fellow-workers in the art of fiction. Its subject recalls one of the most curious coincidences in the history of literature. When Mr. Howells was editing the *Atlantic Monthly*, he received one day from Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, best known to English readers as the author of *Gates Ajar*, the manuscript of a novel. As Mr. Howells read this manuscript he discovered that it treated the same subject which he had himself treated in a novel about to appear in the *Atlantic*. To show that his work had been independent of hers, he sent her at once the proof-sheets of his story. In due course of time Mr. Howells's *Doctor Breen's Practice* appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and after an interval it was succeeded by Miss Phelps's *Doctor Zay*. And now Miss Jewett, a third regular contributor to the same magazine, takes up the same subject, and in *A Country Doctor* we have a third setting forth of the doubts and difficulties which beset a young woman who attempts the practice of medicine. Miss Jewett's solution of the problem is different from Mr. Howells's. Miss Jewett is a woman, and she is in earnest. Mr. Howells is a man, and he has his full share of a man's humour. So Mr. Howells's heroine marries, and Miss Jewett's heroine perseveres in her work, rejecting the manly young fellow she loves better than she knows. It is to be said also that with fine art Miss Jewett has strengthened her heroine's position by suggesting a hereditary taint which the heroine's scientific studies tell her she ought never to transmit to children. Miss Jewett's novel, like her earlier short stories, is admirably planned, and it is written with loving care. Though the story and its telling are quiet, gentle, and lady-like, yet both are earnest and thoughtful. Those who care to know the kind of life led in a simple New England village by the people who have made the United States what it is may be recommended to read Miss Jewett's

novel. *A Country Doctor* is New England through and through; it is saturated with the essence of New England.

Atlantic Monthly 54 (September 1884) pp. 413-422, by Horace Scudder.

The reader of Miss Jewett's *A Country Doctor* is more inclined to compare it with her previous stories than with other people's novels. It is always interesting to see how a writer of short stories will handle a novel, and Miss Jewett has made for herself so good a place by her earlier books that one feels a personal interest in the success of her first long flight. We believe emphatically in the wisdom of such ventures. An artist may have a peculiar gift for miniature-painting, but he will paint miniatures all the better for occasionally trying his hand at a life-size picture. It may be said that *A Country Doctor* is in effect an extended short story; that is, more room is allowed for the expansion of character, more details are given in the separate scenes, a longer stretch of continuous time is covered, but the theme is as simple and the real action as brief as if the author had undertaken to present a study of life within the compass of an ordinary single-number story. Miss Jewett has an excellent subject in the life of a young girl who is predestined to the career of a country doctor. She has blended with her delineation of this life a delightful sketch of a typical country doctor, and she has introduced other characters, drawn chiefly from the class with which she has already shown herself familiar. She has not set herself a very complex problem. The resolution to study medicine is taken by a girl who has no great opposition to brave. Her guardian supports her in her resolve, her own nature witnesses to its inevitableness, and the world is not brought in to object until the resolve has made good headway into action. The task which Miss Jewett has thus had to accomplish has been the faithful portrayal of a character ripening under favorable conditions, and this task exactly fits her power. In saying this, we do not in the least disparage her work; on the contrary, we assert for her a high quality of literary skill. It is no mean thing to dispense with strong contrasts and to make much of delicate shades. This is what Miss Jewett has done. She has, in the first place, made an interesting book. Then she has made a wise book. One is struck by the serene good sense which characterizes the defense of the girl's position. She has made, finally, a graceful book. It is much to be in company with such genuine high breeding, such unflinching courtesy. There are touches, moreover, of something higher; quiet passages which glow with a still beauty. How charming, for example, is the little

series of pictures illustrating Dr. Leslie's successive views of the child Nan! "He always liked to see her come into church on Sundays, her steps growing quicker and surer as her good grandmother's became more feeble. The doctor was a lonely man, in spite of his many friends, and he found himself watching for the little brown face that, half-way across the old meeting-house, would turn round to look for him more than once during the service. At first there was only the top of little Nan Prince's prim best bonnet or hood to be seen, unless it was when she stood up in prayer-time; but soon the bright eyes rose like stars above the horizon of the pew railing; and next there was the whole well-poised little head, and the tall child was possessed by a sense of propriety, and only ventured one or two discreet glances at her old friend."

The development of Nan's mind is well given. We question only if the author has put with sufficient incisiveness the reactionary period, when the girl seems to have forgotten her intention, and to be waiting for the spirit to move her again. This eddy in her life is true to nature, but we doubt a little if its full meaning is clearly expressed; for the reader feels a little surprise when Nan begins all over again, as it were. The faint struggle in her nature when love is offered is cleverly given, though one is aware of a certain timidity in the author when presenting this phase. The lover is sketched good-naturedly, but not with very strong lines, and one feels that Nan's slight stirring of love did not receive a very strong reinforcement from the nature of the man who excited it. The whole passage, however, is in tone with the rest of the book.

A curious comparison might be instituted between this book and Björnson's *The Fisher Maiden*, where the heroine, of a much more tumultuous nature, is likewise possessed of a passion for a profession which the world in which she lives frowns upon. Björnson deals with the whole matter in a masculine manner, Miss Jewett in a feminine. Nothing very strange in this, to be sure; but while Björnson, in his vigorous fashion, forgets his story for a while in his desire to preach a doctrine, Miss Jewett maintains her art successfully in the animated scene of the tea-table discussion. We speak of her treatment as feminine, and the merit of it is that the womanliness of the work is of a thoroughly healthy sort. Heaven be praised for a handling of the theme which is absolutely free from hysterics, and regards men and women in a wholesome, honest fashion! The very seriousness with which the author regards her task is a sweet and fragrant seriousness, and one is unconsciously drawn into thinking and speaking of Nan Prince with that affectionate

interest which leads Miss Jewett to lay her hand on the girl's shoulder, as it were, all through the narrative.

It seems that we never shall have done with contrasts. A Country Doctor takes one into the regions of a pure, honest maidenhood, and one is refreshed by contact with life which is strong, unsullied, and bent on high enterprise. The world is wide, and Nan Prince is not the only type of girlhood. (418-420)

Harper's New Monthly Magazine 69:412
(September 1884), pp. 641.

Of the other novels of the month, of which there has been a plenteous crop, several are of much more than ordinary merit. Among these are: *A Perilous Secret*, the last, though far from the best, of Charles Reade's novels; *A Country Doctor*, an exquisitely delicate and very subtle delineation, by Sarah Orne Jewett, of the evolution of character under the influence of simple and natural surroundings and of wise and wholesome guidance, coupled with some charming limnings of social phases, rural scenes, and village life and character; . . .

Lippincott's Magazine 34 (September 1884), p. 319.

The subject of female doctors has been treated by Mr. Howells, who allows a young and pretty woman to practise medicine just as he allows her the indulgence of any pretty whim and caprice, and by Miss Phelps, who shows the coming of the Golden Age together with the days and works of the female doctors: accordingly, we are inclined to regret that Miss Jewett should have encumbered her first novel - to which all her many admirers were looking forward eagerly - with such a controversy. The fault we have to find with the endless debate is the infusion of an intense seriousness into the argument for female doctors, as if a void existed which must be filled. There are already many more male doctors in the world than the world needs, most of whom work with their highest abilities and intense belief in their dogmas without successfully grappling with the problems which disease presents. To add to the already overcrowded profession vast numbers of a sex not usually considered scientific or endowed with keen, accurate intellectual vision does not seem to promise the instant dawn and full noonday which enthusiasts declare to be shining in the distance. But, luckily, one is not obliged to do battle with a romancer's chimeras, and the good little Nan of this story, who decides against the sweetest impulse of her heart to accept a life

of so-called duty instead of love, has a charm and a sweet coercion of her own that may well attract liking and sympathy. It must be nevertheless in Miss Jewett's details that her full strength lies, and in any judgment of "A Country Doctor" one is inclined to separate as opposing elements the animating idea of the book and its really delightful points. Two of the early chapters, "A Farm-House Kitchen" and "At Jake and Martin's," have that delicate relish for characteristics and faithful rendering of the New-England dialect, suggesting humor without being exactly humorous, which belong to her short stories. In fact, "Jake" and "Martin," two brothers with an insatiable appetite for each other's society, and who, "as they hoed corn, or dug potatoes, or mowed, or as they drove to the Corners sitting stiffly upright in the old-fashioned, stiffly-braced wagon, were always to be seen talking as if it were the first meeting after a long separation," yet hardly spoke to the world at large, seem worthy of a more extended study. Marilla, the doctor's housekeeper and factotum, is a treasure both to her employer and to the reader, - to the latter in particular, when at an inauspicious moment company arrives at the house as she is on the point of setting out for Friday-evening prayer-meeting. "I'd like to say to some folks that we don't keep hotel," she grumbles while she goes about the task of preparing a fresh meal. "I wish to my heart I'd slipped right out o' the front door and gone straight to meetin', and left them there beholdin' of me. Course he hasn't had no supper, nor dinner neither, like's not; and if men are ever going to drop down on a family unexpected it's always Friday night, when everything's eat up that ever was in the house. I s'pose after I bake double quantities to-morrow mornin' he'll be drivin' off before noon-time, and treasure it up that we never have nothin' decent to set before folks. Anna, you've got to stir yourself and help while I get the fire started up; lay one of them big dinner-napkins over the red cloth, and set a plate an' a teacup, - for as to laying the whole table over again, I won't and I shan't. There's water to cart upstairs, and the bedroom to open, but, heaven be thanked, I was up there dustin' to-day; and if ever you set a mug of flowers into one o' the spare-rooms again, and leave it there a week or ten days to spile, I'll speak about it to the doctor. Now you step out o' my way, like a good girl. I don't know whether you or the cat's the worse for gettin' before me when I'm in a drive. I'll set him out somethin' to eat, and then I'm goin' to meetin' if the skies fall!"

Vassar Miscellany, Volume XIV, Number 1, (1 October 1884).

A certain wise man once suggested as the supreme test of a person's scholarship, his ability to read Plato with his feet on the fender, and were the sage alive now he might even want us to prove our scholastic attainments by reading Herbert Spencer in a hammock. But I think he would find, as we all do, that summer sunshine is not conducive to mental activity, and, like the rest, he would leave his favorite authors on the shelves when he took his vacation. The literature prepared for our summer's idleness is almost all light, but, not by any means, all worthless, despite the fact that many of our best writer's [*intended* writers] of fiction give their work first to the periodicals; and in the list we can usually find some which even deserve to be taken back with us when the world begins its year's work.

Of this class is "A Country Doctor," by Miss Jewett. Her many friends had heard that she was going to publish a novel on the much disputed topic of woman in the medical profession. The fact that Mr. Howells and Miss Phelps have already expressed their views on the subject makes Miss Jewett's opinion only the more interesting, and those who expected an entirely different treatment of it from her have not been disappointed. Mr. Howells made Dr. Breen forsake her practice because she was a woman, and to continue it would be absurd. Doctor Zay married and gave up her profession under protest, proving that women can be physicians if they do not abandon their work before accumulating the experience which is so large a share of their capital.

Miss Jewett's heroine is of a different stamp. She is more earnest than Dr. Breen, stronger than Dr. Zay, and accepts her profession as inevitable and final, never taking the possibility of leaving it into consideration. Had Mr. George Jerry been better worth giving up anything for most readers would have felt that her determination had been more severely tested. Still, Nan inspires confidence, and we would trust her with a much more magnetic love, and yet feel her degree was safe. Best of all, Nan is not the only person in the book. The elder Miss Prince, Dr. Leslie and Jake and Martin are all worth knowing. The influences of heredity and relationship in the worthless Thatcher family and the Dyers is touched with Miss Jewett's inimitable tenderness, and the charming pictures of the country roadsides and the old seaport town make one wish that there were more of them.

A Country Doctor is not an ordinary novel, but a very original story of an uncommon type. It treats of a subject of growing importance, the interest of which none will question - not even those who most keenly resent being asked to follow the fortunes of a heroine who, of her own free choice, rejects the honest love of an honest man which she in part returns. She has every reason to believe that her love, if not rooted out altogether, will become an overmastering passion and render it impossible for her to follow out the great aim of her young life. So she refuses to become engaged, and returns bravely to the field of her labour. Miss Jewett calls upon us to concur in Nan's decision, and, for our own part, we do concur in it heartily. The questions which are virtually asked in these pages are, - "Is married life the state best adapted to the genius of *all* women?" and "Do domestic duties develop, to the fullest extent, the best qualities and the highest aims and instincts of all women alike?" - and the answer is distinctly "No," and in this verdict we concur. Neither we nor Miss Jewett deny that married life is the natural sphere for women as a whole class, nor that domestic duties are those in the performance of which she generally finds her best happiness and exerts her best and highest influence; but there is no hard-and-fast line for all women, any more than there is for all men. All women are not fitted alike to be the centre and the reigning spirit of a quiet family group or social circle. All women who are asked in marriage, and who choose to accept the offer, can become wives, and may become mothers, and be surrounded by friends' children and children's friends, and that has seemed to satisfy society up to the present time. Those who have not been asked in marriage, or have not chosen to accept the offer, have generally been looked upon as more or less failures; but no one seems to observe that not by any means all those who have accepted the responsibilities of married life are successes. Indeed, in our estimation, this is very far from being the case. How many cannot each one of us point out, among our own circle of acquaintances, who, as wives, mothers, and mistresses of servants, are failures; not even failing alone, but involving other in their failures! In saying this, we are putting entirely out of the question all those women who have made marriages of convenience, - who have married for position, title, houses, and carriages; these, speaking roughly, deserve to fail. It may be said that women, now-a-days, are free, as a rule, to marry or to remain single as they please; that very little restraint is put upon them in that respect; and it is quite true, as far as direct restraint goes; but a very great pressure of

indirect restraint is still put upon women, by public opinion, to force them into the old groove, and the more delicate-minded and sensitive a woman is, the more strongly, though unconsciously, the aversion to being anything which would render her conspicuous acts upon her, unless some very strong and decided bent, fostered by circumstances, counteracts this influence, and helps her to take up an independent position. Life, to many women, offers nothing but monotony apart from marriage, and they are unduly ready to feel prejudiced in favour of the man who shows a way of escape from this monotony, and many *apparent* love-marriages are made, where the *real* love is given to the hope of a larger, fuller life; which hope is too often delusive in the end, if the woman, through ignorance, has mistaken her longing and aspiration for better things, for love for the man who seems to bring them. No alteration in public opinion could prevent all such mistakes; but it could very much lessen the number of them by removing the artificial barrier between women and their own best natures. It is, and always will be, sad when those natures point to other careers than marriage; for women cannot - as men can - adopt with success professions in which their intellects are satisfied, and at the same time live in homes where their hearts must overrule their heads; and thus a lady, successful in her profession, and exerting - to her own satisfaction -- her intellectual capacities in youth and middle life, must not hope to be the mother surrounded by devoted children in her old age; but it is better to be more or less sad and yet to live up to the best that is in you, than to choose what is only best in the abstract, and for which you are not fitted, and then fail altogether.

All this Miss Jewett brings out most admirably in this one short volume. Nan is an orphan, the ward of a delightful country doctor, with whom she grows up; driving by his side - or rather, driving him - through the country roads surrounding the New England village where his lot is cast, and taking in ardently the stray remarks which he makes now and then to his child-companion, upon herbs and surgery, health and disease; till, unconsciously, she imbibes an intense interest in the healing art, and develops a longing to be of like service to her fellow-creatures; and she astonishes her guardian one day, by binding up the broken leg of a chicken, and nursing the little bird back to health with consummate skill. This achievement awakens in him dreams of future greatness for her, and from that time the doctor's mind is much occupied with thoughts of the future of his ward, to whom he is greatly attached. He considers carefully her keen intellect and ardent temperament, her inherited virtues and vices -

her mother's mother's family having been stern, reasonable, reliable people, capable of much endurance and much achievement by hard work; and her mother's father's family having been wild and ungovernable, and somewhat addicted to drink (a tendency which had ruined Nan's young mother) - and he sees in Nan a blending of the good in both, but also a decided craving for a stirring life. He decides that if she shows any leaning toward a professional life, which will use up the energy that, unused, might become dangerous, he shall interpose nothing to the following-out of whatever career she may prefer; but that he shall in no way do or suggest anything which might shut Nan out from the joys of a home and family, - which joys were his for a short time in this early years, and the memory of which was intensely dear to him. Accordingly, when Nan's schooldays are over, a short period of sixes-and-sevens ensues, during which she wanders aimlessly about, trying to solve the problem of whether "life is worth living," and wondering why she is here at all; till, at last, the light breaks upon her, and she tells her guardian - with lips trembling and eyes downcast at the audacity of the longing which fills her heart - that she wants to become a doctor. Thus, with Dr. Leslie's warm approval, Nan enters the paths of that learned profession, and presses forward with great success and intense pleasure through six years of study. But a moment comes when Nan, with a stunned and awestruck sensation, finds herself on the verge of returning the affection of a young man who is her superior in worldly position - handsome, good, and attractive. She recognizes the fact of what is about to happen, but she knows that in her heart of hearts she should be infinitely thankful if, in some way, this great temptation might be removed from her. She looks back upon the hours devoted to medicine, considers the wasted life of her ardent young mother - to whom the ties of home duties had proved no hindrance to ruin - regards the quiet family circles around her, and deciding that the sacred life of wife and mother is not for her, turns away from it bravely, and throws herself with heart and soul into the sphere for which she has so eagerly and so happily been fitting herself. And we, for our own part - assuming, of course, that she has judged herself accurately - applaud her decision. There are, no doubt, unions which would open to women as widespread a field of usefulness as the heart most deeply imbued with the "enthusiasm of humanity" could desire, and which would satisfy the most *exigeant* craver for a life of intellectual activity; but such opportunities are not offered to the acceptance of many, and such probably was not the sphere which marriage with George Gerry would have opened to Nan.

Apart from the interest in Nan's career, there is much that is delightful in *A Country Doctor*, though we confess that, after the first two chapters, the story travels for some distance somewhat slowly. The opening scenes - where the excellent Dyer family, with their quaint conversation and their neighbourly acts, are introduced - are very good and most amusing. We only regret that the Dyers, Jake and Martin (twin brothers), and their wives, and sour Mrs. Meeker - who delights in telling bad news, and never loses an opportunity of witnessing distress - are so soon eclipsed by other characters. Nan's visit to her "high relations" at the sleepy old seaport of Dunport, where she meets her lover, is most pleasantly described. Dr. Leslie's old servant, Marilla, "who did not hear the doctor and his guest tramp up to bed until late, and though she had tried to keep awake, had been obliged to take a nap first, and then wake up again to get the benefit of such an aggravating occasion," is a capital character. We confess that we do not see much point in the introduction of the doctor's old friend, Dr. Ferris, except as an opportunity for our doctor to air his views. One remark of each doctor we wish to quote, in order that we may express our complete disagreement with it; but we do so with respect, as the tone of the whole book is of a deep, though unobtrusive, religious character, recognising to the full, our high duties towards one another and towards God. "The gift of intuition reaches directly towards the truth," says Dr. Ferris, quoting Buckle on the feminine intellect, "and it is only reasoning by deduction that can take flight into the upper air of life and certainty!" "Yes," responds Dr. Leslie, "and I have believed that the powers of Christ were but the higher powers of our common humanity. We recognize them dimly now and then, but few of us dare to say so yet. The world moves very slowly, doesn't it? If Christ were perfect man, he could hardly tell us to follow him and be like him, and yet know all the while that it was quite impossible, because a difference in his gifts made his character an unapproachable one to ours." Here is preached, we suppose, the doctrine of Christ as a good man, and a stimulating example. And first of all, let us ask, - Has any one yet come up to his standard, even the best of us, or even approached to it? We imagine not; but then, why not? Secondly, Christ, as a moral leader and as an attainable standard, is only a blessing to the successful - to the strong who can look back upon their lives and see no false steps that have led others astray, and can feel that they, like Christ, "have come not to be ministered unto, but to minister." But how about the sinful - the failures of this world - who can only look back upon their lives to find that they have made grievous mistakes and involved others in their

errors, and been a burden upon those whom they most wished to benefit? To them we think that Christ the Divine - the supplement of our feeble natures, the great Righter of wrongs - will be a more acceptable, a more restoring image, than Christ the good man and the edifying Example.

Vassar Miscellany, Volume XVII, Number 6, (1 March 1888).

"Three Types," by Clara L. Barnum, Class of 1888.

In the heroines of the three novels, "A Country Doctor," "Doctor Zay," and "Dr. Breen's Practice," Miss Jewett, Miss Phelps, and Mr. Howells have given us three types of the woman-physician which are well worth studying in connection with one another, and which present many interesting points of resemblance and contrast. It is a little curious that at so nearly the same time, three prominent novelists should have turned their attention to this almost unexplored field, the characters of women who adopt the profession of medicine. The fact is a straw which shows that the current of public interest has been turned in this direction, and that women-physicians are coming to occupy a legitimate and recognized position in the body-politic. The three characters under consideration have a number of points in common. They are all New Englanders trained to take life seriously and to think it designed for some earnest work. They all have means to support them in ease and comfort, are attractive, well-bred, and womanly. So far their ways lie together, but beyond, they have their separate paths distinctly marked.

Miss Jewett begins her story with the little Nan, left an orphan almost in her babyhood by the death of her ambitious, unfortunate, discouraged young mother, whose marriage with the handsome navy surgeon has brought the misery which is likely to result when a young man, handsome, attractive, of fine education, the pride and heir of a family who are the aristocratic descendants of ancestors distinguished from colonial times, marries a good-looking girl, who, restless and dissatisfied with her life in a little country village, has come to the city, hoping to find opportunity to "make a lady of herself." The development of the child of these parents, through her early childhood with her Grandmother Thacher, whose poor soul is tried and puzzled by the strange mixture in her granddaughter of loveliness, self-reliance, great proneness to mischief, a restless longing for free out-door life, and an inherited aptitude for doctoring which impels her to put in splints

the broken leg of a young turkey, -- all this, Miss Jewett relates in a charming and natural way. Then we follow Nan through girlhood, when she is the constant companion of her guardian, Dr. Leslie, the "beloved physician" of all the country round; through her school days and the crucial time of decision between the conventional life of a rich young woman and the vocation which every instinct of her nature urges her to choose; through the struggle against the advice and warning of society, against the entreaty of lover, and the hopes of friends, which tempt her to be false to the work which is her destiny; until finally she enters upon the full practice of her profession, in her appropriate place as student and colleague of Dr. Leslie among the people she has known from childhood, and in the country whose free air and beauty she has always held so dear.

Miss Phelps has treated the character of Doctor Zay in a very different style. We are told almost nothing of this doctor's life until after she has finished her studies and has been settled for four years in active practice in a small country town in Maine. We come upon her in the full glory and maturity of her character. While no less a doctor, she is more a woman than the "Country Doctor." Not that the latter was in any way unwomanly, but her work came to her more as his profession would to a man; she felt that she must do something in the world, and she became a doctor as naturally and surely as a man would become a member of the profession for which his training and tendencies especially fitted him. Doctor Zay, though perhaps as well prepared for her calling by her natural endowments and her familiarity with her father's medical work as was Doctor Nan with her inherited bent in this direction, and her companionship with Dr. Leslie, is however led to it by the course of events rather than impelled to it by the necessity of her being. Doctor Zay is a woman of an intense nature, with a keen appreciation of life and all that is beautiful in it, with deep and strong sympathies, and warm affections, and yet of a scientific mind. The two characteristics combine to make her a physician, the one showing itself in a longing to give to someone else's mother the comfort which had been given to her own by the ministry of the woman-doctor, the other making her rejoice in a work to which she can give her scientific training and all her intellectual powers. She starts into practice where she does, partly because she is attached to the place on account of her mother's connection with it, partly because she has "learned how terrible is the need of a woman by women, in country towns." She is successful, as she ought to be, in a work for which she is well-fitted, and into which she has put her soul. She has the strength on which the weak may

lean, and the power to control and use for others the magnificent gifts of mind and body with which she has been endowed. The love which finally wins her, fulfills an unsatisfied longing of her heart and makes her life complete, being not, as in the case of Doctor Nan, a something which cannot fit in as part, nor fill the whole of life.

Dr. Breen serves almost as an anti-climax in this group of three. Mr. Howells has portrayed her faithfully and has given her the benefit of many side-lights upon her character. We see her at a quiet summer resort at the time after the completion of her course of study, when she is resting a little and maturing her plans for what she has decided shall be her life work. She is a type of the overconscientious, introspective person, who makes herself and everybody else uncomfortable by her constant fear of self-indulgence in some way that will conflict with her over-refined sense of duty. While still in her teens, she has had a disappointment in love, and apparently as a sort of expiation for this unfortunate affair, she has become a doctor. As a natural consequence, she is not a brilliant success in her chosen profession, though she has a good mind and is well-equipped with theoretical knowledge of her science. She succumbs to her first case, which is a very trying combination of nerves, lack of common sense, and pneumonia, and marries the young man who is providentially spending his summer near by. In spite of these rather uninspiring materials, Mr. Howells, with his artistic sense and his photographic powers of description, has succeeded in constructing an interesting story, well deserving its place beside the others. It has a moral, which is contained in some words which Dr. Breen uses after her eyes have been opened to see herself as the reader sees her: "There is such a thing as having too much conscience, and of getting stupefied by it, so that you can't really see what's right." After she has given up this stupefying conscience and the work which she chose on a theory which this conscience furnished, she becomes a happy and useful member of society. We feel in reading this novel that the idea of the woman-physician is merely incidental to Mr. Howells's purpose, and that as far as the moral goes, Dr. Breen might as well have followed some other walk of life. Nevertheless, she may stand as a guide and warning to any who might be tempted to do as she did, and may save them from being obliged to say what she said of her profession, "It has given me up."

The New England Magazine 17:3 (November 1894), 321-338. "Old St. John's Parish, Portsmouth," by Franklin Ware Davis.

[This passage (pp. 331-2) follows Davis's description of the fire of Christmas Eve 1806 that destroyed the church. Davis has selected without ellipses and repunctuated the quotation from *A Country Doctor* (1884).]

The parish at once set itself at work to build a new church. Trinity Church, Boston, contributed \$1,000 to this end. Several wealthy people of Portsmouth assisted, and almost in another year the present St. John's Church was standing on the site of Old Queen's Chapel.

A queer incident occurred when the church was building, an old horse and his owner being the principal parties concerned, as the perpetrators of the joke were not discovered. "Shepherd" Ham, as he was popularly called, had not a good name for sheltering his live-stock. One night a horse strayed out of the ramshackle old structure which he called a barn; and the next morning he was found high up on the steeple side, close by the bell deck, patiently awaiting the coming of help. The animal had been raised by the little elevator used to carry up material to the workmen.

St. John's Church has many pleasant memories for those who have once lived in Portsmouth or been often within its shadow. Sarah Orne Jewett, in her tale of New England life, "The Country Doctor," describes the quaint building. Her heroine, on her visit to Dunport, as she calls it, is made to attend service there. On a pleasant Sunday morning "Miss Nancy turned up a narrow side street toward a high-walled brick church, and presently they walked side by side up the broad aisle, so far that it seemed to Nan as if her aunt were aiming for the chancel itself, and had some public ceremony in view, of a penitential nature. Nan had taken the seat next the pew door, and was looking about her with great interest, forgetting herself and her aunt as she wondered that so dear and quaint a place of worship should still be left in her iconoclastic native country. She had seen nothing even in Boston like this, there were so many antique splendors about the chancel, and many mural tablets on the walls, where she read with sudden delight her own family name. The dear old place! Nan stole a look at the galleries now and then, and at one time was pleased with the sight of the red-cheeked cherubs, which seemed to have been caught like clumsy insects and pinned as a sort of tawdry decoration above the tablets, where the Apostle's Creed and Ten Commandments were printed in faded gilt letters. The letter 's' was long in these copies,

and the capitals were of an almost forgotten pattern."

From Jewett's Correspondence

22 March 1884 from John Greenleaf Whittier

I think thy heroine must make her profession a solemn & imperative duty-- an "enthusiasm of humanity" -- too potent for even love to overcome. It must awaken sacrifice & renunciation; and perhaps her very affection may hold her back from giving only a part of herself to the beloved object, and in the work & engrossment of her mission subjects even the patience of love to a hard strain.

11 June 1884 to Horace Parker Chandler

The book has nearly all been written in Boston since late in January -- but it will be out so soon I must leave it to speak for itself -- My father was a physician and also my grandfather. Dr. Perry of Exeter -- who is now the oldest graduate of Harvard. My home is South Berwick Maine, but I spend the winter months with Mrs. James T. Fields in Boston.

11 June 1884, John Greenleaf Whittier to Annie Adams Fields

I have been reading Sarah's "Country Doctor" with great satisfaction. It is I think her best -- better than "Deephaven" even. What a lovely picture she has given of the quaint old Idyllic life of New England, & how admirable is her characterization of the Doctor & his ward! The style is well nigh perfect....

Aldrich ought to say that the "Country Doctor" is the best book of the season, -- in the next Atlantic.

19 July 1884 from Sarah Wyman Whitman, who designed the cover

I think that I have never yet spoken of the *Country Doctor* to you, dear friend, I think it delightful: written with that combination of pure literary style and aromatic individual flavor that gives one such especial pleasure, and the people live and breathe for me and take their place in the New England landscape. Then comes the moral of the situation, and that's what I want to know more about. Is it that Nan really loves her lover? or does she only feel the possibility and decide to reject it?

Yet, after all, as I ask these questions I see what a foolish person I am; for if one begins to

discuss this strange re-iterated problem, one must go into the depths of it and only come forth with the pearl of Truth which is hard to find.

I suppose I think, in some crude, unformulated way, that if two souls really have found each other, in the Divine Economy (by some highest Mathematics) they will count for more together than they ever could apart; and that whatever loss is entailed in this fusion of interests, is more than made good by a new and more complete existence. But I will not bore you with this, when I may be speaking quite wide the mark of your opinion. . . .

A Marsh Island 1885

The Literary World 16 (May 30, 1885) pp. 191-2.

MISS JEWETT shows her wisdom as well as her skill in confining herself, as a novelist, to a tract of country with which she is perfectly familiar, and to a class of people whom she knows by heart. This reliance upon personal observation and experience gives to her books a landscape which is realistic and a character which is literal and vivid. Miss Jewett bids fair to be the prose romancist, as Whittier is the poet, of Essex County, Massachusetts. The charm of this her latest story is in the fidelity with which it paints the New England prospect to the eye, at a point where the hills and the sea blend in a borderland of marches and dunes, and in the effectiveness with which she humanizes the scene with well-known but fast disappearing types of character. Some novels offer nothing to the eye and everything to the ear; others little to the ear and everything to the eye; this book addresses both senses, occupying the sight with long stretches of lowlands, where creeks wind in and out flushed with the flowing tides, at the same time that it pleases the hearing with the quaint and homely talk of the kitchen and the mowing-field.

Nothing could be simpler than the motive of this story; hardly anything could be finer than the art with which it is handled. There is a farmhouse on the Marsh Island. There is a farmer's daughter, Doris. There is a lover, Dan Lester, who has not yet spoken his mind. And while he halts and hesitates, a roving artist appears at the door, a young man from the city. A sprained ankle makes him a prisoner at the farm. Dale, the artist, surrenders to the spell which Doris casts over all around her; Lester, the former lover, is soured with jealousy; and for a time it seems as if the Marsh Island might witness a tragedy of hearts if not of lives. Like this is the background against which the figures stand:

Westward from the farm, beyond an expanse of almost level country, a low range of hills made a near horizon. They were gray in the drought, and bare like a piece of moorland, save where the fences barred them, or a stunted tree stood up against the sky, leaning away from the winter storms toward a more sheltered and fertile inland region. The windward side of the Marsh Island itself was swept clean by the sea winds; it was only on the southern and western slopes that the farmer's crops, his fruit-trees, and his well-stocked garden found encouragement to grow. Eastward, on the bleak downs, a great flock of sheep nibbled and strayed about all day, and blinked their eyes at the sun. . . . The salt-hay making was over at last. The marshes were dotted as far as eye could see by the round

haystacks with their deftly pointed tops. These gave a great brilliance of color to the landscape, being unfaded yet by the rain and snow that would dull their yellow tints later in the year. September weather came early, even before its appointed season, and there was a constant suggestion of autumn before the summer was fairly spent. The delicate fragrance of the everlasting-flowers was plainly noticeable in the dry days that followed each other steadily. The summer was ripe early this year, and the fruits reddened, and the flowers all went to seed, and the days grew shorter in kindly fashion, being so pleasant that one could not resent the hurrying twilight, or now and then the acknowledged loss of a few minutes of daylight. From the top of the island hill a great fading countryside spread itself wide and fair, and seaward the sails looked strangely white against the deepened blue of the ocean.

Could the scene of this story be more picturesque if it were laid in Holland?

While Doris waits for Lester and for Dale, as if the first one who asked her might get her, the daily work of the farm goes picturesquely on around her; the mother is up at five to get the early breakfast at six for her father and the farm hands who are off to the marshes before seven; the peaches ripen and redden on the trees; the faithful Temperance comes and goes on her errands; the heavily harnessed horses fare afield; the white-winged ships float silently in the distance; the gulls dip and soar; the doughnuts in the kitchen are rolled and cut and fried; the tall clock ticks away; the tired and hungry men come home to their suppers and their well-earned repose; Sunday rests give opportunity for relished gossip; there are visits to the near town; the artist visitor paints and the jealous lover storms; the farm-hands have their quiet jokes and the neighbors their conjectures and suspicions; until at last the true lover's patience can bear no more, and sudden tidings that he has shipped for the Banks bring Doris up by a round turn, and the little drama, just escaping the line of tragedy, plays itself out to a pleasant ending.

It is a sweet and fragrant tale; honest and frank; full of a sylvan loveliness, a rustic freshness, that present the best side of New England to the very life; pure, refined, and wholesome, with the colors of an afternoon in July by the sea, where the blue of the sea and the whitish gray of the beaches and the green of the meadows and the brown of the marsh grass make up an exquisite harmony, and the plain old-fashioned dialect of Farmer Owen, his family, and his men-folks recalls the almost patriarchal times which have faded so rapidly into the past since the War.

Miss Jewett knows her *forte*, and works accordingly. She takes a small canvas, selects a modest theme, plies her brush with truthfulness and pains, and produces as a result a picture which, though not a great one, is an excellent one, and delights the spectator by its purity, refinement, and fidelity to nature and life.

Overland Monthly 5 (June 1885) 662-3.

Last of all come in by far the best two novels of the summer: *Within the Capes* and *A Marsh Island*. Both of these books are of the sort that makes it seem so easy a thing to tell a simple, straight-forward story and make it life-like and interesting that it is unaccountable people should strain and fail so. *Within the Capes* is conventional enough in its outline: a young sailor, returning to his native Quaker village and there falling in love; more sea-voyaging, shipwreck, lone island, rescue, murder trial, and halcyon ending. Yet these conventional outlines are filled in with the freshest and most winning of detail and manner; nothing is strained, nothing crude, not a false note touched. The style is almost quaintly simple: the writer has helped his own imagination in rendering it so by making it the autobiographical narrative of Tom Granger, told in his old age, in the third person, with occasional quaint lapses, as though unconsciously, into the first, so as to reveal Captain Granger himself as the narrator yet without having to explain that he is. Thus the gentle simplicity of speech of a good old Quaker seafarer is attained, the usual drawbacks of the autobiographical form. Tom Granger is a very fine fellow, and the reader becomes aware of it without getting any unpleasant impression that Granger himself thinks so. The Quaker village is charmingly lifelike, and its people are no lay figures, but living and worthy men and women - except the rival lover, who is rather conventional. The time is 1812 and a few years thereafter, and the old-fashioned flavor of the story is appropriate, not only to the supposed venerable years of the narrator, but to the period. This is the sort of story that the "summer novel" should be: it is light, and by no means a great novel; but it is a very pretty, pleasant, and gentlemanly one, and we hope to see others from the same hand.

In even a higher degree, Miss Jewett's new story has the grace of restraint, perfect simplicity and directness, and the best of breeding in matter and manner. But this comment and most other such that could be made, are merely repeating what every one knows already of Miss Jewett's invariable traits as a writer. Her style may be called well-nigh perfect. This particular story is perhaps less delightful than "A Country

Doctor," yet that is more because the subject is less notably happy than anything else. There is not much story, but one does not want much story, in Miss Jewett's books; they are transcripts of bits of life, not regularly constructed novels with plot and machinery. The very fields, and sea, and farming folk are in them. They do not pretend to go as deeply into human nature, nor to be as minutely or vividly true to it as some novels; but in its own way the characterization is perfect. They are like a painter's outdoor studies. Wonderfully uniform they are, too: in this latest one, neither falling away from the mark of previous achievement, nor improving upon it, is visible. In work so perfect in its own way, perhaps nothing of the sort is to be expected. The idly is Miss Jewett's line, and tragedies and dramas and the like are not to be sought among her quiet and fragrant fields.

Vassar Miscellany, Volume XIV, Number 9, (1 June 1885).

The last chapters of "A Marsh Island" are printed in the June *Atlantic*. It has been a pleasant and readable story, but I fancy that critics will be disappointed in it, after the expectations raised by "A Country Doctor." That book showed so marked a superiority over "Deephaven", and Miss Jewett's short stories, that we surely had a right to look for something unusually good in "A Marsh Island." In style, the new book shows some gain -- an added ease in description, a more skilful treatment of dialect, and an independence in the choice of details which brings out more clearly than ever Miss Jewett's strong individuality. But this gain is growth rather than artistic development, and it is not accompanied by any improvement in the matter of the story.

Miss Jewett always writes with a purpose. In "A Country Doctor", she set herself the task of answering Miss Phelps and Mr. Howells, the authors of "Dr. Zay" and "Dr. Breen's Practice", by showing another and, as she believed, a fairer view of the question at issue, -- whether or not women could make successful doctors. Mr Howells, who always chooses to picture weakness rather than strength, and who has never yet given an encouraging answer to any social problem, selected for his typical "female physician" (no wonder that they do not succeed while we call them that) a dependent, irresolute woman, who began the practice of her profession with no appreciation of the difficulties before her, and yielded to the very first obstacle in her path. Mr. Howells was undoubtedly fair, having given Dr. Breen such a character, in making her fail as a physician. The unfairness, if

there was any, lay in presenting her as a type. Miss Phelps gave her heroine a stronger character, but relented, as she always does when the question of love comes in, and let Dr. Zay marry, and give up her profession. Then Miss Jewett brought her "Country Doctor" on the scene, and showed another side of the question. She, undoubtedly had the truest idea of the matter. The only women, -- or men, -- who ought to become doctors are those who enter their profession, not from a mistaken estimate of their capacity, not because they must do something to support themselves, not even from a sincere desire to be of use in the world, but because they were born with a special fitness and an irresistible love for it.

Mr. Howells's and Miss Phelps's stories were interesting and fair views of the question in its application to certain types, but they gave the impression that Dr. Breen and Dr. Zay failed because they were women, while the fact is that the qualities in them which prevented their success as physicians were not by any means exclusively feminine. As an answer to the question, -- which had to do not with probability but with possibility, -- Miss Jewett's book was fairer. The literary merits of the book were great, also. The leading characters were strongly drawn, the details of circumstance, action, and scenery were well managed, and "A Country Doctor" was a delightful book. Miss Jewett's first novel placed her high in the ranks of contemporary novelists. "A Marsh Island" sustains the reputation which she gained then, but does not heighten it.

The plot of "A Marsh Island" is almost as simple as that of "A Country Doctor." A young artist, wandering into the country in search of "material" for his sketches, is detained by accident in a farm-house on the Marsh Island. He nearly falls in love with Doris Owen, the farmer's beautiful daughter. She already has a lover in Dan Lester, a young man of the neighborhood, whom she has always vaguely expected to marry; but Dick Dale's culture and trained artistic mind, coming to her like a revelation from another world, almost win away her affection. In time, however, she returns to her old lover, and is perfectly content to spend her life as a country housekeeper, bringing around herself the new beauties which Dick Dale has revealed to her, instead of leaving her home in search of them. The artist leaves the farm-house, hardly knowing whether or not he is a disappointed lover, and carrying with him a new vigor of purpose which bears fruit in finer work as an artist, and stronger life as a man. This is the story. The whole interest lies in the development of the few leading characters, and in the exquisite descriptions of striking scenes, or narrations of delightful bits of conversation in

Marsh Island dialect. Miss Jewett has the good sense to confine herself to those branches of writing for which she has natural talent; and so far as form goes the book is exceptionally pleasant reading. But, after all, what merits has the book aside from this charm of style? If an author writes merely to please, we are content if he succeeds in pleasing us. But, when we detect, as any critic must in Miss Jewett's books, an intention to do something more than that, we have a right to submit our author to a severer criticism; to ask what is the object of the book, and whether it is successful. I confess to finding some difficulty in defining the exact purpose of "A Marsh Island." Perhaps Miss Jewett meant, more than any thing else, to show that a woman of high ideals, of natural refinement, and of mental strength can be perfectly happy as the wife of a country farmer, who is her inferior in every one of these particulars. I hope I am not unfair in assigning this as the main purpose of "A Marsh Island", for in that case my whole estimate of the book is unfair. Granted that this was Miss Jewett's chief thought, the book fails to prove it true. If Dan Lester had been a trifle less boorish, a bit nearer Doris's level; if he had had the natural qualities which make refinement possible, we could imagine Doris loving him and being happy as his wife. But Lester has almost nothing to recommend him; he loses his temper like an irascible small boy; he is childish in his treatment of his rival, and selfish in his love for Doris. The contrast with Dick Dale shows him in a most unfavorable light. We find much to praise in the young artist, and almost nothing to blame, except his want of energy; and he is cured even of that by his contact with Doris Owen. They certainly come very near falling in love with each other, and we are hardly prepared to find it so Platonic a friendship as it appears in the last pages of the story. When he comes back from the Island, Dick Dale tells his friend, Bradish, that he wishes he had fallen in love with the farmer's daughter; and I think most readers will wish that he had not only fallen in love with her but won her. There was something too fine in Doris Owen for her to give herself up to the kind of life which her mother had lived. No matter with how much love and hope she might enter upon it, her future as Dan Lester's wife could hardly be as happy as Miss Jewett promises. The deeper and richer side of her nature, which had found sympathy in Dick Dale, was perfectly incomprehensible to Dan Lester. It was not Lester's want of education which made him incomparably his wife's inferior; if it had been, there would be some hope that she might in time have raised him to her level. It was rather an absolute lack of all those finer inborn qualities which rendered Doris admirable, and which made even the uncultured old farmer, her father,

worthy of both love and respect. Whether or not Miss Jewett wrote with the purpose which I attribute to her, she is mistaken in her theory; the conclusion can not logically come from the premises. However, let me not be too severe on "A Marsh Island." The book has some strong characters and several fine passages. Martha Owen and Temperance Kipp are well-drawn, and the old farmer, Doris's father, is excellent. The description of the ride to Westmarket, in one of the last chapters, shows as fine work as Miss Jewett has ever done. And if her views of life are not always practical, her theories are interesting ; and among the gloomy pictures of life and characters which many novelists represent, Miss Jewett's idealism is sometimes really refreshing.

The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine 24,1 (July 1885), p. 89.

A Marsh Island, by Sarah Orne Jewett, is a brief novel of that high order which we expect in all Miss Jewett's work, with a simple plot, a quiet style, and great realistic effect in portraying the life of the marsh in Essex County. N.P.G.

The Cottage Hearth 11 (July 1885) 224.

A reviewer's task, if thoroughly done, is not always a pleasant one. There are books where vast numbers of pages have to be drearily traversed by the critic, who wanders to and fro like a traveller on the desert, seeking for a high spring of clear, living water. It is therefore, with a sincere sense of personal gratitude that the writer has taken up Miss Jewett's last novel, and found it as delightfully refreshing as the shade of one of the old apple-trees she loves to write about, on an August day. As a piece of literary work, the "Marsh Island" is decidedly in advance of any previous book the author has given us. The plot, though not unique, does not lose its interest for a moment; nor can the conclusion of the story be anticipated with any certainty until the last chapter is reached. The description of the old farm in the midst of dreary stretches of saltmarsh - one of the most impossible landscapes to handle with vigor or pathos, one would suppose - is charmingly natural and vivid. We can see the ponderous scow, leaving the whitened patch of grass where it has lain all the spring, and floating slowly down the reek; or hear the "rustle of the unburdened bough" as, released from the hand of the apple-gatherer, it springs back to its place. Doris is full of shy, pretty ways, with little pathetic touches that are both womanly and winning. What could be more touching than her surprise at the sight of the tennis-ground, now deserted by the city-folk;

actual "land," just used on purpose for play! While at the same time she approaches the closed house and, with a strange longing, timidly peers into the dark interior through the heart-shaped opening in the shutters. The whole book, one said to the writer, is an exquisite water-color, with no heavy daubs of fiery tint nor depths of black; just fair, sweet, transparent colors, laid on with the daintiest of brushes. When deeper reflections are ventured upon, they are always true, as well as graceful. Though the artist left Doris behind, and felt the loss in his life, "he was dimly conscious that for each revelation of truth or beauty, Heaven demands tribute and better service than before." That is a bit of real gospel; a little sermon, as delicately preached as ever lady spoke. And of such dainty and forceful utterance, the book is full.

San Francisco Chronicle (July 13, 1890), p. 7.

A good book for summer reading is "A Marsh Island," one of Sarah Orne Jewett's best novels, which is reprinted in the pretty Riverside Paper Series. It is full of sketches of New England scenery and of quaint Puritan character, while her quiet humor makes any of Miss Jewett's stories as good reading as one of Howells' novels.

New York Tribune (15 July 1885), p. 6.

The locality of Miss Jewett's "Marsh Island" is said to be Essex County, Mass.

Christian Union (30 July, 1885), p. 21.

Miss Jewett's popular novel, "A Marsh Island," is having a steady sale, and is now in its fourth thousand. Critics think it is the best thing she has done.

Note

These two short notices in the *Tribune* and *Christian Union* seem likely to be the result of Jewett attempting to "create buzz" to aid sales of the novel. See Jewett's letter to Azariah Smith of July 1885.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine 71 (Aug. 1885) 477-8.

There is a combination of the art of the poet, the painter, and the story-teller in Sarah Orne Jewett's *A Marsh Island*. It is at once an idyl, a romance, and a cabinet of exquisite *genre* word-

pictures. A painter who is young, rich, gifted, and a society favorite, but withal thoroughly clean-hearted and unspoiled, is carried by his vagrant art to one of those rural oases so common on the sea-coast counties of Massachusetts, where the rolling ground of the mainland fades into the level marsh-land of the tide-waters. Here, at intervals of luxurious idleness through a languorous sunny day, he reproduces upon his canvas the scenery around him, captivated with its rich glintings of color and its quaint and quiet and secluded beauties, until evening overtakes him. The day's work or play over, he lingers half dreamily and half impatiently, waiting for the lad who had engaged to carry his traps back to the distant town, but lingers fruitlessly, till at length he sees the sun is sinking in the west, and he is left seemingly the sole tenant of the country. As he has a "game" foot, and it has become too late for him to find his way back to his hostelry, he bestirs himself to find a shelter for the night, and plods on jocundly, but a little wearily, until he descries in the distance a farm-house nestled amongst tall trees, in the neighborhood of a great red barn that bespeaks the thrift of its owner, and encompassed by a farm that rises from the surrounding marshes like a high and fruitful island. Pleasantest of all to the wayfarer, at that moment, a straight plume of smoke is going up from one of the chimneys of the hospitable-looking dwelling, most supper-like in its suggestions, and he makes for it as a haven where he shall find rest and the creature comforts his inner man is now loudly calling for. Nor were his hopes and expectations disappointed. He is cordially received and hospitably entertained. The house and its belongings gratify his æsthetic taste, while its owners minister to his necessities. It is a happy, a wholesome, and a plentiful home, equally removed from fashion and from rudeness, dignified in its simple freedom, in the frank independence of its primitive manners, in the capable management of its mistress, and in the self-respect, the quiet dignity, and the fine urbanity of its master, and beautified by the presence of a daughter whose loveliness attracted, and whose stately grace and womanly purity held in check, the admiring stranger. He soon becomes a favorite with the old people, ingratiates himself in their confidence, is permitted to stay on indefinitely, sets up his studio in one of the commodious out-buildings, and begins a rural idyl that is told with felicitous warmth and earnestness in this charming story. How the gracious and beautiful farmer's daughter, strong in her maiden innocence, and the handsome young artist, sensitively alive to beauty, are brought closer together by companionship and comradeship; how they mutually influence and regard each other; and

whether they indulge in young love's dream, or whether it has already been indulged in to the disappointment of the one or the other, we shall not now reveal. Is it not all written in the delightful prose poem that awaits and will richly reward our readers' perusal?

The Critic 4 (8 August 1885) 64.

MISS JEWETT'S new book is in many ways very pleasant reading. It is a great advance upon *A Country Doctor*, and exhibits at their best the fine literary traits that have made for Miss Jewett the enviable reputation of one who can interest the public in simple things. Nothing could be better of the kind than the bits of landscape scattered through the book. Inimitable is the description of the marshes, 'looking as if the land had been *raveled out* into the sea,' and of the tide, 'holding itself bravely for a time: it had grasped the land nobly; all that great weight and power were come in and had prevailed; it shone up at the sky, and laughed in the sun's face; then changed its mind, and began to creep away again; it would rise no more that morning, but at night the world should wonder!' So keen and bright and true are these pen-sketches, that if they had been left as landscape painting they would have seemed not only exquisite but spirited. The effort to mingle with them, however, something of a story of life and human nature, has resulted in a drowsy effect upon the reader, which reminds one of Lucretia Mott's saying on entering a room where her husband and brother were together: 'Ah! I thought thee must both be here; it was so quiet!' It is impossible to feel excited, very hard to feel even decently interested, as regards the characters of the story. The *mise en scène* is perfect, but the people are dull. That is, they are not even really dull; they simply do not exist for us. The good housewife does not touch our hearts, even as a frier of doughnuts; Doris is entirely inanimate; and the artist is as quiet as if he knew professionally that he ought to sit still while his portrait was being painted. But it is pleasanter to praise, and for the scenery and settings of the incidents no one could have anything but praise. It is, indeed, because they are so fine that one looks for something more important to happen in them than the eating of apples or the making of a pie.

Detroit Free Press (8 August 1885), p. 7.

The great idea in America has been to avoid being a foot passenger. How the ladies got on when there were no horse cars in the city I cannot imagine, but in the country they either

stayed at home or harnessed their own horses, or, what was better, persuaded their husbands to harness them. Miss Jewett, in "A Marsh Island," makes her heroine walk only once, for any extent, and that was when she was desperately afraid her lover would go to sea before sunrise, and she should lose him. Young ladies are not supposed to walk in these days unless in shady retreats with their lovers, or in idle lounging about where lovers are supposed to linger.

Note.

This review notes that it has been quoted from Boston *Herald*.

The Dial 6 (Sept. 1885) 123, by William Morton Payne .

There are few things more characteristic of New England scenery than the salt marshes of the coast. It is to these that Miss Jewett takes us in her new novel, which has just been rescued from the dismembering grasp of the "Atlantic Monthly," as the "marsh island" which she describes has itself been rescued from the Atlantic Ocean. It is unnecessary to say that "A Marsh Island" is a simple and exquisite story of, for the most part, the life of country people, and that it is, in a high sense, an artistic production. Miss Jewett has little invention, but she has a rare delicacy of touch, and the American fiction of to-day shows no more beautiful sign than that which is given by her stories and sketches.

Miss Murfree has given us, in "Down the Ravine," a story which is chiefly intended for juvenile readers, but "children of a larger growth" will probably find it no less interesting for its style and dialect, if not for the narrative itself. It is the story of a Tennessee country boy, whose chief desire is to become the owner of a mule. After various reverses, his object is attained, and the story ends happily for all concerned, excepting the bad boy of the tale, who, in his eagerness to outwit others, finds himself completely outwitted. There is a good deal of clever study, both of character and of scenery, in this little volume, and Tennessee is so little known to literature that such glimpses of its life as Miss Murfree gives us are very welcome.

The Independent 37 (Sept. 17, 1885), p. 12.

Miss Jewett's *A Marsh Island* is a stronger and more finished story than "A Country Doctor." Perhaps the chief charm of it is its serene atmosphere, the delightful descriptions of foregrounds and backgrounds, of cloud and water and meadowland, in which the pleasant

little pastoral drama is played. This is quiet enough, we admit; but hardly less interesting (unless one has come direct from the gas and glitter of Ouida, for example) because the reader will take naps between chapters. We quote an illustration of Miss Jewett's happy style of dealing with a bit of description. It merely describes what a young man lying in his bed, wakeful, gathered, half-unconsciously, as impressions of the night; but it might be far more commonplace in other hands.

"Later that evening, Dick Dale lay in bed, listening again to the crickets, which kept up a ceaseless chirping about the house, and to the sober exclamations of the lonely sea-bird, in the lowland not far away. The window was wide open, within reach of his hand, and once or twice he raised himself on his elbow to look [up] at the stars, which were gleaming and twinkling in a white host, whose armies seemed to cover the sky. The willows reached out their huge branches, and made a small cloud of dense darkness, and the damp sea air was flavored with their fragrance and that of the newly-mown marshes. There were no sounds except those made by the faintly chirping creatures, which seemed to have been stationed by the rural neighborhood as a kind of night watchman, to cry[,] 'All's well,' and mark the time. The great loon was the minute hand, while the crickets told the seconds with incessant diligence. As for the hours, they seemed so much longer than usual, that, whether a wind or a falling star announced their close, it would be impossible to determine."

This is the poetry of quiet Nature, felt and expressed with equal truth and simplicity.

Life 6, 142 (17 September 1885) p. 160.

Bookishness: The Lady Novelist, She Surely Won't be Missed.

THERE are a good many false notes in "Paul Crew's Story," by Alice Comyns Carr; there generally are when a woman attempts to do some especially fine writing. We are told with fine alliteration that "the marsh-land is not always wont to be so weary a waste of watery monotony," and that "the salt sea breezes and the strong August suns bleach its placid stretches to a pale amber color"; and so on through pages of mellifluous and mellow melody of meaningless and maudlin mistiness.

That kind of writing can be spun by the mile from any dictionary. It does not mean anything in particular, but there are a great many sentimental noodles who consider it very fine rhetoric.

* * *

THE pity of it is that a really touching story, with several fine situations in it and some common

humanity, is spoiled by a hurdy-gurdy accompaniment. As a setting for the story, the bit of marsh-land by the sea is picturesque, and the author shows a true appreciation of the changing colors that the seasons bring to it. But contrasted with Miss Jewett's description in "A Marsh Island," these wordy pictures are as sounding brass to the pure notes of a flute, or a picture in *Puck* to a marine by Alexander Harrison.

Atlantic Monthly 56 (October 1885), 560-1, by Horace Scudder.

In Miss Jewett we have a writer who might, if personal comparisons were not idle as well as odious, be regarded in the light of Miss Howard's career. It were scarcely more than an accidental ground of comparison, however, which should be taken, were we to note their contemporaneity, their agreement in nativity, and their common literary pursuit. We prefer to consider Miss Jewett without references to others, and even without much reference to her own previous work. Such a book as *A Marsh Island*¹ may very properly ask to be looked at in a gallery by itself. Its charm is so pervasive, and so independent of the strict argument of the story, that those who enjoy it most are not especially impelled to discuss it. It does not invite criticism and more than it deprecate close scrutiny. What was the charm that Richard Dale found in the marsh island itself, where he was so willing a prisoner? simply that which springs from a landscape, broad, unaccented, lying under a summer day, breathing the fragrance of grass and wild roses. The people about him were farmer folk, scarcely racy even, the very heroine herself moves through the scenes unadorned by any caprices or fluttering ribbons of coquetry. The sketches which he brought away were studies in this quiet nature; they were figurative of *A Marsh Island* itself, which is an episode in water-color.

It seems to us that Miss Jewett owes her success, which is indubitable, to her wise timidity. She realizes the limitations of her power, and knows that what she can do within the range of her graceful gift is worth far more than any ambitious struggle outside of it would be. So long as she can make us feel the cool breeze blowing over the marshes, and suggest those long, even lines of landscape, and bring up to our imagination the swing of the scythe, the passage of the hay boat, the homely work of the kitchen, why should she weary us, quieted by these scenes, with the turbid life which another, more passionate novelist might with equal truth discover in the same range of human activity and suffering? We are grateful to her for

the shade of such a book as this, and accept it as one of the gifts which Nature herself brings to the tired dweller in cities. We are not uninterested in the quavers of Mr. Dale's vacillating mind, and we recognize the lover in Dan Lester, but after all it is not these figures by themselves upon which our attention is fixed; they but form a part of that succession of interiors and out-door scenes with pass before the eye in the pages in this book. Flemish pictures we were about to call them, but the refinement which belongs to Miss Jewett's work forbids such a characterization. We return to our own figure: they are water-color sketches, resting for their value not upon dramatic qualities or strong color, but upon their translucency, their pure tone, their singleness of effect.

New Orleans Daily Times Picayune (4 October 1885), p. 9.

Readers who were delighted with "A Country Doctor," by Miss Jewett will be glad to find this newest story by the same author, in such handsome dress as the Riverside Press has given it.

The Art Amateur A Monthly Journal Devoted to Art in the Household 14,1 (December 1885), p. 23.

"An episode in water-color" is the way *The Atlantic Monthly* characterizes Sarah Orne Jewett's charming story *A MARSH ISLAND*. We suspect that the play on words is accidental, but the term happily conveys the idea of the refinement and delicacy of this writer's literary method, and, we might add, her limitations as a story-teller. There is no strong plot in "A Marsh Island," and no strong writing; but the narrative is pure and sweet, the personages are firmly outlined, and the local color is broadly washed in.

The Literary World 16:26 (26 December 1885), p. 487, from *The World's Literature in 1885, A General Survey I, The United States, Fiction*.

The most successful works of fiction of 1885 are perhaps Mrs. Barr's "Jan Vedder's Wife," Mr. Howe's "Mystery of the Locks," Mr. Wendell's "Duchess Emilia," and Miss Jewett's "Marsh Island."

From Jewett's Correspondence

Early Summer 1884 (Monday Evening) to Annie Adams Fields

I really finished the first chapter of The Marsh Island -- it was not a very long one but I feel as if I had got fairly into the swing of the story and as if it might go off easily. I have taken a great fancy to the hero whose name I have at last remembered -- (Robert Dale sometimes called Bob --) and as for Doris, you will like her I know -- Dan Lester is the country lover and the best of the lot is Isr'el Owen the old farmer. Now I know them all so well I am sure I can think of enough that is interesting to tell about them --

Summer 1884 (Monday night) to Annie Adams Fields

I have had a great worry over the Marsh Island* in these last two days. It seemed to run into the sand and disappear. I got ten pages done early this afternoon before the company came and worked away not hopelessly, but I feel uncertain about it -- and wish it were a stronger sort of story -- We will let it tell itself and wait, wont we darling?

Autumn 1884 (Sunday evening) to Annie Adams Fields

Now ... I have at last, after much grumbling and groaning, got my next two numbers of the "Marsh Island" ready for the printer, and I take a long breath, being free until February. The second of the two was not half so bad as I expected, and some day or two in town will work wonders with the rest.

5 November 1884 to Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Dont be disheartened with A Marsh Island! I am afraid you will think the beginning is dull, but I really believe it is better as it goes on. I shall have the next part ready in a few days; I have been finishing the story this last week and now I will put it in order as fast as I can.

24 March 1885 John Greenleaf Whittier to Annie Adams Fields

I am sorry to hear of dear Sarah's illness, and to think of her suffering while we have been enjoying her installments of "Marsh Island" so heartily.... Tell Sarah that her "Marsh Island" is even better than the Country Doctor.

June 1885 (Friday night) from Annie Adams Fields

Mr. Millet has just been here bringing good news! Such news! "The Marsh Island" was all sold (the first edition I mean) at once.

21 June 1885 from Helen Bell

I meant to come & thank you yesterday for the book, but I became so absorbed in it & so interested that nothing would have tempted me to leave it one moment, even to see you "on the Heights" -- May I blow my blast about it & try to say how beautiful the book is as a mere work of art -- even leaving out the [unrecognized word] interest -- ? if my eyes had not brimmed up every time that Dan's did, I should almost think I had been looking at a beautiful picture, instead of reading a book -- a lovely Fuller picture -- I mean as Fuller was meant to be but was not quite -- then the fun -- & the dignity of it all & there is Just enough -- & not one word too much -- & at the last I suppose you meant to leave a little sad suspicion, as to whether Dan or the Artist was the "true God" that Emerson writes of -- a kind of "might have been" weighs on me -- is it your fault? I liked Dan & your word 'compelling' made me, as well as Doris in love with him -- the flight across those sand-dunes made my old heart carry on like mad. I was surprised at my excitement & kept saying "who would have believed the old man had so much blood in him?!" You ought to be and are proud -- to have written it ----

Early July (Friday) 1885 to Azariah Smith

I have been thinking a good deal about A Marsh Island* since I saw you yesterday and I have come to the conclusion that I should like to advertise it a good deal as a venture of my own. I find that people ^in^ whose opinion I have a good deal of confidence think it is better than my other stories, but it seems to "hang fire" just now. Of course the bulletins and circulars do a good deal of advertising for it, but I believe most story-buyers are attracted to books by seeing a good deal about them in the papers and getting the idea that they have a good run, are popular and that it is "the thing" to read them. I have looked over the notices and taken some short bits of them and made up these little advertisements which I enclose.

If you do not see anything out of the way in it will you be kind enough to have some copies sent to these papers with any others which seem proper to you? The Sunday Herald, the Journal, Advertiser & Transcript, & Traveller -- in Boston -- N.Y. Evening Post & Chicago Tribune -- I should say the Herald on two Sundays and the Traveller only once or twice, but I should like to have it repeated in the other papers every

other day for a while. I should like to spend at least seventy-five dollars on my own account in this experiment, and I hope the publishers will have no objection to this plan.

Would you please send some "items" occasionally to the papers? I think it might be well to say that the scene is supposed to be laid in Essex -- Mass -- or Essex Country ----- I hope you will not think I am unmindful of all your interest and kindness about this and all my books -- but I perfectly understand that a publishing house has its limits in proper adventures and cannot make an exception of my story or any other.

-- But I hope there will not be any reason why I cannot speculate a little in advertising on my own account -- It will be a satisfaction to my mind at any rate!

Summer 1885 (Friday morning) to Lilian Woodman Aldrich

Isn't it fun about the Marsh Island which seems to be doing better than any of my books so far? I shall begin to show signs of unwonted prosperity before long.

A White Heron 1886

Detroit *Free Press* (2 October 1886) p. 8, by John Macfarlane.

Almost too delicate, but very beautiful in its whiteness, is Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's new book "A White Heron." And it is as delicate and dainty within as without. The story selected for the title is the first of nine and the best, with possibly one exception. Very simple it is -- a mere sketch of a young girl's sacrifice, but it is singularly touching, and has moreover an exquisite flavor of the country and the woods. "Marsh Rosemary" is a more elaborate sketch, but not less touching -- the story of an old maid's romance. Two of the stories are new: one -- "Farmer Finch" -- is reprinted from Harper's Monthly, and the others have appeared in Atlantic and other periodicals.

Overland Monthly 8 (October 1886), pp. 439-441.

. . . . and *A White Heron*, a collection of Miss Jewett's latest stories, the first of which gives the title to the book.

Of Miss Jewett's stories little can ever be said, except to remark afresh on their beauty, their straightforward simplicity, and above all, their loving truth to the life of rural New England not merely in its external aspects, but in its very heart and spirit. It needs only to compare such a bit of outside observation as Mr. Howells's picture of Lydia Blood's home with the studies of the same sort of people from the more intimate and sympathetic standpoint of Miss Jewett's stories, to realize how great is the mere historic importance, apart from the purely humane or artistic value, of these stories, and the little "school" of which they, with Rose Terry Cooke's, stand at the head. They constitute the only record for the future of the real motive and temper of life among the latest (and possibly the last) distinct representatives of the English Puritan colonization of New England; as well as very nearly the only one, in any detail, of its manners and customs. In view of the current misconceptions of the Puritan temper, which threaten to fasten themselves upon history, such authentic records of its rugged kindliness, its intensity of personal affections, its capacity for liberality, are invaluable. Nor can one doubt that these *bona fide* Yankees, yet lingering among the remote farms, are the true descendants in character as well as in blood of the original colonists, if he will compare them with George Eliot's studies of the farmer folk from among whom they came. The community of essential character, modified by two hundred years of

greater independence, more liberal thought, and harder effort is unmistakable. *A White Heron* contains two or three stories that are among Miss Jewett's best; the average of the collection is scarcely equal, we think, to previous ones. The first story, "A White Heron," however, is perfect in its way - a tiny classic. One little episode of child-life, among birds and woods makes it up; and the secret soul of a child, the appeal of the bird to its instinctive honor and tenderness, never were interpreted with more beauty and insight. A paragraph or two will give the heart of the little picture cut from its frame, and perhaps, like the shells that "had left their beauty on the shore with the sun and the sand and the wild uproar," almost spoiled thereby:

Sylvia's face was like a pale star, if one had seen it from the ground, when the last thorny bough was past, and she stood trembling and tired but wholly triumphant, high in the tree-top. Yes, there was the sea with the dawning sun making a golden dazzle over it, and toward that glorious east flew two hawks with slow-moving pinions. How low they looked in the air from that height when before one had only seen them far up, and dark against the blue sky. Their gray feathers were as soft as moths; they seemed only a little way from the tree, and Sylvia felt as if she too could go flying away among the clouds. Westward, the woodlands and farms reached miles and miles into the distance; here and there were church steeples, and white villages; truly it was a vast and awesome world.

The birds sang louder and louder. At last the sun came up bewilderingly bright. Sylvia could see the white sails of ships out at sea, and the clouds that were purple and rose-colored and yellow at first began to fade away. Where was the white heron's nest in the sea of green branches, and was this wonderful sight and pageant of the world the only reward for having climbed to such a giddy height? Now look down again, Sylvia, where the green marsh is set among the shining birches and dark hemlocks; there where you saw the white heron once you will see him again; look, look! a white spot of him like a single floating feather comes up from the dead hemlock and grows larger, and rises, and comes close at last, and goes by the landmark pine with steady sweep of wing and outstretched slender neck and crested head. And wait! wait! do not move a foot or a finger, little girl, do not send an arrow of light and consciousness from your two eager eyes, for the heron has perched on a pine bough not far beyond yours, and cries back to his mate on the nest, and plumes his feathers for the new day!

* * * * *

The grandmother and the sportsman stand in the door together and question her, and the

splendid moment has come to speak of the dead hemlock-tree by the green marsh.

But Sylvia does not speak after all, though the old grandmother fretfully rebukes her, and the young man's kind, appealing eyes are looking straight in her own. He can make them rich with money; he has promised it, and they are poor now. He is so well worth making happy, and he waits to hear the story she can tell.

No, she must keep silence! What is it that suddenly forbids her and makes her dumb? Has she been nine years growing, and now, when the great world for the first time puts out a hand to her, must she thrust it aside for a bird's sake? The murmur of the pine's green branches is in her ears, she remembers how the white heron came flying through the golden air and how they watched the sea and the morning together, and Sylvia cannot speak; she cannot tell the heron's secret and give its life away.

Dear loyalty, that suffered a sharp pang as the guest went away disappointed later in the day, that could have served and followed him and loved him as a dog loves! Many a night Sylvia heard the echo of his whistle haunting the pasture path as she came home with the loitering cow. She forgot even her sorrow at the sharp report of his gun and the piteous sight of thrushes and sparrows dropping silent to the ground, their songs hushed and their pretty feathers stained and wet with blood. Were the birds better friends than their hunter might have been, -- who can tell?

The Critic 6 (October 9, 1886) p. 172.

The story which gives the title 'A White Heron' to Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's new book (Houghton Mifflin & Co.) reminds one curiously, in its grace and refinement, its beauty of rhythm and its poetic subject, of Mrs. Browning's little Ellie with her 'swan's nest among the reeds;' and the fact that the climax is quite different from little Ellie's, only adds to the charm of it. Miss Jewett has always written well, but she is beginning to write better. Her work shows quiet, conscientious growth; she is beginning to interfuse her descriptive work with a warm human glow of emotion, to mingle strong feeling with calm expression of its results. 'The White Heron' is not a realistic story; but if it gives us a higher standard even in such minor matters as not betraying a bird's secret, let us remember Vernon Lee's ideal of fiction as that which artificially increases those moments of life when our meaner part is in abeyance, our better in the ascendancy. Miss Jewett's earlier work was a little cold, and to some of us a little dull at times; but there is nothing cold about 'The White Heron,' though it is gratefully cool in its quiet

purity. And if there is nothing cold in 'The White Heron,' there is certainly nothing dull in the 'The Dulham Ladies,' except the first syllable of the town in which they lived; for this second sketch is full of a gentle humor that may not make you burst into hilarious laughter when you read it, but it will keep you smiling half a day. Altogether this new book is very far the best of Miss Jewett's work; and it is a pleasure to see it enshrined between Mrs. Whitman's dainty covers.

San Francisco (CA) *Chronicle* (10 October 1886), p. 11.

One of Miss Jewett's books is always a treat to those who are fond of good literature. Her latest collection of tales, entitled "A White Heron and Other Stories," contains several stories of New England life which have not been printed, with others which will be familiar to readers of the magazines. "A White Heron" is a dainty study of a little Yankee maiden whose love for birds overcame her passion to make a little money and her dawning desire to please a young ornithologist who spent his vacation at her house. It is full of the effective touches which serve to bring out character. "Farmer Finch" is a story with a purpose, and that purpose is to show that a woman may do hard farm work without allowing it to coarsen her nature. Of the other tales the best is "Marsh Rosemary" -- a tender idyl of a woman's self-sacrifice -- and in our judgment the best story which Miss Jewett has ever written. The little volume is given a dainty dress, in keeping with its contents.

Atlantic Monthly (November 1886), p. 719.

Miss Jewett has collected her recent short stories into a pretty little volume, *A White Heron and Other Stories*. (Houghton.) Our readers will find some of their favorites, together with two new stories which have not before been printed.

Cottage Hearth 12 (November 1886), p. 368.

It goes without saying that Mrs. Jewett's work now needs no introduction to the reading public. Drawn with rapid but careful touch, every picture she gives us is a new pleasure. In her last volume "A White Heron," which comes to us daintily bound in white and gilt with green cloth back, there is found the same fresh interest in humble life which charmed us in her earlier work; the same unadorned, pure English style; the same quiet adherence to simple truth in the presentation of her scenes and characters. To

feel the charm of this lady's writings, one should read a few pages in any of the showy novels of the day, and then turn quickly to one of these gentle talks. There is a certain unmistakable *ladyhood* in the author's tone and manner which alike rests and delights after the morbid atmosphere and raised voice, too common in even our better class of fiction. The *White Heron*, the first of the essays in this new volume, is full of exquisite bits of narration and description, especially that of the little girl driving her charge home from pasture, "the cow taking slow steps and the child very fast ones." The *motif* of the sketch, slight as it appears, is one of such fragile beauty, tenderness and pathos as only Miss Jewett could have given us.

"Deephaven" is added to the fast increasing number of sterling books in cheap form. This volume is finely printed and bound in flexible, dull green cloth.

The American Hebrew (5 November 1886), p. 196.

Miss Jewett's new volume of her ever-charming stories has all the special characteristics of her work. We have the delicate perception of individuality in people and places, the happy choice of epithet, the sympathetic description of scenery, and the beautiful English she has taught us to expect. Like all her best work, it is sketches of country life and people. She is a sort of modern Miss Mitford. One or two of the stories in the book give better promise of something more than any other work we have seen from her pen. "Marsh Rosemary" in particular has action in it. It is not a happening, it has a story to tell. In our opinion it is superior in this respect to some of the author's more ambitious writing: but, perhaps, after all, it is sketches, not dramas, we want from Miss Jewett, and in these she is unsurpassed. The gray tone is so all-pervading in this collection that the reader feels as if he were lost in one of her own sea-fogs, and it is well that the book closes with something brighter. The last story, "The Two Browns," is irresistibly funny in its actual and possible complications.

The Literary World 17 (Nov 13, 1886), 388.

In its pearl-gray covers across which the heron is flying, its green back and gilt top, this little volume presents a dainty and refined exterior, symbolic of the first sketch that gives the title. "A White Heron" is the purest and tenderest, the most idyllic of all Miss Jewett's productions, and reveals her to us in the use of imaginative and creative powers which give

promise of rare work in the future. Here, more than in anything previously written, we recognize the fine instinct and touch of the artist; hitherto she has made common life beautiful and poetic, but this is a bit wholly apart, ideal, a lovely fancy with a human meaning. "The Gray Man" is "after Hawthorne," and a new experiment with the author. The others of the collection are "Farmer Finch," reprinted from *Harper's Magazine*; that fine study of two homely lives, "Marsh Rosemary;" the character drawing, also in her best manner, of "The Dulham Ladies;" "A Business Man;" "Mary and Martha;" "The News from Petersham;" and that unique venture which shows another side of her genius, "The Two Browns" - a choice little list, with representative samples of a varied work which is always as conscientiously as it is charmingly done.

Nation 43 (30 December 1886) p. 548.

In Miss Jewett's 'White Heron' there is no breath of romanticism or taint of literary sentimentality. Her stories are word paintings of New England landscape, enlivened by a few characters indigenous to the soil. They are more remarkable as specimens of excellent workmanship than as the expression of creative ability or of fine idea. If throughout a tendency towards puritanically moral instructiveness be observable, it does not seem to be premeditated, but rather an unconscious manifestation of the author's individuality. The last story, "The Two Browns," has no sort of resemblance in scene or incident to its companion sketches. The attraction which its meaningless complication may have had for the author is not shared by the reader, and the enigma of its reason of existence is undecipherable.

Catholic World 44 (December 1886) pp. 413-4.

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett is another New-Englander of the "Quietist" school. She has something of the tone of the charming Miss Mitford, whose *Our Village* and *Belford Regis* are classics. Her latest book is *The White Heron, and Other Stories* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) "Marsh Rosemary" is the most carefully written of the sketches that make up the book. It is on the same line as Tennyson's "Enoch Arden." An old maid marries a young and lazy man. After a time he disappears; she mourns in silence, forgetting his bad qualities and glorifying his good ones. Suddenly, after a lapse of time, Mrs. Elton, a village gossip, brings news of the man whom Ann Floyd had believed to be dead:

"Ann was stitching busily upon the deacon's new coat, and looked up with a friendly smile as her guest came in, in spite of an instinctive shrug as she had seen her coming up the yard. The dislike of the poor souls for each other was deeper than their philosophy could reach."

It is remarkable that in most of these New England stories in which the life of the people is depicted with fidelity, religion assumes a hard and repellant aspect. The deacons, the farmers, the seamstresses -- who seem to answer in social position to Miss Mitford's poor English gentlewoman -- and even the minister, are in their professionally religious capacity unforgiving and obstinate. Ann, in "Marsh Rosemary," in her trouble is all the more pathetic because religion has no consolations for her. She finds that her husband has "married" another woman. She comes suddenly, unobserved, upon a domestic scene made up of the faithless Jerry, his wife, and the baby. She is pleased to hear that Jerry, who, the neighbors predicted, could come to no good, is thrifty and industrious; but then the sense of her woe and his treachery enters her heart:

"The other woman stood there looking at them, full of pride and love. She was young and trig and neat. She looked a brisk, efficient little creature. Perhaps Jerry would make something of himself now; he always had it in him. The tears were running down Ann's cheeks; the rain, too, had begun to fall. She stood there watching the little household sit down to supper, and noticed with eager envy how well cooked the food was and how hungrily the master of the house ate what was put before him. All thoughts of ending the new wife's sin and folly vanished away. She could not enter in and break another heart; hers was broken already, and it would not matter."

Now, Ann -- or Nancy, as Miss Jewett prefers to call her -- was a religious woman, according to her Congregational lights; but in this crisis, when it was a question of solving a social problem which she had no right to solve in a sentimental way, her religion offered her neither consolation nor direction. Jerry, evidently a bad and heartless man, was left to his sin, and his innocent partner to the consequence of it. He might desert his new wife as he had deserted his old one. But Nancy, who paid out of her scanty earnings her portion of the minister's salary and never missed meeting, takes no thought of her responsibility as accessory to her husband's crime. Miss Jewett's sketches are slight but artistic, and so true to life that, like Miss Terry Cook's *Sphynx's Children*, they have worth as material for the study of New England life. Gogol and Tolstoi, and others of the Russian novelists now so greatly in vogue, have this merit of fidelity. And in *St. John's Eve*, by

Gogol (New York: Crowell & Co.), we find a clue to the present position of Russia among novels. In fact, novels are to-day doing what we formerly expected history to do -- telling us the truth; we gain more knowledge of the character of the Russian people from the Russian realists than from all the cumbrous historical essays on the Cossacks and Peter the Great yet written.

Godey's Lady's Book 113 (December 1886) 593.

A most dainty volume containing nine tales which have all appeared heretofore in magazines. The author's exquisite taste is shown in these stories where the interest is maintained without any strain upon the imagination.

The Harvard Monthly 3 (1886-7) 125.

A White Heron and Other Stories. S. O. Jewett. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Whoever has read *Deephaven* must turn with interest to any new book by Miss Jewett. Though volumes of short stories have come rapidly from her hand, still they are never disappointing. The stories may vary in power and strength, but the reader always finds in them the same delicacy of treatment and of thought, the same dainty humor which have made *Deephaven* a "classic." In her last volume of stories, *A White Heron*, Miss Jewett is seen in all her different moods. In it, too, are all the beauties which her readers have come to expect in her work. Two of the sketches, *The Gray Man*, and *A Business Man* are especially noteworthy. The first by its fantastic character reminds the reader of some of Hawthorne's short stories. *A Business Man* we would place among the best of Miss Jewett's stories, so delicate and beautiful is the drawing of the rich old man, lonely in the midst of his busy, fashionable children. G. P. B. [G. P. Baker, Jr., *Editor in Chief*].

The Unitarian 11 (Jan. 1887) p. 21, by m.b.c..

This is a dainty, gilt-edged volume in white, with a heron in outlines on the cover. These stories, like all of Miss Jewett's writings, are full of interest. One almost holds his breath while the fate of the "White Heron," with his "slender neck and crested head," hangs in the balance. Though "The Gray Man" and "Marsh Rosemary" give us an indefinable feeling of sadness before we are aware of it, "The Dulham Ladies" and "The News from Petersham" bring involuntary smiles.

Harper's Magazine 74 (Feb. 1887) p. 483.

A gentler pathos, a pensiveness lit with the humor which is absent from Mrs. Wyman's work [*Poverty Grass* by Mrs. Lillie Chase Wyman, mentioned earlier in the review essay], breathes from Miss Jewett's latest book. *A White Heron and Other Stories* is not the volume which we would praise as showing the author at her best, and yet some of the pieces could hardly be better. One may say that certain of them are slight and tame to the point of fragility and the temper of the cosset, but others are exquisitely good. "The Dulham Ladies," whose final and most thrilling adventure is buying two frizzes of a deceiving French hair-dresser; "Martha and Mary," to whom the god appears in a reconciled cousin with the gift of a sewing machine, are masterpieces of a kind that one would simply like to go on reading forever in that quiet, restful, humorously appreciative style of Miss Jewett. They are as satisfying at once and as appetizing as "Marsh [March] Rosemary," where the material of a much longer tale is wildly flung away in the story of the poor old maid who marries the worthless young sailor, and who makes a long journey to expose him to the second wife after he abandons her, and then seeing their happy home through the window, with its promise of usefulness for the man, returns to her desolation without taking her revenge.

Revue des Deux Mondes 83 (1887), pp. 428-451. "Le Naturalisme Aux États-Unis," "Naturalism in America," Th. Bentzon's (Marie Thérèse de Solms Blanc).

Miss Jewett's "A White Heron" seems to us a perfect example of the genre.

The white heron is the object of desire for the hunter / ornithologist, and he would gladly help little Sylvia, whose cow grazes near the precious bird's nest. The young girl is so wild that she seems more a flower of solitude or a small, wild animal than a human child. She undertakes a heroic quest to help the stranger in his relentless pursuit. At dawn, she climbs to the top of a colossal pine, from which she sees the dizzying wonders of the surrounding countryside. From this observation post, she spots the bird rising from the greenery of the marsh. There it is! she is surprised to uncover this secret that can enrich her and earn for her the affection of the hunter, whose passage through her solitude has been the only event of her young life! Why, then, is she unable to speak? unable to deliver the white heron that had perched so near her on a branch and watched the sunrise with

her? She simply cannot. No matter what, she must keep the bird's secret.

In this brief idyll of a few pages, Miss Jewett shows the qualities of a painter and a poet. The emotion vibrates at the end without the author having evoked any other feeling than that of loyalty, an instinctive and delicate point of honor. That's enough. Nature remains overwhelming, and little Sylvia takes up little more space than a blade of grass, but the beating of this childish heart, so honest and so pure, still fills the immense landscape and adds to its impassive serenity, largely and simply rendered, something greater than nature, something divine.

Note

This rough translation from French is by Terry Heller, using Google Translate.

From Jewett's Correspondence

August 1885 (Home Saturday afternoon) to Annie Adams Fields

Mr. Howells thinks that this age frowns upon the romantic, that it is no use to write them romance any more, but dear me, how much of it there is left in every-day life after all! It must be the fault of the writers that such writing is dull, but what shall I do with my "White Heron" now she is written? She isn't a very good magazine story, but I love her and I mean to keep her for the beginning of my next book and the reason for Mrs. Whitman's pretty cover.

17 March 1887 from Samuel Longfellow

... I send it quite as much because it gives me the opportunity of saying ... with what great pleasure I read last autumn in Portland your little volume of stories, which paint so admirably certain phases & characters of New England life. The fine reserve of the close of the White Heron seemed to me a wonderful touch of art -- if it were not rather a touch of nature. Perhaps both in one.

The Story of the Normans 1887

A number of these reviews were transcribed from a clippings file held by the Houghton Library of Harvard University. Some are not fully dated. They are marked (HL).

The Critic 158 (8 January 1887), 23.

Prof. E. A. Freeman, when requested by the Messrs. Putnam to write the story of a nation for their popular Nations series, very much to their surprise selected Sicily, a land which, he argued, 'presents before all others the Story of the Nations, not of one only, but of all that have ever been of any moment in the Mediterranean.' The next volumes of this series will be Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's 'The Story of the Normans' and Mme. Ragozin's 'Story of Assyria.' The 'Story of Chaldæa,' by Mme. Ragozin, has been highly praised by Profs. Max Müller and Sayce in letters to Mr. George Haven Putnam.

The New Orleans Daily Picayune, (13 February 1887), p. 10.

This book belongs to the fine series being published under the general title of "The Story of the Nations." The author, Miss Sarah Jewett, is one of the most graceful, sympathetic and popular of the magazine writers, but even her most devoted admirers will be pleasantly surprised to find with what depth, comprehension and eloquence she has lent her pen to the romantic and thrilling career of the Normans. Miss Jewett's book relates chiefly to the Norman conquest of England, and it will always remain one of the best and most readable of the series.

The Standard (Chicago), (Thursday, 17 February 1887), (HL).

Some part of the story of the Normans is given in that volume of this excellent series which treats of Norway itself, and written by Mr. Boyesen. It is that part of it which concerns Norway chiefly. The book now in hand takes up the story where Boyesen leaves it, dealing with the Normans in their relation to English history. Soon after the time of William the Conqueror Norman and Anglo-Saxon, in England, accepted the situation as regards to their joint occupancy

of the island, so that, although it is long before the races blend, it ceases to be necessary to treat of either Norman or Saxon as any thing else but English. Thus it is that, as the title to this volume implies, the subject of it is the Normans with principal reference to that notable conquest. The author begins with Norway and the Vikings, but the scene soon changes to that part of France where the Normans made their first great conquest; the race of Rolf the Ganger by whom this conquest was achieved being traced in their various fortunes and in their growth to that measure of power which made William the Conqueror equal to his own great enterprise. With the story of this achievement, a briefer record of the reign of William Rufus and of the first Henry, the book closes. The book is what its title implies -- the "story," not in any large sense the history, of the Normans. Not that it is less true than history, but that it runs lightly along on the surface of events, picturesque, descriptive, with that sort of fluent narrative which makes all this writer's books so fascinating and popular. She has studied the subject, evidently, with conscientious fidelity, but quite as evidently has not attempted to rival those more elaborate works in which the philosophy of the history, the causes and results of what is narrated, is dwelt upon. We think the book will be highly popular with those for whom especially it has been written.

The Dial, (March 1887), 274.

The name of Sarah Orne Jewett on the title page of "The Story of the Normans," the latest number of the "Story of the Nations" (Putnam), leads us to expect a narrative of blended symmetry and strength; and our expectation is perfectly fulfilled. The quiet, earnest spirit, the scrupulous veracity, the careful construction, the finished style, which mark the essays and stories of Miss Jewett, distinguish this more serious and comprehensive work. She has studied the subject faithfully, mastering it to a degree which enables her to treat it with an original picturesque force. It has all the charm of a romance, with the truth of a veritable history. The record of a people, written with such simplicity and beauty, impresses lastingly the mind of the reader, old or young. "The Story of the Normans" is confined to a few generations, extending from the middle of the ninth to the beginning of the eleventh [twelfth?] century; but as Miss Jewett relates it, it is relieved from all obscurity and elevated to its due rank and importance. We are not to forget that the lines of our ancestry go back to the Northman as well as to the Anglo-Saxon, and that to him Englishmen and Americans are indebted for some of their

most estimable qualities. It is, in truth, our earlier history we trace in this story of the Norman Dukes.

Dartmouth *Literary Monthly* 1:6 (March 1887), 294-5. Courtesy of Dartmouth College Library.

Some peoples, like some individuals, are born brilliant, beautiful, venturesome, as others are born stolid or stupid. They seem to be endowed with a greater suppleness of mind, a loftier spirit, a keener sense than their fellows. Nor are these gifts the index of inferior force and endurance, as we sometimes think. Nature, like fortune (if they are not identical), has her favorites on whom she lavishes her most precious gifts of mind and body. Among such favorites of Nature were the ancient Persians in western Asia, and in Europe the Normans. The Persians are better known to the classical student than any other Asiatic nation. This is owing to their long struggle, now aggressive, now defensive, with the Greeks and Romans. Nor was this prominence undeserved. The character of the Persian compares not unfavorably with that of his western cousins. The names of the great Cyrus, the wise Darius, the savage Cambyses even, are not unworthy of their place in history beside the heroes of Marathon and Salamis. Æschylus's *Persians* shows us that the Greeks themselves were far from despising their great foe. We are a little apt to think of the Persians as a vast horde of enervated barbarians, swarming over the world in a course of conquest as purposeless as it was cruel. In this we are eminently unjust to the Greeks and Persians alike. We accord to the former a foolish fear of the latter, cheapen their triumph over them, and we fail utterly to appreciate that force and endurance that have kept the Persians even to our own day a united and discrete people. Far from being enervated, they were one of the most vigorous offshoots of the pure Aryan stock; far from being barbarians, in anything but the Greek sense, they were preëminently intellectual and ready-witted, and remarkably spiritual in their religion and philosophy. They have been called the "nerve of the East," as the Hindoos "the brain." Few Asiatics interest our Western temper more than do this fair shepherd people, with their noble manners and their simple worship on the sunny mountains of Iran. Yet in spite of Persia's superior birthright, fate has decreed that she should never influence the world save negatively. Paradoxically, it seems to have been what Persia has not done that has advanced the race. She did not conquer Greece, and the world will forever be in debt to the culmination of Greek genius incident upon the Persian war. She could not resist Alexander, and thus the

Hellenization of the East became of the vastest importance to the subsequent spread of the English church. She could not become mistress of Byzantium, and the lingering life of that too-easily forgotten empire has fulfilled a mission that has been, and is yet to be, of great weight in the destinies of Europe. Persian history has been a thread connecting the somewhat inconsequent rise and fall of the Asiatic powers. Parthian, Babylonian, Jewish, Egyptian, Saracen, and Turkish history all blend with hers. Whether as the ruling power, or the oppressed of all, in the checkered story of the East, Persia is ever a prominent figure in our interest and imagination. Although Mr. Benjamin, our late minister to that country, has written an accurate enough account of its history, his style is bald, sometimes rather careless, and he fails to hold us as the merits of the subject would lead us to expect. We regret, too, that he has not thought it worth while to dwell a little more largely on some subjects than he has. We could well have spared half of his opening chapters on the legends of Persia if he had devoted an equal space to a more adequate account of Zoroaster and his religion, its wonderful revival under Artaxerxes the Sassanian in the third century of our era, and the subtle influence it exerted on the Christianity of that day. Such an account, imperfect as it would have to be, would not have encroached upon the domain of ecclesiastical history, and in this day of Oriental scholarship would not have failed to interest us beyond any mere mythic chronology.

The central position held by the Persians in Asia is paralleled by the Normans in Europe. The story of the Normans is the key to the history of Europe, as that of Persia is to Asiatic history, but with a difference. The Persians were overrun by all nations; the Normans overran all nations. The Persians kept their nationality intact and separate; the Normans assimilated themselves to every people they conquered. The Persians were superior in civilization to their neighbors; the Normans were the pupils of their subjects. The instances are rare in history of a nation not only assimilating a foreign civilization, but developing it beyond those from whom they borrowed it. The Saracens are the only striking instance of this besides the Normans, and they were the less remarkable in that their culture decayed as rapidly as it grew, a bright mirage of the desert as compared with the permanent splendors of the Norman name.

Charlemagne, when he wept at the sight of the Norse long ships sweeping past the shores of his domain, was a poor prophet, mighty emperor though he was. He did not see, it was impossible that he should see, that of that fierce pirate breed was to come the flower of Christian knighthood and kingdom, the fairest and

proudest and most royal race that the world had seen for many an age. The Normans were the last of the Teutons to take their position in the new map of Europe: the last, but by no means the least. European history would have been very dull, very similar to the interminable annals of the German states, but for this saving element of grace and romance. The Normans were the little leaven of imagination that leavened the stolid lump of western Christendom. By their poetic alchemy they transmuted all they touched into that something so exquisitely fair that we call mediævalism. War became a crusade, arms chivalry, the Roman system of patronage feudalism, by their magic use. We judge feudalism and chivalry now by the light of the subsequent abuses of them; and it is only by severe research and much against our prejudices that we can discover and enjoy their pristine loveliness and beneficence. Compare the empire of Charlemagne and the empire of Barbarossa. We are apt to think of the Normans almost wholly in connection with England; but their influence was no less pronounced on France, and even in Italy they are not without witness. It would be very interesting to trace the Norman in the wit and the polish of which the French are so proud. On the other side of the Channel, many though the losses were to England by the Conquest, we doubt if even the most violent Saxon-maniac, if I may use the term, would care to blot out the names of her first dozen kings. With all their faults of pride and treachery, never did more kingly kings, all in all, sit on any throne than the Plantagenets. Miss Jewett has fulfilled a task as agreeable to herself, we doubt not, as to her readers. It is with a fond imagination and a loving hand that she depicts for us this Viking's brood. The fascinating beauty for which they were so famous still haunts their story, and still dazzles those who never saw them nor even the land of their birth. In a vignette style our author's story passes from incident to incident, each delightful, each full of exquisite color and character. In her tenderness and loving reverence Miss Jewett reminds us of Miss Yonge at her happiest. The history of the Normans has been more completely told, but their story never more charmingly, than by Miss Jewett.

We wonder if any strain of Viking blood in Victor Hugo is answerable for the wonderful art with which he describes the awful tempests in *The Toilers of the Sea* and *The Man who Laughs*, and made him the champion of the Norman troubadour against the classicists of the *grand siècle*. However that may be, Victor Hugo has certainly proven that the old Norse *spirit* still exists in France. Whatever follies this nineteenth century has plunged into, and they are not few, it must be admitted that it has been remarkably

fertile in great literary names. This is nowhere more true than in France, in its great romantic revival with Hugo as its chief creation and creator. The Norman element seems again to have conquered for itself a place in literary geography....

Central School Journal (Keokuk, IA), 10 April 1887, 13-14 (HL).

THE STORY OF THE NATIONS. The Normans. By Sarah Orne Jewett. The Moors in Spain. By Stanley Lane-Poole. New York. G. P. Putnam's Sons. Octavo, beautifully illustrated, per volume, \$1.50. The series of histories outlined by the publishers under the title, *The Story of the Nations* is excellent every way. Mrs. Jewett has told the story of the Normans admirably. In a simple graphic style, she has portrayed the Norman heroes and their conquests, their lives and customs; and withal has been historically accurate. In *The Moors of Spain*, Mr. Lane-Poole gives a vivid idea of those wonderful people. The history is entertaining as well as instructive and clearly evidences the scholarly ability of its author. The volumes are profusely and elegantly illustrated. Some of the illustrations being unusually fine. Mechanically the books are superb.

The New England Magazine 5:30 (April 1887), 603.

A LARGE number of American readers should be interested in the history of the Normans, since in their veins runs a rill which, in some degree, had its source in Normandy in times antedating William the Conqueror. In her history of this people, Miss Jewett has treated an important as well as an interesting subject in a sprightly and in a worthy manner. In their own land they are brought to our view in the persons of the first seven dukes, the successive rulers of Normandy, who were "typical of their time and representative of the various types of the national character." The author regards these Normans as the foremost people of their day, "the most thoroughly alive, and quickest to see where advances might be made." This is observed to be true in regard to their methods and skill in government, and in the extension of their power and their national growth. It is shown in their very striking and original architecture, which has had so wide an influence, and whose beauties are constantly reproduced in modern structures. The same eminence is perceived in the social field; for it is admitted that this people were gifted with sentiment and with good taste,

together with intellectual cleverness. Yet as with others there is a dark side to this picture, -- failures in point of noble action, and misfortunes that involved much privation. These were owing, as usual, to a blindness to the inevitable results of certain courses, and the accompanying unwillingness to listen to their best teachers. In order that we may understand the old Norman beauty and grace, their manly strength, courage, and courtesy, the author would have us go now to the shores of Norway, where in the country of the saga-men and the rough sea-kings, beside the steep-shored harbors of the viking dragon-ships, linger still the constantly repeated types of our earlier ancestry, and where the flower of the sagas blooms as fair as ever. This is a rather romantic view of the subject, but in a certain sense, it is probably a true one.

The Advance 22 (21 April 1887), 246.

In *The Story of the Normans*, by Sarah Orne Jewett, we have one of the best histories yet published in *The Stories of the Nations* series. Miss Jewett's stories of New England life have given her an established literary reputation. The same charm of style which has made these stories attractive, and the same power of picturesque and vivid description distinguish this more serious historical work. Her graphic pen gives an air of living reality to the characters and acts of such heroes as William Longsword, Richard the Fearless, Duke Richard the Good, Robert the Magnificent, and the great William the Conqueror. Less complete and valuable as a history of the Norman Conquest of England than Thierry's work, Miss Jewett's work is yet more valuable than his, as supplying a history of the Norman from the first beginnings of his power in Northern Europe, to the culmination of that power in the great victory of William at the Battle of Hastings. As a compendious, convenient and altogether trustworthy manual of Norman history, it is to be preferred above the elaborate and exhaustive work of Sir Francis Palgrave. Its literary merits will give it favor alike with the old and the young.

North American Review 144: 366 (May 1887), 548.

It seems a pity that a collection of brief, popular histories so happily conceived, and for the most part so well executed as "*The Story of the Nations*" series should in any instance have departed from the general aim of assigning the exposition of a given subject to some writer specially qualified by original research for the work. We are not aware that the compiler of the

volume, [*The Story of the Normans*; by Sarah Orne Jewett. G. P. Putnam's Sons.] devoted to that division of the Northmen which is mainly associated with the Duchy of Normandy and with England, has such special qualifications, which are, on the contrary, undoubtedly possessed by Professor Freeman, or, if he was unobtainable, by more than one other English student of Northwestern Europe in the early middle ages. Hack work, though it may be performed with a certain neatness and dexterity, is, in our judgment, out of place in a series of this order, whose pretensions to fresh and independent treatment have been, upon the whole, well founded.

Atlantic Monthly 59 (June 1887), 859.

The Story of the Normans, told chiefly in relation to their conquest of England, by Sarah Orne Jewett. (Putnam's.) This book belongs to a series designed in a general way for young people, but there is little in Miss Jewett's treatment which especially calls up such an audience. We like best those portions, both at the beginning and end, and where she touches upon the artistic contribution of the Norman life, which enable her to lay aside for a while the strictly historical manner. Miss Jewett seems hardly to feel the more rugged force of the Norman character, or rather she is perhaps a little out of sympathy with Norman savagery, and more desirous of getting to the finer development. Her quiet style makes the book a somewhat amiable presentation of the subject, and she writes sometimes as if the work were an effort. A little sharper historical analysis might have given strength to her work, but we must nevertheless congratulate the author on the success which she has attained in a difficult task.

Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine 9:54 (June 1887), 664-5.

OF THE late issues of the Stories of the Nations, two are so intimately connected in subject matter that they may be considered together. *The Story of the Moors* is merely an expansion of one of the most important and romantic of the series of movements forming the Saracenic invasion of Europe. This Saracenic episode is one of the most intensely interesting in the history of Christendom, and yet it is one which has not hitherto received any adequate popular treatment. There is an element of romance and of mystery in the sudden rise of this Asiatic flood, which fiercely menaced the shores of Europe, and then subsided as quickly as it had

risen, leaving almost no trace of its presence. The Arabs, for more than one thousand years, had dragged on a colorless, unambitious existence in their desert peninsula. Contented in their low condition, they continued their primitive, uneventful life, just beyond the reach of the mighty movements that were convulsing the then civilized world, uninterested in, even ignoring, the conflicts being waged at their very doors. From this inglorious tranquillity they were aroused by the teachings of one man. Without predecessors to open the way for him, without any preparatory mental development of the people, Mohammed changed not merely their religious thought, but revolutionized their whole character. From a peaceable, contented, trading people, they became a restless, ambitious, implacable race of warriors.

After the death of Mohammed the era of conquest began. He had decreed that the faith of Islam should be spread by the sword, and so successfully was this policy carried out by his successor, that within four years after his death, Chaldea, Babylonia, and the greater part of Syria, including Jerusalem, had fallen into the hands of the Moslems. For one hundred years the irresistible spread of their power continued, until their possessions enclosed the Mediterranean on three sides, and they threatened European civilization from two directions. But the weakness which finally caused their overthrow, began to assert itself almost from the day of the prophet's death. The Saracens never formed a compact nation. The people were always divided into numerous tribes, which never fused into one mass. No attempt was made to assimilate the widely varied peoples who came under their sway, and the Kalifate gained no coherence, but rather became less united as its territory increased. In the election of the third Kalif, but twelve years after the prophet's death, the various factions began to assert themselves, and internal dissensions did not cease until the power of the Saracens had been completely lost.

The period of the greatest power of the Saracens was brief, almost momentary. They spread over Northern Africa and into Spain, but almost before the Goths had been overcome, the Berbers had regained extensive portions of the African conquests. They swept over Arabia, Persia, and Asia Minor, but Constantinople was the rock against which they dashed themselves continuously but ineffectually for one thousand years. It formed the defense of Christendom during the development of the western nations. The eighth century saw the greatest power of the Saracens; the ninth century marked their highest intellectual development. Arts, sciences, and literature flourished until Christendom sent her scholars to drink at the Moslem fountain. But

the increase of learning brought with it a scepticism, which sapped the foundation of the Moslem power. The removal of the capital to Bagdad had given a preponderance to Persian influence, and their religious views prevailed. The Koran and the religion of Mohammed were finally attacked by the Commander of the Faithful himself. In the absence of any national unity, Islam had been the only cohesive force of the Kalifate, and, when it was thus awakened, factions sprang up in every direction, and the conquered territory dropped away part by part.

As compared with the earlier books of this series, *The Story of the Saracens* is marked by a decided improvement in the way of maps, and the same may be said of *The Story of the Moors*; the latter book is also conspicuous for its clear, terse, vigorous, and interesting style. The series does not confine itself to the stories of the nations most familiar to general readers, but does some good work rummaging around in the dark corners of history, and throwing an attractive light upon them. Two of the dark corners thus illuminated are Normandy and Persia. Perhaps in the case of the former, it would be more proper to say the Normans, for the sojourn of this people in the land to which they gave a name is the least important part of their life-story as a nation. The Normans are peculiarly interesting to us, for they formed a curious element in the development of the English-speaking race, mingling as they did the hardy race characteristics of the north, with the manners and customs of the Latin races of the south, acquired during their contact with those people in France. Miss Jewett has told the story of this people well. Her style is clear, picturesque and attractive, and she is particularly happy in her vivid presentation of the life and manners of these rough people. Mr. Benjamin writes the story of Persia most sympathetically. He makes the narrative entertaining, almost fascinating, but the early history of this, like most other Oriental countries is more or less shrouded in the mists of succeeding ages, and he has not always been scholarly in separating that which is authentic from what is purely traditionary. The latest issue of the series, *The Story of Ancient Egypt* sustains well the excellence of the earlier issues. There is always a danger in calling on a specialist to address a popular audience on his favorite subject, particularly when that audience is composed of those whose minds are so immature as to prevent their entering sympathetically into the discussion of those abstract questions which form his pastime. In the present instance, however, Prof. Rawlinson has succeeded unusually well in combining the spirit of scholarly research with his popular exposition. The subject is handled with that firm

grasp and true perspective which one has a right to expect from the reputation of the author, and yet the readers will find the style clear and interesting throughout.

The Nation, (2 June 1887), p. 477. (HL)

The romantic history of the Normans has found a worthy chronicler in Miss Jewett, who has made out of her material one of the most interesting volumes of the series. The title-page would lead one to fear lest the earlier history of the Normans and their adventures in the South be somewhat neglected for the English conquest. It is not so, however. The whole career of the Normans is well told: their life in the North, the annals of the duchy, and the adventurous conquest of southern Italy and Sicily. Only, our sense of proportion and completeness would have been better satisfied if this last subject had been carried out a little further -- to the death of William the Good, the end of the Norman period in Sicily, as the death of Henry Beauclerc was in England. The account of the peasants' revolt we will mention as particularly good. There are many excellent illustrations, especially from the Bayeux Tapestry; but we cannot see the pertinence of a full view of Canterbury Cathedral and the doorway of Chartres Cathedral to a history of the Norman period.

The *Boston Globe*, p. 188. (HL)

Sarah Orne Jewett is the author of "The Normans," the latest volume of "The Story of the Nations," a series that better than any other fulfills the purpose of providing youth with the essential facts of the history of every nation, entertainingly and in becoming style. The ease, grace and taste of her imaginary writings do not suffer any hindrance when they deal with the arbitrary realities of historical narrative, but maintain their power, suggesting everywhere that she has entered capably and heartily into the purpose.

This volume, like some of the published ones, contains pages of history familiar to special students only, and covers quite fully a period that is hurried over in nearly every history of England.

And it helps in all its parts to a better appreciation of Norman character than most readers possess. It is issued in the beautiful manner of the series, with extra paper, and superior maps and illustrations, and in keeping in other respects with the high quality of the subject matter.

Daily Chronicle, (7 January 1891). (HL)

The story of the Normans is well worthy of a place in the interesting series of "Stories of the Nations." To readers of every nationality the history of that daring and chivalrous race will be interesting; to Englishmen it must have an irresistible charm. From the days when the hardy Norsemen in their rude boats first swooped down upon the shores of Britain, Gaul and Spain, to the time when their dukes met the kings of France to pay them scornful homage at Rouen and Paris, when Norman knights showed their prowess in battle and taught a nobler courtesy to the chivalry of France, when the beauty and charm of Norman ladies took and held captive the Princes of Europe, when Norman valour and genius, after planting a rich if rude literature in the snows of Iceland, left their traces in relics of noble architecture and manifold beauty along this valley of the Seine, built up the kingdom of the two [Sicilies?], and grafted on the sluggish Anglo-Saxon stem the energy which blossomed forth in the Chaucers and Shakespeares, the Drakes and Raleighs of England, the story of the Normans is one brilliant world-romance. We feel a proud wonder at the progress our modern world had made during the last fifty years with the aid of numberless inventions; but what of the contrast between the men of the dragon ships, who came south with Rolf, and startled the people of Jumièges, some time early in the tenth century, and the gallant host assembled in 1066 around Duke William from all parts of Europe by the blessing of Hildebrand and the Pope, when the duke awaited at St. Valery a fair breeze to carry him across to Sussex? The hundred years of Norman progress, with only strong hearts and hands to hew the way, may well compare with the fifty years of modern progress, though the telegraph and the steam-engine, with a train of conquered forces of nature have aided it. We have found out many inventions in modern days, but it may be doubted if our architects of the present time excel those of Normandy, if the examination schools of Oxford present any fairer enthusiasm for learning than did the Abbey of Bec under Lanfranc, if our civilization is adequate to produce a stronger will or a keener intellect than the stern Conqueror's, pious and just withal, who dug so deep the foundations of England's greatness.

Of the original home of the Normans nothing is known. Of course, they came along that mysterious Aryan track which the philologists are painfully rooting up. We learn from anthropologists too, that they must have been preceded in their northern wilds by an earlier race, dark-haired and inferior in stature, of whom

traces remain in corners of the Pyrenees, where they have sheltered and preserved their speech, and even among the Celts of North Britain. At some date anterior to history the fair-haired Norsemen dispossessed them, built their huts on the rocky shores of the fjords, and trained themselves for other conquests by braving the icy blasts and battling with the sea storms. After such intractable opponents the feeble folk of southern lands were an easy prey, and the dragon ships became a terror to the shores and river banks of Western Europe and even of the Mediterranean.

The story is told with considerable picturesqueness by the American author of this book; only it reminds me disagreeably sometimes of the American tourist's accents of surprise at the wonders of the Old World. Mr. Freeman's great work has been a mine of wealth for Miss Jewett to quarry from; the volume throughout gives evidence of painstaking research of the second-hand order, and the modesty of the author lays claim to nothing more. What we should most desire, but have by no means got yet, is a book giving from firsthand knowledge the results of such learning as Mr. Freeman's without his cumbersomeness. A writer keeping that end in view and really possessed by his theme, would be secure against such efforts after strong writing, that are really a weakness, as mar the present volume. "William the Conqueror and the Norman Conquest," by Thomas Carlyle, would have been a boon to literature. To those who are not very particular about literary form, Miss Jewett's volume will afford much interesting information. But it certainly is not the story of the Normans "told chiefly in relation to their conquest of England," unless we are content to believe that the Norman conquest of England was achieved on the field of Senise. It only began there. If that victory had not been followed up by a real conquest in the rule of William, the arrow that pierced Harold would not have been of much account in the history of England. Our author apparently knows a few facts about William's reign. A judicious dash of the pen across superfluous sentences that take up about one-third of the volume would have left space for such treatment of the real and lasting conquest as might have justified the words on the title page.

Manchester Guardian, (9 June 1891). (HL)

Miss Jewett is, we believe, known as a novelist in the United States, where she commends herself to the New England public as a portrayer of their country life. She has not been well advised in attempting to deal with the

history of the Normans in the 11th century. She does not possess the necessary knowledge of the period, nor is she well acquainted with what has been written upon it in recent times. Her book, consequently, has little to commend it to the student, while it is too vague and colourless to please the reading public. It is but fair to add that she seems to have taken some pains to write in good grammar and good taste, and it is possible that if she had known as much about the Normans and their land as she is said to know about New England and the New Englanders, she might have written a book worth reading. As it is, it is a waste of time to read what it has been a waste of time to read and print. In the never-to-be-forgotten life of Mookerjee it is written that "none can be great impromptu," and one may safely recommend this aphorism to Miss Jewett, for certainly history cannot be written impromptu. The illustrations in the volume are of a mixed character; those taken from the Bayeux Tapestry and from an Old English manuscript are good, the maps are fair, but the rest are neither helpful nor artistic.

Freeman's Journal (Dublin), (12 June 1891).
(HL)

This is one of the valuable historical series of publications entitled "The Story of the Nations." It deals with one of the most notable races of medieval Europe, and traces their life history down to the accomplishment of that which was, perhaps, their most notable achievement, the conquest of England by Duke William, which, the authoress maintains, was a battle won in the cause of progress. At the very outset she refers to the climatic influence of the Gulf Stream upon the southern coast of Norway, and though she does not pursue that topic to ethnological consequences, there is certainly a great deal to be said upon the effect which climate had had in the making of races. The [unreadable word] of atmosphere in which the hardy Norsemen were raised must have been to them a source of vigour and energy. In eighteen chapters the manners, customs, and doings of the Normans are set down from the time of their first Duke Rolf, who lived A.D. 911 to the accession to the English Throne of William Rufus in A.D. 1086. The earlier chapters are conversant with the ruthless raids upon English and other shores of those ancient "sea kings" and "vikings," who could build sound and safe ships, or rather boats propelled by oars and sails, who made long and adventurous voyages in them, and who, in a word, were never as much at home as when they were at sea. Grand men, physically speaking, they must doubtless have been, although all the things that they were

in the habit of doing would not meet with general approval on the part of the people now, no more than they did even the from the clergy. We read that "if a sea king heard of a fair damsel anywhere along the neighbouring coast he simply took ship in that direction, fought for her, and carried her away in triumph with as much of her goods as he was able to seize." These very ancient Northmen were not farmers -- their country was too barren and ungenial for that -- they were hunters and fishermen. They were also Pagans, and addicted to sacking and plundering the Christian churches when they could get at them, and murdering the ecclesiastics. But in due time they were converted to Christianity, and then the fierceness of their spirit underwent mitigation, and later on, under the influence of feudalism, they developed into Christian knights animated by motives of religion and virtue, and only allowing themselves to fight for noble objects. The authoress makes an interesting quotation from Guizot's History of France of the ritual of twenty-six articles, to which the candidate for knighthood in Normandy in William the Conqueror's early days was obliged to swear before his shield be admitted into the order. The reader will recognize in these a lofty code of ethics; but the authoress warns him against supposing that they were generally held or acted on. "It would not do," she says, "to take these holy principles or the pageant of knight-errantry for a picture of Normandy in general. We can only remind ourselves with satisfaction that this leaven was working in the mass of turbulent, vindictive society. The priests worked very hard to keep their hold upon their people, and the austerity of the Church proved equal to many a subtle weakness of faith and quick strain of disloyalty. When the priesthood could not make the Normans promise to keep the peace altogether they still obtained an astonishing concession and truce. There was no fighting from Wednesday evening at sunset until Monday morning at sunrise. During these five nights and four days no fighting, burning, robbing, or plundering could go on, though for the three days and two nights left of the week any violence and crime were not only pardonable but allowed. It is mentioned that in William the Conqueror's time every landed gentleman fortified his house against his neighbours, and had a secure and loathsome prison in his cellar for their frequent accommodation. Even Mr. T. W. Russell will admit that the subsequent exclusive use of the cellar for the keeping of the gentleman's wine was at all events a step in the right direction. The book has a number of interesting illustrations, one of them being Falaise Castle, the birthplace of William the Conqueror, whilst

the others include representations of Norman ships, men in armour, etc. The printing, paper, and binding are excellent.

The Publisher's Circular, (13 June 1891). (HL)

'The Normans: told chiefly in relation to their Conquest of England' ('The Story of the Nations'), by Sarah Orne Jewett. The story of the Normans must always be one of paramount importance to English people, by virtue of our descent and intimate association. Miss Jewett begins with 'The Men of the Dragon Ships,' who sailed from Norway and Sweden to carry what may politely be called commerce, but which was in point of fact piracy. From this time she leads us by gradual steps up to the days of Harold Harfager, who, about the middle of the 9th century, did great things in Norway. And from this time it is but a little while before we find one Rolf the Ganger sailing up the Seine from the Hebrides with a small fleet, and casting anchor at that still delightful and picturesque town, Jumièges, five leagues from Rouen. Once established in this district, the Normans soon made themselves known to the old inhabitants of Britain, and from this time forward their history is more or less intimately connected with the history of England. Miss Jewett has a romantic subject, and her volume is one of the most interesting in the series. It is also interesting as showing to many people who never quite realised the fact that the Normans of the Conquest were only French by association, and were directly descended from the old Norse Vikings, from whom we also, by virtue of the Norman invasion, may claim descent.

Leeds Mercury, (24 June 1891). (HL)

There was a great difference, Miss Sarah Orne Jewett reminds us at the outset of the new volume in the "Story of the Nation's Series," between the manner of life in Norway in far-off days and that which prevailed in England or France. The Norwegian stone, for instance, though admirably adapted for arrow-heads or axes, was not fit for building purposes. There is little clay, moreover, in the land to fashion into bricks, so that wood has usually been the only material for houses. In England or France castles or fortresses were built at an early age, but the people of Norway could build no strongholds that a lighted torch could not destroy. That perhaps was one reason why they came to trust more to their ships than to their houses, and why some of their great leaders and chieftains declined to live on shore at all. If their houses were somewhat fragile, they were

often very gracious, and a good deal of dignity and hospitality have always been characteristic of Norse life. Hospitality was one of the chief virtues of the people, and in ancient times every guest was entertained with stories from the Sagas. Each great family possessed its own Skald, or poet, and they ranked much higher in social position than the minstrels and troubadours of a later age in France. The monkish chroniclers of England and France gave the Vikings a bad name, and there is reason to think that the censure, though not altogether undeserved, was exaggerated. The fact was, the "countries to the southward were spiritless, and bogged down by Church influence and superstition, until they had lost the energy and even the intellectual power of their ancestors five centuries back. The Roman Empire had helped to change the Englishmen and many of the Frenchmen of that time into a population of slaves and laborers, with no property in the soil and nothing to fight for but their own lives." The black raven adorned the Vikings' flags, and it became only too familiar in other harbours than their own. They were bold, energetic, fearless men, and made themselves masters of the high seas. They knew nothing of the mariner's compass, but they studied the sky and steered by the aid of the stars. They carried on board their "dragon-ships" captive ravens, and when bewildered in which direction to steer for land, they let the birds loose and followed their flight. The Vikings had their own rough code of honour: -- "To join the most renowned company of Vikings in Harold Haarfager's time, it was necessary that the champion should lift a great stone that lay before the King's door, as first proof that he was worth initiating. We are gravely told that this stone could not be moved by the strength of twelve ordinary men. They were obliged to take oath that they would not capture women and children, or seek refuge during a tempest, or stop to dress their wounds before the battle was over." The manner in which the Norsemen, under William Longsword, Richard the Fearless, Robert the Magnificent, and William the Conqueror, took, so to speak, the world by storm, and established their supremacy in France, in England, and even in Italy, is described in a group of picturesque chapters in this volume; and the narrative ends with the period when the vitality of Normandy was turned into new channels, and is to be traced in the history of England, France, and the Low Countries. Miss Jewett contents herself with describing the characters of the first seven Dukes and Edward the Confessor, whom she regards as men who were not merely typical of their time, but representative of the different phases of national character. She thinks that the secret of Normandy's success was "energetic

self-development and apprehension of truth; the secret of Normandy's failure was the blindness to the inevitable effects of certain causes, and unwillingness to listen to her best and most far-seeing teachers." Carlyle said once to a friend, "There has never been a nation yet, that did anything great, that was not deeply religious." The age of faith -- the period in which the cathedrals were built and the monasteries founded -- was identical with the greatest era in the history of the Normans. ("The Normans, told chiefly in relation to their Conquest of England." By Sarah Orne Jewett, Illustrated. T. Fisher Unwin, London.)

John Bull, (11 July 1891). (HL)

The new volume of *The Story of the Nations*, now in course of publication by Mr. Fisher Unwin, deals with The Normans, and has been entrusted to Mrs. Sarah Orne Jewett, an American lady, who is somewhat afflicted with a mania for picturesque writing, which is carried to such an extent as to become rather tiresome, even though relieved by such Yankee colloquialisms as the assertion that the Archbishop of Canterbury, martyred by the Danes, "squarely refused" to pay Danegelt, and such a remarkable non sequiter as that in the description of the French King, who died "only thirty-three years of age, in spite of his tempestuous reign and always changing career." But for the general reader such a method of writing history is probably preferable to the old Dryasdust system, and though a severe critic would desire a somewhat more chastened literary style, it may have its attraction for the class for whose benefit the history-made-easy series, of which it forms part, is primarily designed. The story is mainly told in relation to the Norman conquest of England, and a good use has been made of Mr. Freeman's great work, which is a perfect storehouse of material ready at hand for the compiler of such a volume. Mrs. Jewett begins with the men of the dragon ships, and feels a keen delight in tracing back her own pedigree as a citizen of the United States to the hardy race of Northmen, whose beginnings she has here chronicled, though it is not till Rolf the Ganger [Gauger] launched his ship from the island of Vigr, that they emerge from the shadow-realm of Sagaland into the domain of actual history. Though Normandy was not actually reunited to France till 1204, the historian regards the young Prince who was drowned on the White Ship as the last real Norman Duke, and has not carried on her narrative through the long years that intervened, nor does she deal with the influence of the

Northmen upon the later Kingdom of France. Her interest attaches more to the growth of the Duchy itself, and to that English conquest which transplanted the main seat of Norman Rule from the banks of the Seine to those of the Thames. Even the Italian side of the history of the Normans, picturesque as it is, does not long divert her from the pursuing of what she regards as the main stream of her story. We cannot say that the book on The Normans will take rank as one of the best volumes of the admirable series of which it forms part, but it is certainly not the least interesting volume in that series, and has so many merits that we cannot but regret the overtendency to the picturesque, and the introduction of some few American vulgarisms which interfere with its literary merit.

Sword and Travel, (July 1891). (HL)

Who does not wish to know a story so intimately interwoven with our own? Only cubs of the same wolves that bare the Anglo-Saxon people could have crossed the channel, and subdued that unconquerable race. Who those Normans were, and how like the rest of the hardy Norsemen, whose blood is in our veins, this chronicle will tell. It reads to us as if it had been written for the young, -- which we say not to its detriment. The record is not long, but it is full of daring and freaks of fury. This is No. 29 of the "Story of the Nations." These books ought to be a mine of wealth to those who own the copyrights; at any rate, we view them as mental treasures out of whose depths we may dig gold.

The Speaker 5 (23 January 1892), 114-15.

Of the making of series of popular little history books -- they cannot be called histories -- there seems to be no end. The "Epochs of History" commenced the epidemic, and it has now risen to such a height that every publishing firm, whether of old-established reputation or of mushroom growth, which cannot think of a good title for a series of cheap biographies, such as "English Men of Letters," "English Men of Action," "Great Writers," or the like, must have its historical series. Most of these series have their good volumes. Their harbinger, the "Epochs of History," easily bears the palm. Such books as Dean Church's "Beginning of the Middle Ages," the Bishop of Oxford's "Early Plantagenets," Mr. S. R. Gardiner's "Thirty Years' War" and "Puritan Revolution," and the Bishop of Peterborough's "Age of Elizabeth," are models of their kind. But even this series, graced by such great names and, what is of more

importance, by such admirable volumes, was marked by many doleful failures. The bad volumes of this, the best of the cheap historical series, were bad enough; but there has been reserved for this particular collection of national history the "cool malignity," as Charles Lamb would have termed it, of inappropriate illustrations. It is inevitable that all these series should have their failures as well as their successes, and it is only right, for the sake of the publishers as well as the public, to point out these failures, lest the success of one or two good volumes by one or two well-known authors should foist off on unsuspecting readers utterly worthless books which should never have seen the light. The "Story of the Nations," which is Mr. Fisher Unwin's series, has had its share of good volumes. Mr. Morfill's "Russia," Mr. Bradley's "Goths," Mr. Morrison's "Jews under Roman Rule," and Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole's "Barbary Corsairs," are all valuable works, and absolutely the only books in the English language treating their respective subjects according to the lights of the latest historical research. Some of the others, which treat of well-worn subjects, are accurate and spirited little text-books. But there have been some lamentable failures -- lamentable alike for the purchaser, who has been induced to buy the worthless volume because it was one of the series, and for the reviewer, who feels it his duty to speak out clearly and emphatically against dishonest work.

"The Normans" is an instance in point. It is a curious fact that the small book upon "The Normans in Europe" in the "Epochs of History" was also, to put it mildly, not a success. And yet it might be supposed that upon no historical era would it be so easy to write an interesting and accurate little book. Not only is the subject picturesque in the extreme, affording many dramatic situations and striking portraits, but the abundant materials have been worked up by one of the three great living English historians, Professor E. A. Freeman, into a narrative at once interesting and complete. An analysis of the authorities used by Miss Jewett in the book under review will give some evidence of the absolute unfitness of the lady to write an historical work. She naturally quotes largely from Professor Freeman, but the only authors whom she mentions with words of praise are Mr. John Addington Symonds and Miss Charlotte M. Yonge! The former she calls "a charming writer," and no one will cavil at the epithet: but when she deliberately founds the greater part of a chapter on a story for children called "The Little Duke," written by Miss Yonge very many years ago, and speaks with a certain poverty of epithet of this "charming story" in the text, it is time to protest. Among the authorities quoted are the Rev. A. H. Johnson's "Normans in Europe" in more than

one place, Sir Francis Palgrave, and, on the Icelandic sagas, instead of writers of reputation on the subject, Depping's "Voyages Maritimes des Normands." But Miss Jewett's knowledge of English novelists and appreciation of their writings is evidently more extensive than her acquaintance with the standard historians of the epoch she attempts to describe. Dickens's "Child's History of England," probably for the first time since its publication, is actually quoted as the authority for an historical statement. "England was made a great grave," says Dickens of the Norman Conquest, "and men and beasts lay dead together," and Miss Jewett calmly accepts this remark as being of sufficient value to deserve quotation. Even more remarkable is her admiration of Lord Lytton as an authority on Anglo-Saxon manners. Surely in this year of grace it would hardly be expected that anyone, even an American lady-novelist, should deliberately say of the family of Godwine, "Lord Lytton's novel, called 'Harold,' makes this famous household seem to live before our eyes" (p. 192).

But enough of Miss Jewett's qualifications for writing or understanding history. Let us turn now to her style of composition. Its great advantage is that it is entirely her own. Without the simplicity of Lady Callcott's "Little Arthur's History of England," it seems in places inspired by a systematic attempt to write down to the level of her readers, whom she then expects to be very juvenile, while elsewhere she indulges in curious philosophical dissertations intended for mature readers. The result of the mixture is occasionally absolutely ridiculous. A few quotations, taken at random on opening the book casually, will justify these remarks. Take, for instance, from the first chapter, entitled "The Men of the Dragon Ships," these two passages:

"Think of those clumsy little ships out on such a journey with their single masts and long oars! Think of the stories that must have been told from town to town after these strange, wild Northern foes had come and gone! They were like hawks that came swooping down out of the sky, and though Spain and Rome and Greece were well enough acquainted with wars, they must have felt when the Northmen came as we should feel if some wild beast from the heart of the forest came biting and tearing its way through a city street at noontime" (p. 20).

Miss Jewett understands the feelings of the Vikings as thoroughly as those of the Greeks and Romans and Spaniards harried by them.

"As for the old men," she says, "who had been to the fights and followed the sea-kings and brought home treasures, we are sure that they were always talking over their valiant deeds and successes, and urging their sons and grandsons to go to the South. The women

wished their husbands and brothers to be as brave as the rest, while they cared a great deal for the rich booty which was brought back from such expeditions. What a hard thing it must have seemed to the boys who were sick or lame or deformed, but who had all the desire for glory that belonged to any of the Vikings, and yet must stay at home with the women" (p. 27).

The following description of the battle of Hastings is too sublime for criticism: --

"And the fight grew hotter and hotter, the Normans were beaten back, and returned again fiercely to the charge, down the hill, now up the hill over the palisades, like a pouring river of men, dealing stinging sword-thrusts -- dropping in clumsy heaps of javelin-pricked and axe-smitten lifelessness; from swift, bright-eyed men becoming a bloody mass to stumble over, or feebly crying for mercy at the feet that trampled them; so the fight went on. . . . There was no sound of guns or smoke of powder in that day, only a fearful wrangling and chopping, and a whir of arrow and lance and twang of bowstring. Yes, and a dolorous groaning as closer and closer the armies grappled with each other, hand to hand" (pp. 307, 308).

A more charming "derangement of epitaphs" has not been seen for many a year in a work pretending to be serious.

Miss Jewett's philosophical reflections are couched in equally graphic and exquisitely comic sentences. Here are two as examples. The first contains her ideas on the effect of the Norman conquest of England: --

"Heaven send dampness now and bleak winds, and let poor Eadward's sufferings be short! There was work for a man to do in ruling England, and Eadward could not do it. The Englishmen were stupid and dull; they ate too much and drank too much; they clung with both hands to their old notions of state-craft and government. It was the old story of the hare and the tortoise, but the hare was fleet of foot and would win. Win? Yes, this race and that race; and yet the tortoise was going to be somehow made over new, and keep a steady course in the right path, and learn speed, and get to be better than the old tortoise as the years went on and on" (pp. 243, 244).

The second shows her profound grasp of the effects of war: --

"Just here we might well stop to consider the true causes and effects of war. Seen in the largest way possible, from this side of life, certain forces of development are enabled to assert themselves only by outgrowing, outnumbering, outfighting their opposers. War is the conflict between ideas that are going to live and ideas that have passed their maturity and are going to die. . . . Wars may appear to delay, but in due time they surely raise whole nations

of men to higher levels, whether by preparing for new growths or by mixing the new and old.

Generals of battalions and unreckoned camp-followers alike are effects of some great change, not causes of it. And no war was ever fought that was not an evidence that one element in it had outgrown the other and was bound to get itself manifested and better understood. The first effect of war is incidental and temporary; the secondary effect makes a link in the grand chain of the spiritual education and development of the world" (pp. 255, 256).

It is not pleasant for a reviewer to hold up a lady to ridicule. Miss Jewett is a lady who has won some fame as a novelist in the United States; she should stick to her last and not infringe on the domain of the historical writer. To write history needs a special training; it needs wide reading; it demands unceasing labour and whole-souled devotion. A man or woman who can reel off fluent sentences is not thereby justified in thinking he or she can write history, and, above all, popular history, the hardest task in which many eminent historians have failed. We must conclude, however, in spite of seeming ungallant, to amuse our readers by a last gem from Miss Jewett's chaplet: --

"One familiar English word of ours -- hurrah, -- is said to date from Rolf's reign. Rou the Frenchmen called our Rolf; and there was a law that if a man was in danger himself, or caught his enemy doing any damage, he could raise the cry Ha Rou! and so invoke justice in Duke Rolf's name. At the sound of the cry, everybody was bound, on the instant, to give chase to the offender, and whoever failed to respond to the cry of Ha Rou! must pay a heavy fine to Rolf himself. This began the old English fashion of "hue and cry," as well as our custom of shouting Hurrah! when we are pleased and excited" (p. 49).

Note

The reviewer seems to assume it is obvious that Jewett is practicing poor history in her discussion of the word "hurrah." As the *Oxford English Dictionary* does *not* support this etymology, Jewett's account probably is not correct, and her use of "is said" hints at her skepticism. However, she is paraphrasing reasonably authoritative sources when she tells this story in Chapter 2. Sir Francis Palgrave presents this idea about the origin of "hurrah," in *The History of Normandy and of England, Volume 1*, 696-8. See also Duncan, *The Dukes of Normandy*, pp. 21-2.

The Churchman. (HL)

"The Story of the Nations" series sustains the high reputation it has already attained in this its latest volume. The gifted authoress tells her story of the Normans in that enchanting manner that comes from a thorough acquaintance with the period which she has made in a sense her own, together with an enthusiastic interest in it. Mr. Freeman has told, it would seem, all that can be known of the "Norman period," that is, the period of the Norman conquest of England. His volumes are exhaustive, but are designed for older readers. Here the story is condensed, simplified and adapted to a younger student. The volume is copiously illustrated with cuts new and old, many being the familiar reproductions of the Bayeux tapestry.

Church Messenger. (HL)

This volume is number twelve of the "Story of the Nations" series. It is a clear, spirited account of the Norman people -- that people whose language and history is so largely our own. It gives an account, among a thousand other events and persons, of the battle of Hastings, of Richard the Good, Robert the Magnificent, Matilda of Flanders, Harold, the Dragon Ships, and is fully illustrated. This series is one of the most valuable ever issued by the Putnams. Rome, Greece, Norway, Spain, Carthage, the Moors in Spain, Chaldea, Germany, Hungary, Saracens, Jews, had all been issued, but none exceeds the "Story of the Normans." The authoress maintains in this volume a high standard for herself and her topic, and the reader will delight to have read her account -- from Falaise to Odo.

The Critic. (HL)

The famous French picture of 'Les Glaneurs' contains a wealth of moral truth, behind its mere landscape perfection, that may well be applied in other directions -- for instance, to the writing of history. After the heat of the day is passed, after the great historians have come and gone, after the epoch-making volumes based on original research have been written and published in expensive form, viola! Here come along the patient 'gleaners' and popularizers who pick up the overlooked grains and lost stitches, open out the closely-written chronicle of adventure, select the delectable portions of the immense 'story of the nations,' and transforming them by an airy

touch, a grace of arrangement, a perfection of style or a gift for saliciencies and charment, present the tale to us anew, stripped of all its cumbersome impediments. Such is the duty of the gleaner as the hum and the murmur of the host of harvesters has passed by; such the duty of the popularizer of the great historians after the mighty volumes have been written and are at rest.

One of the most graceful of these gleaners -- she does not pretend to be more -- is Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, to whom has been entrusted the task of popularizing the works of Freeman and others, in 'The Story of the Normans'. Miss Jewett's style has a delightful effect as a whole. While one can rarely put one's finger on a particular expression or passage and admire its felicity, yet there is something in her work better than even that: a quietness and evenness, a grace and simplicity all her own, not based for its charm on epigram or *curiosa felicitas*. This peculiarity is more than ever evident in her new book, which fills a charming corner in the historical library to which it is a contribution. In eighteen chapters she takes up, as it were, the Bayeux Tapestry and unwinds its marvels before our eyes -- that striking story of Viking and Norman, of Saxon and Dane, wrought in imperishable embroidery by the fingers of unknown women celebrating a great deed. And not only this: she traces the ins and outs of the marvelous threads, the beginnings and ends of Norman life in Scandinavia and France -- how they radiated this way and that, across channel and sea, from Norway to Normandy, from Rouen to Canterbury. In her story of the Seven Dukes, from Rolf to William, she unravels for us many an intricacy, grouping her facts about this or that heroic figure, giving us not only the hundred yards of storied tapestry over again, but a series of plaques and plastic reliefs filled with historic tableaux. The Conquest of England by the Normans is traced to its true sources back among the Norwegian spruces and fjords -- not simply to the poppies and bluettes of Normandy. It is shown to be not a mere episode but a great movement of races superabounding with energy, eager to find resting places, intolerant of opposition, beating at the feet of the crags of England for many hundred years and at last finding entrance through the gates of Senlac. Her account of all these things has a woman's daintiness and a refinement and love of the picturesque. With a combination of crewel and canvas she produces her 'document in worsted,' too, making us thankful that such a thing as style still survives, and along with it a stray person or two to exercise it. We are much mistaken if "The Story of the Normans" does not turn out to be one of the favorite volumes of the series.

The "Story of the Persians", by S. G. W. Benjamin, late United States Minister to Persia, in the same series, has been entrusted to the very competent hands of the Hon. S.G. W. Benjamin, late United States Minister to Persia, an artist and author of exceptional gifts and opportunities. Unhappily for his 'story,' Mr. Benjamin had just published a delightful volume -- "Persia and the Persians" -- treating very fully of the present condition and prospects of the empire of Sohrab and Rustum; so that, in his 'Story of the Persians,' to avoid repeating itself, he was thrown back upon the comparatively uninteresting legendary and mediæval annals of the country which had already been more or less covered by 'Greece,' 'Assyria,' 'Alexander's Empire' and 'Chaldæa' of the same series. For the legends he is indebted to the great poem of Firdausi (lately reviewed in these columns), which had already been beautifully and abundantly given by Atkinson in his verse-and-prose translation (Chandos Classics). For much of the early historical part Herodotus and the Behistun Inscription are his authorities. The style of the book is more like that of Vámbéry's 'Hungary,' and is therefore less adapted to popular reading than the 'Normans.' The 'winged word' is apparently the birthright of few among 'articulate-speaking men,' and those few keep it unfortunately only too much to themselves. A fascinating chapter might have been written on the poets of Persia, but we find it not. Mr. Marion Crawford, with his knowledge of Oriental life and language, would have reveled in such a subject, as we gather from the gorgeous chapters of 'Zoroäster.' Again, we nowhere find a connected or coherent account of Persian geography -- a subject interesting in the extreme and absolutely necessary to the understanding of the tenacity with which Persian types and customs have survived from the times of Cyrus the Elder down to Nasr-ed-Deen. In fact it is evident that we must look for the 'story' of Persia elsewhere than in this book, which follows the old chronological system only too pertinaciously, and leaves us to gather from the author's other writings what we had a right to expect from this one.

Irvine *Democrat-Herald*. (HL)

To G. P. Putnam's Sons' handsome and valuable series, *The Story of the Nations* -- now too well known to need further definition of its scope and purpose -- Miss Sarah Orne Jewett contributes a picturesque study of that bold and aggressive race of medieval Europe, whose personality, temper and traditions, engrafting themselves so firmly in early centuries upon the soil of Franks and Saxons, survive under much altered conditions, modernized and adapted to

the exigencies of universal civilization, in the characters and governments of the France, England and America of to-day. Of some thirty-two volumes designed for the series, and whose subjects are already decided upon, fourteen have now appeared and have been for the most devoted to nations of remote, or comparative antiquity, the authors having been individually qualified by special study or research for their respective tasks. Miss Jewett presents a romantic descriptive narrative of successive historic phases in the life, as a people, of the hardy Northmen and of their continuous career of conquest and territorial acquisition, specially considering their progression and development in relation to their final subjection of England in the eleventh century. The volume, like all of the series, has numerous illustrations and maps.

St. John's *Globe*. (HL)

Sarah Orne Jewett furnishes to "The Story of the Nations" series *The Story of the Normans*, which she tells chiefly in relation to their conquest of England. But not wholly so, for she gives us a readable and indeed fascinating account of the old Norsemen, those dashing sailors and fighters, the sagas of dragon ships, the vikings and seakings of Scandinavia, who swooped down upon Britain and Gaul, who even explored the shores of the Mediterranean, and who settled down for a time at least in many parts of Europe; and who made a permanent home in what we know now as Normandy. And from Normandy, as all schoolboys know, started out William the Conqueror to capture Britain and to lay the foundation of a great nation which has ever since been ploughing the waves with her ships, and which, for many years, has been planting colonies under every sky. The great Normans, the leading incidents in their lives, the civilization they rejected, the civilization they accepted, and their history generally, is depicted with a graphic pen -- indeed, there is not a dull or an insipid page in Miss Jewett's book, and the closing passages of it are really eloquent:

"At the beginning of the Norman absorption into English I shall end my story of the founding and growth of the Norman people. The mingling of their brighter, firmer, more enthusiastic and visionary nature with the stolid, dogged, prudent and resolute Anglo-Saxons belongs more properly to the history of England. Indeed, the difficulty would be in not knowing where to stop, for one may tell the two races apart even now, after centuries of association and affiliation. There are Saxon landholders and farmers, and statesmen in England yet -- unconquered, unpersuaded and un-Normanised. But the effect

on civilization of the welding of the two great natures cannot be told fairly in this or any other book -- we are too close to it and we ourselves make too intimate a part of it to judge impartially. If we are of English descent we are pretty sure to be members of one party or the other. Saxon yet or Norman yet, and even the confusion of the two forces renders us not more able to judge of the either, but less so. We must sometimes look at England as a later Normandy; and yet, none the less, as the great leader and personified power that she is and has been these many hundred years, drawing in strength from the best of the Northern races, and presenting the world with great men and women as typical of these races and as grandly endowed to stand for the representative of their time in days to come, as the men and women of Greece were typical, and live yet in our literature and song. In the courts and stately halls of England, in the market-places, and among followers of the sea or of the drum, we have seen the best triumphs and glories of modern humanity, no less than the degradations, the treacheries, and the mistakes. In the great pageant of history we can see a nation rise, and greaten, and dwindle, and disappear like the varying lifetime of a single man, but the force of our mother England, is not yet spent, though great changes threaten her, and the process of growth needs winter as well as summer. Her life is not the life of a harborless country, her fortunes are the fortunes of her generosity. But whether the Norman spirit leads her back into slowness and dullness, and lack of proper perception in emergencies or necessary change, still she follows the right direction and heads the way. It is the Norman graft upon the sturdy old Saxon tree that has borne the best fruit among the nations -- that has made the England of history, the England of great scholars and soldiers and sailors, the England of great men and women, of books and ships and gardens and pictures and songs! There is many a gray, old English house standing among the trees and fields, that has sheltered and nurtured many a generation of loyal and tender and brave and gentle souls. We shall find these men and women who, in their cleverness and courtliness, their grace and true pride and beauty, makes us understand the old Norman beauty and grace and seem to make the days of chivalry alive again. But we may go back farther still, and discover it the lonely mountain valleys and fjord-sides of Norway, even a simpler, courtlier, and nobler dignity. In the country of the Sagamen and the rough seakings, beside the steep-shored harbors of the Viking dragon ships, linger the constantly repeated types of an earlier ancestry, and the flower of the sagas blooms as fair as ever. Among the red roof and gray wall of

the Norman towns, or the faint, bright colors of its country landscapes, among the green hedgerows and golden wheat fields of England, the same flowers grow in more luxuriant fashion, but old Norway and Denmark sent out the seed that has flourished in richer soil. Today the Northmen, the Normans, and the Englishmen, and a young nation on this western shore of the Atlantic, are all kindred, who, possessing a rich inheritance, should own the closest of kindred ties."

Inter-Ocean. (HL)

The heroic life of the Norman furnishes a fine field, and well has Miss Jewett occupied it. The story as told relates chiefly in relation to the Norman conquest of England. The heading of the chapters are: "The Men of the Dragon Ships;" "Rolf, the Gouger;" "William Longsword;" "Richard, the Fearless;" "Duke Richard, the Good;" "Robert, the Magnificent;" "The Normans in Italy;" "The Youth of William the Conqueror;" "Across the Channel;" "The Battle of Voles-Dunes;" "The Abbey of Bee;" "Matilda of Flanders;" "Harold, the Englishman;" "The Battle of Hastings;" "William the Conqueror," and "Kingdom and Dukedom." The volume is well illustrated, and contains a map of Europe at the close of the century.

Interior. (HL)

"*The Story of the Normans*," by Sarah Orne Jewett, is the latest addition to the series, "The Story of the Nations." It is a grand and worthy portrayal of that hardy race who first appear before us a vigorous, sea-faring people inhabiting the coasts of the Baltic, and of the two peninsulas which form the Norway and Sweden and Denmark of to-day. They were the Norsemen, the old Vikings who harassed England, ravaged the coasts of Germany and France, settled Iceland, colonized Greenland, discovered and settled America. After detailing the interesting history of the settlement of the Normans in France and Italy, through seven of its eighteen chapters, the volume begins, what it is its main purpose to tell -- the story of the Normans in relation to their conquest of England, and begins that story with the youth and life of William the Conqueror, and the condition of England under the Danes. Then come the Norman invasion, the battle of Hastings, the conquest of the country, and the conclusion of a story full of stirring events and which will be considered by many as, thus far,

the best of the series. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York; A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago.

Portland *Oregonian*. (HL)

One of Hamlet's shrewdest observations was made as he stood in the churchyard, watching the gravedigger working and singing at his work, -- "The hand of little occupation hath e'en the daintier sense." And if one did not know Miss Jewett's other work there would be a temptation to suppose that the daintiness of the sense displayed in the last volume in "The Story of the Nations" came from little occupation with historical writing. And perhaps even Miss Jewett could not preserve to her style so much freshness if she wrote a series of historical narratives. But in the present instance, "The Story of the Normans," it is enough to say that the tale of that bold race is told with the same vivacious tranquility -- as it were -- the same charm of diction, the same easy and simple continuity, which her admirers have long been accustomed to prize in "Deephaven" and in succeeding sketches of country life in New England. No better occasion could be taken for pointing out the advantage of a right literary manner, to whatever kind of composition it may be applied. Here is a short and necessarily crowded epitome of many years, of different countries and a long-lived race, which yet contains many passages even more admirable and pleasing than this:

They brought him down to the great hall of the palace, and there he found all the barons who had come to his father's burial, and the boy was told to pull off his cap to them and bow low in answer to their salutations. Then he slowly crossed the hall, and all the barons walked after him in a long procession, according to rank -- first, the Duke of Brittany, and last the poorest of knights, all going to the church of Notre Dame, the great cathedral of Rouen, where the solemn funeral chants had been sung so short a time before.

If more history could be written in this fashion, we cannot help thinking that more people would read it, and there is no doubt that they would get greater good from it. Besides the writing, Miss Jewett has so managed her Normans in their rude beginnings, in France, in Italy and in England, that the different threads of the story make a web which has variety without confusing the eye. In short, the book is done with nice art. It is as far from a harum scarum sketch as from an ordinary digest, and the reader who comes to it for instruction will find pleasure in its pages.

Concord *People Patriot*. (HL)

The title of this work and the name of the author are, together, ample guaranty of the fact that it is one of the most valuable of the series of Historical Studies for the young which the Messrs. Putnam have been issuing at frequent intervals for a year or two past.

No epoch of the world's history holds more of interest for the student, and especially the American student, young or old, than that covering the period of the Norman conquest of our parent isle, and the characteristics of no people of ancient or modern times are studied with greater zest than those of the Normans; and when the story is told in the simple, yet fascinating language of Miss Jewett, it becomes no longer history, but is clothed with all the charms of romance.

Wheeling, W. Va *Register*. (HL)

This volume is one of the series of the "Story of the Nations" issued by G. P. Putnam's Sons. The book contains a concise and entertaining history of the Normans from the earliest times. The first chapter tells of the Norman seamen and their exploits. In succeeding chapters Rolf the Ganger [Granger], Charles the Simple, and William Longsword, are told of. The founding of Normandy, Charlemagne, Richard the Fearless, Duke Richard the Good, Robert the Magnificent, the Normans in Italy, the Youth of William the Conqueror, the Normans in England, the Battle of Val-es-Dunes, the Abbey Bec, Natal Day of Flanders, Harold the Englishman, the Battle of Hastings, William the Conqueror and Kingdom and Dukedom, each form interesting chapters in the work. The volume is a handsome one and is one of the best of the series.

_____ *Register* (HL).

There seems to be something infectious in the vigor and romance of the Northmen, which is caught by those who write about them. Something of the freedom and freshness which marked Boyesen's "Story of Norway" appears in this sketch of the fortunes of some of the sons of Norway who made their mark on three empires and affected the fortunes of all modern Europe. For the young, who commonly get only vague ideas of the Normans before the battle of Hastings, this story will be of exceeding value. It reveals some of the roots of modern history in an attractive manner, and shows what manner of men their Norman ancestors and predecessors were. Commonly, we watch the Normans going to England; and the point of view

makes a difference. We see the inevitable destiny of England, as it is preparing on both sides of the Channel, and are glad when the strong Norman hand is laid upon the weak but turbulent hordes of half-civilized England. The story is told with sufficient fullness to give a clear idea of the events which led up to William the Conqueror, and made him necessary. For graver problems and more elaborate researches, the reader may seek the greater works of Freeman, who has been liberally drawn upon, as he should be, in the preparation of such a book. "The Story of the Normans" is thoroughly good and readable.

Denver *Republican*. (HL)

This is an addition to the Stories of the Nations series. It is uniform in type and size with its predecessors, and is delightfully written. The style is more that of romance than of history.

The School Journal (New York). (HL)

This volume of "The Story of the Nations" is of immediate interest to us, especially the first chapter, which gives a full and clear description of the Northmen. These "Men of Dragon Ships" have a great charm for Americans, as a portion of our early history is, in a rather mysterious manner, associated with them. As it is the plan of the writers of the different volumes of this series to enter into the real life of the people of the country, and to bring them before the reader, as they actually lived, labored, fought and struggled, studied, wrote, and amused themselves, this volume is perhaps one of the most charming; for the Normans have produced some of the grandest men and characters known to history. Besides being a description and life-history of this wonderful people, the way in which the narration is given is an additional charm. Sarah Orne Jewett is a pleasant writer, and a book from her pen, once commenced, is not set aside to rest until it is finished. This volume is well illustrated with pictures that assist the reader in appreciating the country and its people with ease. There are also several maps, and a genealogical diagram, giving the Dukes of the Normans.

____ *Secretary* (Hartford, CT). (HL)

This volume is one in the admirable series now being issued under the general title of "The Story of the Nations." They are by different authors of established reputation, are of uniform size and style, and are all finely illustrated. Quite

a historical library will be formed by the set when complete for the young for whom they are specially designed. They are a series of graphic historical studies, stories of the different nations that have attained prominence in history. The present is of special interest to us as appertaining to the romantic adventures of our own ancestors. Human history is a sad tale of wrong and outrage, and to read this ancient story of bloody wars and fierce oppressions, and "the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter;" makes one feel how greatly the world has improved. This is emphatically true of the so-called Christian nations. In deploring present evils we are too apt to forget how great are the advances which have really been made.

Troy *Times* (Now *Times-Record*, New York). (HL)

Sarah Orne Jewett has written a creditable work, "The Story of the Normans," in "The Story of the Nations" series. This volume relates to the Normans more particularly in their raids which led up to the conquest of England, but the picture is complete enough for the ordinary historical purposes. Of all the races which ravaged any portion of Europe during its earlier history, the Normans were the most daring and possessed the most admirable traits. The story of their adventures reads like a romance. The series of which this work is a member comes from G. P. Putnam's sons, New York City. Troy: Nims & Knight.

Unitarian Review. (HL)

The Story of the Normans, by Sarah Orne Jewett, "is told chiefly in relation to their conquest of England." Its style is more familiar than that of most of its predecessors in the series to which it belongs, and one misses those marks of eminent scholarship which Mr. Freeman would have left on every page. But Miss Jewett cannot write a dull book; and her compilation is not only pleasing in its manner, it also shows thorough preparation. It would be well in all the volumes of this series to give a list of the principal authorities, as Miss Jewett has failed to do. On the other hand, it is an improvement to insert the maps in the body of the work instead of placing them inside the covers. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

Wisconsin? (HL)

As a story-teller Sarah Orne Jewett is pre-eminent; and in that field of fiction she has achieved marked success. In the volume in hand she has bent her acknowledged ability as a story writer to the task of telling the history of the Normans from their earliest movements as conquerors. The book opens with a genealogical tree with the branches from which came the Norman dukes, and a map of Europe at the close of the eleventh century. The story of the Normans is told with the breezy air of a writer of fiction, but withal it bears the marks of close study and determination to cover the subject in all its points. The Norman tree is followed with fidelity from the root, and the foliage of fact is given a tint of romance. The editor of "The Story of the Nations" series chose well when he allotted "The Story of the Normans" to Sarah Orne Jewett.

_____ at Work? (HL)

The Story of the Normans, as told by Sarah Orne Jewett, forms an interesting addition to the valuable series of the "Story of the Nations" in course of publication by G. P. Putnam's Sons. The story is told chiefly in relation to their conquest of England, and the old sea-kings and Vikings fairly live once more in these pages. Rolf the Ganger [Gauger], William Longsword, Richard the Fearless, Duke Richard the Good, Robert the Magnificent, Matilda of Flanders, are characters unsurpassed by any in the most fascinating pages of romance. The important battles of Val-es-Dunes and Hastings are described in a most graphic manner. Though the author has confined herself to the period of the first seven dukes and Edward the Confessor, who were men typical of their time and representative of the various types of national character, her book is a very fair description of the character of this remarkable people, their daring and intrepid spirit, and their rapid progress and development. The book will not only charm all readers, but will be found as instructive as it is fascinating. Like the previous volumes in the series it is plentifully and handsomely illustrated.

Undated Reviews probably of the London 1891 Edition

London *Morning Post*. (HL)

There are various ways of writing history. One of these is to present the sum of known

facts, coordinating and subordinating and generally arranging with as much skill and regard to truth and consistency as may be. Another and more excellent way is to be guided by the various trustworthy authorities, to follow them loyally as they explode the several popular misconceptions about each period, not to be afraid to leave debateable matter unsettled, but rather to be content with indicating and arguing in support of probable theories and reasonable conjectures in regard to the [unreadable word]. This sort of inquiry is, after all, true history; masses of facts and statements presented in order of time can claim no other title than compilation. On the whole Mrs. Jewett appears to have tried to follow the better way. She is fortunate in her period, and evidently appreciates it fully. For the Norseman holds our English interest by a weird claim that is all his own. This it is combined with the force of nerve of Charles Kingsley that makes his "Hereward the Wake" so good a book. Mrs. Jewett's first chapter is a series of vivid pictures of old Norse life -- the household, the large hospitality, the pastimes, and the sagas. These compilations in verse or prose were the fruit of a wild northern genius. "They were evolved without models, and disappeared at best without imitation; and it is most remarkable that is the island of Iceland, of which the name alone is a sufficient hint of its frightful climates, and where the very name of poet has almost become a wonder" in this very island the Skalda produced innumerable sagas during a space of time which covers the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries. The men of Normandy were originally Norsemen, who came down south to find a local habitation and bestow a name. In the admirable chapter with which the book opens all this is traced, and the reader familiarised with the Norse atmosphere, and so enabled to read further both intelligently and appreciatively. "The old chronicles of Scandinavia and Denmark and Iceland cannot be relied on like the histories of Greece or Rome. The student who tries to discover when this man was born or that man died from a saga is apt to be disappointed. The more he studies those histories of the sea kings and their countries the more distinct picture he gets of a great crowd of men taking their little ships every year and leaving the rocky barren coasts of their own country to go southwards.... Now and then we hear the name of some great man...." The reflection will occur that this uncertainty is common to most ancient records... And Mrs. Jewett's remark is further unfortunate, for the early history of Rome and Greece is certainly unreliable. The book is easy and entertaining reading, and will be an excellent auxiliary in preparing for examinations. When the striking figure of William the Bastard rises on the horizon

he practically draws the history into his own monograph. It is a full and fair picture. The third chapter, again, gives a good starting point in the shape of some clear ideas about Charlemagne. It might well have been more full. The proportion of readers to whom Charlemagne is anything more than a name would be instructive, if ascertained. No one without some considerable knowledge to bring to the task could read with profit such books as "Hallam's Middle Ages." The presenting of a few clear ideas and salient facts is one mission of such books as the "Story of the Normans." The rise of the feudal system and the development of Gaul into the French union is well given, and the quotation of authorities in [reference ?] is one of the excellent features of the book. Here and there are slips of the pen, as this "masterful, to use a good old Saxon word." Good and old certainly, but not Saxon. And "hardshipped" for visited with hardship is novel. On page 316 the phrase "powder of succession," quoted from an old writer, if not a misprint, is puzzling enough to require some explanation, which is not given. The whole subject has a poetical haze, through which, nevertheless, for the writer has not tried to ruthlessly dispel it, the needful background of dry fact may be traced without much difficulty. Perhaps the work might have been better done, even if still confined to a single volume, for the historian is abroad to-day, yet for all that the story of the Normans is well told in this volume.

Editor's Note

Jewett several times in *The Story of the Normans* assumes knowledge her readers are unlikely to possess. The example of the "powder of succession" is one of these. In this case, she draws upon Sir Francis Palgrave, who explains the suspicion that William the Conqueror eliminated a rival, Walter Count of Vexin and his wife, by means of poison. See *The History of Normandy and of England*, v. 3, p. 270.

Unidentified fragment. (HL).

...few slips of detail here and there, as where the First Crusade is ante-dated by some sixty years in a description of Duke Robert the Devil's pilgrimage to Jerusalem, do not materially affect the value of this work. A more serious fault is the tone of exaggerated enthusiasm, reminding one of the later rhapsodies of Carlyle, in which the authoress describes the anarchic violence of a set of adventurers who, with all their shining qualities, were almost the greatest brutes in history.

From Jewett's Correspondence

Following is a collection of comments by and exchanges with Jewett in her correspondence as she worked on *The Story of the Normans* (1887). Unless otherwise noted, all of the following letters were written to Annie Fields.

Items from Annie Fields, *Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett* (Boston: Houghton, 1911) are marked as Fields, followed by the letter number.

Item from "Richard Cary, Jewett to Dresel: 33 Letters," *Colby Library Quarterly* 7:1 (March 1975), 13-49, is marked by Dresel, followed by the letter number.

Items from "Richard Cary, 'Yours Always Lovingly': Sarah Orne Jewett to John Greenleaf Whittier," *Colby Library Quarterly* 7:1 (March 1975), 13-49, are marked by Whittier, followed by the letter number.

Items marked HL are from manuscripts. Unless otherwise noted, all are from: Jewett, Sarah Orne, 1849-1909. Annie Fields (Adams) 1834-1915, recipient. 194 letters; 1877-1909 & [n.d.] Sarah Orne Jewett correspondence, 1861-1930. MS Am 1743 (255). Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

fragment [1884?] (HL from p. 1)

And now Mr. & Mrs. Furber are coming tomorrow to finish their visit. I shall get more out of him about my Normans.

Monday evening [1884?] (HL from pp. 3-4)

Did I tell you that I am reading Bulwer's Harold – the Last of the Saxon Kings, with great delight? It is such a high colored, vivid picture of life in those days that nothing has made me place my chief figures so easily. Mr. Furber told me to read it – and you said something about one of Kingsley's didn't you? which I must surely get.

From Fields, dated Monday evening, [1885] (Fields 7)

Today I have been reading hard, in Thierry chiefly, with some other big books alongside, and I feel as if I had been over-eating with my head!!! I try to think how fortunate it is that I should be well paid for learning a thing that I ought to know at any rate, but all that period is very difficult for any one to straighten out who

has not been a student of history. It is so important and such a key-note to later English history, that I think of the early Britons all sound asleep under the green grass of Salisbury Plain, and feel as if they would have been quite within my grasp! When I read the "Saturday Review" and "Spectator" I find myself calling one politician a Saxon and the next a Norman! Indeed I can pick them out here in Berwick!

Monday evening [Autumn 1885] [HL, from p. 1]

This has been a hardworking Pinny [Jewett], but a getting-along-one! I wish I could be sent to school over again, for I never was more conscious that I don't know how to study. Of course, a certain amount of this reading must be committed to memory, else I have to go back again and again to get things straight ----

Monday afternoon [1885 or 1886] (HL from pages 1-2, 4)

I read Burnaby's Ride to Khiva Saturday night with great pleasure and a new persuasion of the barbarism of Russia. Last week one day I indulged in a short peroration on the true causes and benefits of war to begin a Normans chapter, and this story of travel made me feel more eager about my opinions. I hope to read it to you someday and have you say you agree.

Note

Jewett's peroration opens Chapter 13 of *The Story of the Normans*.

Friday Morning [1886] (HL from p. 1)

Such a day's work yesterday. Straight through the battle of Hastings so that I am ready to say Hooray and think that I have broken the back of my piece of work. If I could go straight on now I should soon finish the first writing, but next week I shall have to be going to and fro crab fashion.

(July 28, 1886) (HL from p. 3)

I feel more like reading story books than anything else. And a great sense of the history weighs on my mind -- not the details any longer, but the whole enterprise, but I hope to forget it after a while.

Sunday Morning November 14, [1886] (To Whittier 24)

I have been very busy since I came home Friday afternoon for the work on the Norman book is very pressing just now and this coming week must be divided between indexing and dressmaking. If the weather is fair again I shall take to my heels and seek refuge in windy pastures.

Wednesday evening (with a great rain on the roof of the study) [December 1886 or early January 1887] (HL from pages 4-5)

Mr. Putnam writes today that Mr. Freeman has sent for proofs of my history because he's going to do the Sicily. I am horribly afraid of Mr. Freeman -- It is like having Sir Walter come with his dogs after one of my story-books.-- or much much worse!

November 20th, 1887, from Edward A. Freeman to Jewett (HL)

I forget what I could have said to make you say that you have found Eremburga. There can be no doubt about her as Count Rogers second wife, quite distinct from Judith his first, though Geoffrey Malaterra makes it a little confusing by leaving out Judith's death and Eremburga's marriage. But there is no doubt about it. I have given a long note to it. But what can be the use of Hares Cities of Southern Italy and Sicily. I tried it but he's worthless there on the spot. I don't believe he has ever been at Spoleto. Murray's volume (by George Dennis) is far better and [*Grell-fels?*] better again. Maurice must be some odd confusion with [unrecognized word] or [McGrice?], or both. It never does to trust second-hand writers. I don't want anybody to trust me. Even in this little Sicily, where I shall not be able to give definite references, I shall give a heading of authorities to each chapter.

Notes

This transcription of MS Am 1743 (68) Freeman, Edward Augustus, 1823-1892, 1 letter; 1887, is available courtesy of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

Sunday afternoon, December, 1888. (Fields 20)

Another postcard from Mr. [Edward A.] Freeman. He has found about Maurice!! and is more friendly than ever. How can I live up to this

correspondence? I am going to head him off and keep him quiet for a while by telling him that I have only a few of my books at hand.

December 17, 1890 from G. H. Putnam (HL MS Am 1743 (185))

Mr. Unwin, the London publisher of the "Story of the Nations" series, has finally offered to take a set of the plates of the "Story of the Normans" at a small advance on the cost of reproducing these. --

We are desirous, for more reasons than one, that this volume should not continue to be omitted from the London list of the series, and we have therefore accepted Mr. Unwin's offer and shall plan to ship his set of the plates early in the New Year.

The margin of profit on this shipment, amounting to £35.0.0. , we shall divide with the author, passing to her credit £17.10.0.

Kindly send us, as early as convenient, a list of such corrections as seem to you important, and we will have made (at our own cost) all that may not entail any exceptional outlay.

We can secure no allowance from Mr. Unwin for the cost of correcting the plates for his English edition, and we shall wish, therefore, to keep the expense of these corrections as moderate.

We shall send you in January February, statement showing sales to date of the book.

The King of Folly Island 1888

Atlantic Monthly (August 1888), p. 288.

The King of Folly Island and Other People, by Sarah Orne Jewett (Houghton), contains eight stories, of which three are already known to our readers; but the charms of Miss Jewett's stories is not exhausted by a single reading.

Overland Monthly and Out West 12: 68 (Aug. 1888), pp. 213-217.

In a pleasing volume Sarah Orne Jewett has gathered together seven of the short stories that she has printed in several magazines, adding to them one new one. All of them are of New England life with one exception, when the scene shifts to Acadia. Miss Jewett's work is of the conscientious sort that gives her likenesses a photographic character. Every reader familiar with the life of rural New England can name the originals, or if not the originals, yet what might have been the originals of all the principal characters. The conscientiousness, the curiosity, the love of gossip, the veneration, the pride, the pugnacity, the thrift, that characterize the Yankee when unspoiled by city influences, -- all these are typified and illustrated on Miss Jewett's pages. This work is admirably done, but the reader that seeks for excitement, for plot, or for the dramatic, must seek elsewhere.

Cottage Hearth 14 (August 1888), p. 262.

The King of Folly Island, and Other People. By Sarah Orne Jewett. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston. As one takes up a new book by Miss Jewett, the first emotion, on reading the opening pages, is one of gratitude, almost as to a personal friend. Her work always comes to us with the same freshness and purity of sentiment, the same unaffected style, and simple coloring of quaint scenes and characters, the same wholesome presentment of life as sweet and enjoyable, which made her earliest work so welcome to American readers. The first of the sketches in the book before us is exquisitely done, and deserves to rank with the "White Heron" - to our mind the best of her previous work.

Harper's 77 (October 1888), p. 801, by William Dean Howells.

Perhaps we can make clearer some points concerning Mr. Denison's work by contrasting it

with Miss S. O. Jewett's in her late volume, *The King of Folly Island*, and other sketches. Here there is a knowledge of common life (we call it common, but it is not vulgar, like the life of most rich and fashionable people) not less intimate than his, and a kindness for it quite as great; but it is studied from the outside, and with the implication of a world of interests and experiences foreign to it. Of course Miss Jewett's lovely humor, so sweet and compassionate, goes for much in the tacit appeal, the mute aside, to the sympathetic reader for his appreciation of the several situations: but nothing is helplessly or involuntarily good in the effect; all was understood before and aimed at, and there is a beautiful mastery in the literature, which charms equally with the fine perception. From first to last both are so unfaltering in such a sketch as "Sister Wisby's Courtship" or "Miss Peck's Promotion" that one is tempted to call the result perfect, and take the consequences. At the same time the writer's authority is kept wholly out of sight; she is not sensibly in her story any more than a painter is in his picture. It is in this that her matured skill or her intuitive self-control shows to the disadvantage of a very clever writer like the author of *Tenting at Stony Beach*, who has herself too much in mind, and lets the reader see it. With the latter, humor occasionally degenerates into smartness; nevertheless it is for the most part very genuine humor, and it includes a lively sense of character both among the South Shore natives and the summer folks. The pretty girl of our civilization, who pushes into the canvas home of the tenters, is caught with much of Mr. James's neatness, while Marsh Yates, the "shif'less toot," and his beautiful, energetic wife, and Randy Rankin and her husband, are verities beyond his range.

The Academy 54 (August 18, 1888, p. 100.

Miss Jewett's volume is very able, and, to us, very irritating. It contains, in addition to *The King of Folly Island*, seven elaborate examples of the new American story, which is not a story at all, but rather an episode in a story of which the beginning, or the end, or both, remain untold. Our children may learn to delight in this kind of thing - and unless rumour errs we have among us living adults who, at any rate, pretend to delight in it - but there are those of us who are too old to learn new tricks of appreciation, and to whom the game of pretension is not worth the candle. Some people object to the doctrine "Art for art's sake" because they consider it dangerous to morality; but we may fight shy of it on the ground that it is all but fatal to interest. The "finish" of these stories, for such in default

of another name we must call them, is so delicate and perfect that connoisseurs of "craftsmanship" will probably be thrown into ecstasies of admiration; but one commonplace middle-aged critic feels inclined to ask the brutal question. "What is the use of finishing a thing which is really not begun?" A mere episode or situation can be treated with effectiveness and interest - has, indeed, been treated so again and again by a great living poet; but, then, Mr. Browning always gives us hints which suggest antecedents and consequences - the action which has come before, the action which must follow. Miss Jewett gives us no such hints, with what result may be imagined. The feeling that one ought to admire is a poor substitute for the consciousness of enjoyment.

The Saturday Review 66 (August 18, 1888), p. 222.

In fiction we have Miss Jewett's *The King of Folly Island; and Other People* (Boston and New York: Houghton & Mifflin), a collection of *nouvelles*, as the *nouvelle* is practised in America, sober in method, intelligent in theory, and very dull and disenchanting in effect. Mr. Armiger Barczinsky's *A Shadowy Partner* (London: Swan Sonnenschein), a "shilling unreadable" of the mildest type, tells how a young man got to know his shadow, and by taking the thing's advice became a renowned author, a successful speculator, and the hero of a trumpery imitation of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In Mr. Justin Maguire's *Alastor: and Irish Story of To-day* (London: Simpkin) Mr. Gladstone is described as "the greatest statesman of the age," while of the passing of the heroine -- a lady who marries one man and loves another -- it is noted that "Her sin was expiated, the Avenger's work complete, and the moon bent down from her star-girt throne and kissed into a beauty it had never possessed in life the pallid awestruck face." As for "Rita's" new book, *The Seventh Dream* (London: White), it is only to be described as a sentimental nightmare of the next world, and a travesty of this one. The style is inflated, the aim mysterious, the plot not quite intelligible, the invention vague, the effect not memorable; and that is all.

The Epoch 4 (September 7, 1888), p. 88.

There is generally a strong undertone of sadness in Miss Jewett's short stories, eight of which are included in the volume under consideration. Seven have been previously published in various magazines, the only new

one being "A Village Shop," which is quite equal to any of the others. These tales do not conform strictly to the rules for short-story writing which are observed by the best masters of the craft in France and this country, and which Mr. Brander Matthews not long ago summarized and considered in an excellent magazine article. Miss Jewett's writings are episodic and discursive, lacking that completeness of form and purpose that the ideal short story possesses. Some are merely character sketches, while others read like fragments from longer works. Yet in all there is considerable charm, due to the singularity of many of the types of character presented and the evident faithfulness with which they are described, and to the purity and charm of the style. Nor should we omit to pay just tribute to Miss Jewett's keen and loving observation of nature and her minutest facts, whether her scene is laid in the far-off, rocky, wind-swept and barren slopes of the most eastern of Maine's islets, or amid the abundant foliage of late Summer in a more southern and genial part of New England. "The King of Folly Island," which is selected to give its name to the book, is not to our thinking the best. The honor we believe lies between "The Courtship of Sister Wisby" and "A Village Shop." "Miss Tempy's Watchers" is nothing more than a conversation between two mature women who are passing a night, watching the body of their friend, yet a great deal is learned, by the reader, of the character of the watchers, while the lovable and self-sacrificing disposition of the dead woman is strongly brought out, and the good influence to be exercised by memory is made manifest.

The Nation 47: 1214 (October 4, 1888), p. 274.

'The King of Folly Island' includes half a dozen sketches of New England life, all so like previous sketches by Miss Jewett that we might as well be reading the last volume, or the volume before that. The fishermen, the countrymen, the old maids by hill and shore, are familiar friends, and there is no obvious reason for presenting them under new names, except to keep before us the author's skill in the delineation of them. The last sketch (there is not a story in the volume), "Mère Pochette," is of French Canadian life, somewhere between the settlements, the Eastern States, and the St. Lawrence country. The location is indefinite, but it serves. The sketch does not indicate any more definite acquaintance with the people than with the topography. Mère Pochette, the several curés, and the rest are conventional peasants, not *Canadiens*. The sweeping characterization of the habitants as, "hardening into solid

farmers," growing "stupid and heavy," "drinking gin and bad beer," is an unjustifiably severe criticism of the French in the Province of Quebec. It betrays almost as superficial a knowledge of their actual condition as the reference to "merry, vine-growing ancestors" does of their history. It is not recorded that their ancestors were gloomy, but it is set down with exactness that the vine-growing provinces furnished but few colonists for New France. There were forests and snow and savages to be encountered in the new land - not a prospect seductive to vine-growers, merry or sad. The best that can be said for Miss Jewett's tentative excursion into foreign territory is that she has not the blighting tendency to misrepresent for romantic effect, and that thus far the Canadians are fortunate in her hands.

The Athenaeum 3181 (October 13, 1888), p. 48.

"The King of Folly Island" is one of a number of stories reprinted from several American magazines. It is not quite easy to understand the author's popularity in America. She writes well, her stories are cleverly begun, and often she show a good deal of power of presenting individuality; but she is sadly wanting in the gift of construction, and seems to come to an end without knowing what she was driving at. To read her stories, therefore, is to suffer a series of disappointments.

The Literary World 19 (27 October 1888), p. 365.

Miss Jewett's graceful command of the picturesque attributes of humble New England seaboard life is exemplified once more in the collection of studies embraced under the above-quoted title. Stories in the proper sense of the word Miss Jewett does not give us. There is in her pages no evolution of character, she reveals no gradual unfolding of motive, she is incapable of constructing a plot. But how fine and true, within its narrow limits, her work is! Given a situation suited to her peculiar talent, she has no rival in the gentle art of depicting two or three people in certain simplified relations and making them denizens of reality. Her art is photographic in fidelity to general outlines and essential details, while having a softness of tone that bare description could never rival. The whole secret of her success is sympathy. She knows and loves the sterile hillsides and rude coasts where her fancy loves to wander, and the people who inhabit them are with her objects of unflinching interest. Only once in the volume before us does

she step aside from her familiar province to enter other fields. "Mère Pochette" is perhaps worthy of a place with Miss Jewett's other productions, but certainly it lacks vitality and is, compared with the rest of the book, a most lame and impotent conclusion.

The Athenaeum 3950 (July 11, 1903), 59.

The King of Folly Island. By Sarah Orne Jewett. (Duckworth.) -- With one exception the eight stories included in this little volume are reprinted from American magazines. They are thoughtful, well-written stories of American life, and contain more good stuff than the average reader is likely to find in them. The author's method is discursive, rambling, diffuse. Now in the short story excursions from the main point of the theme must be made fascinating if the average reader is to win through them to the story's kernel. Mere talent is hardly sufficient equipment for the short-story writer who would lead his readers by these roundabout, vague ways; the task demands something nearer akin to genius; and the author of the present volume does not show genius, only considerable literary ability and conscientious workmanship. Her stories are scarcely stories at all, but pleasant essays in fiction, quiet, well-bred, sincere, and unpretentious. We commend the work, while we urge that the short story demands more concentration.

The Saturday Review (London) 96 (July 25, 1903), p. 117-118

For all except the writer's friends -- and very often for them also -- the republication in volume form of short stories which have already appeared in magazines is extremely trying. Unless the stories are very good or the author very distinguished the reader is apt to be exasperated at the reprint, while the fact that he has been induced to buy a volume in the belief that it is new matter, afterwards to discover that it contains stories which he was pleased, perhaps, to read once but which he certainly does not wish to read twice, is sufficient to make him eschew the purchase of "collections" for the rest of his natural life. If then we except this volume of Miss or Mrs. Jewett from the list -- a long one -- of short stories which should not have been republished we shall be understood to give it no small measure of praise. The stories were, in our opinion, deserving of collection in volume form because they deal with unusual and out-of-the-way aspects of life and because they contain certain literary qualities which give them a permanent value, so that he who hath

once read can turn yet again to the pages and find therein both pleasure and profit for himself.

Bookman (London) 24:143 (August, 1903), p. 186.

Miss Jewett writes with delicate humour and pathos and a quiet charm of manner that is nowhere else to be met with outside the pages of Miss Mary E. Wilkins. Yet the similarity between the two writers is less a similarity of style than of subject; they both deal with the curious old-world lives and customs of New England, and it is therefore inevitable that there should be occasional family resemblances between their characters, and it is because each faithfully reproduces the types that are equally familiar to both that one traces similarities between them that naturally result not from one being influenced by the other, but from both writing under the same inspiration. "The King of Folly Island" and the other seven stories in this book are made of such slight episodes that to reduce them to a bald outline would ruin them, yet they are told with such exquisite art as makes them more affecting and more effective than any rush and strength of plot could do. It is one of the few volumes that are worth reading and keeping to read again.

From Jewett's Correspondence

1 March 1888 to Houghton Mifflin & Co.

I have magazine stories enough for a new volume which Mr. Whittier suggests should have the name of *The King of Folly Island*, that being one of the stories. I have a longish new one unprinted which I am willing to put in by way of 'new material' -- and I can have everything ready at any date you give me. I hope that in case you think it wise to bring out the book Mrs. Whitman* may design its cover. I suppose that the first of June will be early enough for it to come out, but there is no reason on my part why it should not be sooner.

31 May 1888 from John Greenleaf Whittier

Thy lovely book with the generous dedication reached me last night. I am glad exceedingly to have my name so pleasantly associated with thine. I was longing for it, and especially needed it for I have been suffering from the dampness and east winds of to me the [hardness?] month in the whole year -- and the loveliest! I

have been reading today the King of Folly Island with renewed admiration of its exquisite descriptions, admirable characterization, and pathos which brings tears to one's eyes.

I am sure this last book is thy best and that is saying much.

27 December 1888 from Louisa Dresel

Did I tell you that Marianne & I read your "King of Folly Island" book together? She loved the "Village Shop" till just at the end, & then was in a perfect rage at Leonard's marrying Nellie after all! ... "horrid selfish man, such abominably good luck, & the library beside!" -- Her very excitement was a proof of how real you had made the people to her, & when I said so, she rejoined: "yes, that is the worst of it! In real life such good-for-nothings get taken care of too well; what's the good of a book if it's going to be just as provoking?!" And she quite refused to be pacified, referring to the whole conduct of the dear, selfish, booky creature as simply criminal! -- You see you have produced a great effect on one mind, whether exactly the one you intended, I do not know! "Miss Tempy" was unalloyed satisfaction -- we both agree in thinking it one of the very best.

Betty Leicester 1889

The Literary World 20 (Dec. 7, 1889), p. 460.

This sweet and wholesome little book has little plot to it. It simply gives the every-day life of a dear every-day child, sent to spend the summer in a New England neighborhood, and the freshening and pleasure which her breezy and helpful nature bring[s] to a great many people. Nothing happens in the course of the narrative more exciting than the escape from jail and death of a somewhat dimly outlined criminal father to some children in the village; but the whole is sunny and delightful, and full of characteristic hints and hits at character in Miss Jewett's happiest vein, from Betty herself to the delightful old lame woman, whose chief joy is braiding rugs out of rags, and who opines that the royal family of England "have to think of their example;" and adds:

"I wonder 'f 'mongst all they've learned to do, anybody ever showed 'em how to braid or hook 'em a nice mat? I s'pose not, but with all their hired help, an' all their rags that must come of a year's wear, 'twould be a shame for them to buy!"

Overland Monthly 15: 85 (Jan 1890), pp. 110-112.

Betty Leicester is by Sarah Orne Jewett, and that is equivalent to saying that it is in almost every respect as good of its kind as possible. It is a story of a young girl's summer, -- a story without a plot, merely of the people she met, and the things she saw, and the influence of her frank, sunny nature. It is stretched out and pieced up from a shorter story published in *St. Nicholas*, and it shows it, -- which is a pity, it might have been so nearly perfect. It would have been better if shorter, for it has not the substance for as much of a book as it has been made into.

Cottage Hearth 16 (January 1890), p. 23.

Miss Jewett has been known hitherto chiefly as a writer of books— quite unsurpassed in their atmosphere of sweet, pure, New England country life—for the general reader. She now takes her place in the ranks of those women whose works are calculated to elevate and inspire the young; not little children, but young girls who need a true woman's influence and counsel as they step forward to take their places in the busy world. "Betty Leicester" is a girl of fifteen, which she thinks "such a funny age—you

seem to perch there, between being a little girl and a young lady, and first you think you are one and then you think you are the other." The story of her simple, natural, sunny life, bringing "a bit of color" into the gray lives of the country people where she spends the summer, is an exquisite bit of helpful writing, worthy of a place beside *Little Women* and *Faith Gartney*. The world seems to us, after we have read this little book, a brighter and better place to live in.

The American Hebrew 42 (2 April, 1890), p. 199.

If it be considered how important are the years from thirteen to sixteen in forming the reading habits of girls, it cannot be thought less than criminal on the part of parents, when they allow their daughters of this age to enter upon a course of reading consisting mainly of unmitigated trash. It is impossible to estimate how much of intellectual degradation is to be traced to this practice of permitting girls at this period of their lives to devote their entire leisure for reading, to such stuff as the silly novels of Mary J. Holmes, Mary Agnes Fleming, Bertha Clay, Mrs. Southworth, and the rest of the crew. True, it is not easy to write a work of fiction as is suitable for the age indicated. Miss Jewett's first attempt at this class of literature is perfectly successful in meeting the requirements of the case. There is a good story and it is cleverly written. In fact, the interest is continually sustained, and as was to be suspected of a writer of her culture and experience, the literary quality is of that order which ought to be one [of] the first essentials in books of the character we are now considering. It is indeed an excellent study of character, and an exquisite picture of New England life.

Ah, but there is a moral to the book! Well, and what of it? Is any the less a work of art, for that? Is not this exquisite description of the manner in which a bright girl coming from a long course of foreign travel to the somewhat depressed and depressing social conditions of village life, touches it up, insensibly to herself and to those whom she influences, with a radiant gracefulness and graciousness,-- is not this the real element of art in the book? Is not this better than Mrs. Southworth's everlasting children changed at birth, or Mary Holmes' seamstress with the smile of a duchess, who is treated with scorn by her young mistress because she is afraid her "grand" brother will fall in love with the lovely sewing girl? Is it disgraceful to compare Miss Jewett's delicate workmanship with this rubbish. But, how else will negligent parents be urged to pay some attention to this matter of the books read by their daughters? Just let such take up any volume by

one of these scribblers we have mentioned above, and then read this "Betty Leicester" by Miss Jewett. They will then realize how great is their responsibility in relation to the subject, and how needful it is for them to exercise some oversight in regard to the reading of their children.

From Jewett's Correspondence

July 1889 to Annie Adams Fields

I have been making more notes for a Bit of Color and I do not believe that I shall be long about it when I once begin -- I mean to call it Betty Leicester when it is published in book form. I think it is more attractive & says itself more easily.

28 September 1889 to Azariah Smith

The thought strikes me that it will be a good thing to put an advertisement into St. Nicholas, in order that that the young folks who were pleased to like "A Bit of Colour" may understand that "Betty Leicester" includes those chapters with a great deal of new material.

1 November 1889 to Louisa Dresel

I am just beginning to take it in that I am out of my own girlhood! and in writing Betty Leicester I have made many things plain to myself. I am very eager to see how you like the little book -- Now that it is done I wish that it were much better -- it seems to me that I ought to have worked this whole winter on it,...

4 December 1889 from Andrew Preston Peabody

When I receive from an author's kindness a book of doubtful complexion or promise, I send my thanks by the next mail, with the hope that I may be instructed or edified by the book. Not feeling that need with regard to your "Betty Leicester," I reserved my thanks till I had read the book; & I now render them most fervently. It is a story for young girls; but a man of nearly fourscore has been instructed & impressed by it, & has read it with delighted interest. I have recently said to a graduating college class, that there is nothing that one can do "which does not admit of his putting into it all that is in him of culture & character." Thus your story is such as a mere story-writer for young people could not have written. It reminds me of the time when that department of literature was adorned & enriched by such writers as Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Barbauld, & Jane Taylor. There is in it a wealth

of not common-sense, but such as ought to be common, of ethical wisdom, of instruction in what are miscalled minor morals, on which, more than on all things else, the happiness of home & society depends, that would be worthy of one who has lived twice your years. Then the character drawing is perfect. The types are all such as I can identify in vivid memory, if not in the young people immediately around me. The story charmed me all the more, because I am familiar with its geography, can recall all the features of hill, valley & river &, I am quite sure can identify several of the spots specified, & one or two of the individual houses. Aunts Barbara & Mary* are among my familiar acquaintances & I should say that I had been at their house, were there not several not unlike houses in that region, in which I used to be intimate.

23 January 1899 to Mary E. Mulholland

I thank you sincerely for your most kind letter, and I wish to tell you how much pleasure it gives me to know that you like my stories, and especially that you are such a friend of Miss Betty Leicester! I must own that I took a great liking to her myself when I was writing her, and that she has always seemed to me to be a real person. And it is just the same way with Mrs. Todd....

I am sure that you must like a great many other books since you like these stories of mine. And I am so glad, because you will always have the happiness of finding friendships in books, and it grows pleasanter and pleasanter as one grows older. And then the people in books are apt to make us understand 'real' people better, and to know why they do things, and so we learn sympathy and patience and enthusiasm for those we live with, and can try to help them in what they are doing, instead of being half suspicious and finding fault. It is just the same way that a beautiful picture makes us quicker to see the same things in a landscape, to look for rich clouds and trees, and see their beauty.

Betty Leicester's Christmas 1899

Atlantic 84 (July 1899) p. 31-2. Notice of coming publication.

When "Betty Leicester" appeared, this very judicious comment was made: "It is rather difficult to find the right kind of books for girls of fifteen and sixteen, and they are apt to experience a craze at this age for the silliest and most harmful kind of third-rate novels; but 'Betty Leicester' is just the right kind of story to put into such a girl's hands. It is bright, healthy, natural, and interesting to the reader from first to last. It is thoroughly friendly and companionable." Betty went to England soon after she inspired that story, and there she had a charming variety of good times, seeing famous places and people, and enjoying all her unfamiliar experiences. The most remarkable of these were connected with the Christmas season, and they are delightfully described in the story Miss Jewett tells. The book is brought out in an attractive style, and will be an unusually suitable holiday gift.

The New England Magazine New Series 21: 4, (Dec 1899) 387.

Betty Leicester does not appear for the first time when we meet her at the Christmas festivities at an English house party; for Miss Jewett has already let her live, as she says, "in a small, square book, bound in scarlet and white," but she remains the same helpful and dear child everybody loves to know.

The Dial 28 (December 1899), p. 235.

Of books more distinctly for girls, none could be more delightful reading than Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's "Betty Leicester's Christmas" (Houghton). It is an international work, telling how a simple-hearted little American girl made one of the stately homes of England the merrier for her presence.

The Epoch 7 (July 4, 1890) p. 350, by Kate Upson Clark.

Tales of New England 1890

The Critic 13 (May 31, 1890), 269.

TO ENTER the same field traversed in some of Hawthorne's daintiest sketches, in some of Mrs. Stoddard's most vigorous chapters, and demonstrate a right to remain in it is given to but few of the many who make the attempt. Among these few we would put Sarah Orne Jewett, whose 'Tales of New England' are, for closeness of observation at least, not unworthy to be compared with the best that has been done in her way. There is an art, too, of which the reader is unconscious – until all is said – in the way in which she presents the slight happenings of some quiet neighborhood, -- an art which is not mannered, though it is distinctly that of the 'New England school.' 'The Delham [Dulham] Ladies' grow upon us little by little, and we come to know them well while they are blundering in the choice of a false front. Miss Tempy is introduced to us as a corpse, and we carry away a memory of a living woman. Nancy [Ann Floyd] Lane's hard lot in 'Marsh Rosemary' is lightened to us as to herself by the slight humorous touches which bring out, not too prominently, the character of her good-for-nothing husband. Jerry smiles to himself and waves his hat in anticipation of his easy victory the hot day he drops in on Ann Floyd and captures her heart; and, as he dozes in the grass under sentence of banishment, while the measuring worms make havoc in the currant-bushes, he chuckles over the adventures yet in store for him. Nancy, when she discovers his infidelity, leaves him in peace with his new wife and partly consoles herself with thinking over the good stories he used to tell her on winter evenings before the fire. It is only now and then that a situation strikes us as picturesque while we are reading of it, like that in 'A White Heron' when Sylvia sees the world from the top of the great pine-tree, 'like a main-mast to the voyaging earth.' More often we jog along by hedgerow and grey farm to find at the end that some exquisite bit of nature has made a lodgment in our memory. The dark blue cover and neat presswork of the Riverside Aldine Series just suit these tales, being like them serviceable not for a day but for a lifetime.

A new volume of Miss Jewett's stories is sure to receive a warm welcome from a large and discriminating circle. The latest, contains eight, namely: "Miss Tempy's Watchers," "The Dulham Ladies," "An Only Son," "Marsh Rosemary," "A White Heron," "Law Lane," "A Lost Lover," and "The Courting of Sister Wisby." Of these, perhaps "A White Heron" is the most delicate and satisfactory, though "An Only Son" is a strong and noble sketch. Something amounting almost to genius is needed, surely, to give such slight plots and commonplace characters and pictures as those which make up these simple tales, so vivid and human a quality as we find in them. Each is a gem, chosen, cut and set in an individual and characteristic style of Miss Jewett's own which, while it is lacking in something of the depth and fire, and especially in the poetic romanticism of Miss Mary E. Wilkins, – still strongly suggest that writer.

No one who has not tried it can appreciate the amount of skill and refinement required to pencil such delicate pictures as theirs, out of the uncouth New England dialect. Even Mrs. Stowe and Mrs. Rose Terry Cooke, both of whom in their best New England work excel in some respects Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins, degenerate into coarseness not infrequently in handling New England dialect. These younger writers never do it. Their touch is true, their sympathy unflinching, and their literary graces manifold.

The Independent 42 (July 31, 1890), p. 1061.

Houghton, Mifflin & Co. have collected into a neat volume for their "Aldine Series" eight short stories by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, under the title, *Tales of New England*. Every well-informed reader knows what to expect when Miss Jewett writes. Her stories are told in exquisite style and with a view to quiet pictures of humble New England life. Most of the pieces in this volume have been in print for some years, but they have worn well; and it will be long before their interest will fail with the lovers of good literature inclosing the dreariness, harshness and immitigable pathos of New England rural experience. Miss Jewett's art is not inspiring, but it is effective and genuine.

Cottage Hearth 16 (July 1890) , p. 225.

TALES OF NEW ENGLAND. By Sarah Orne Jewett. We have often had occasion to speak of Miss Jewett's pure, breezy sketches of New England life. The present volume is issued in the dainty "Riverside Edition" form, and contains some of the author's best pieces, namely: "Miss Tempy's Watchers," "The Dulham Ladies," "An Only Son," "Law Lane," "A Lost Lover," and "The Courting of Sister Wisby." It will be seen that all of these are old favorites, which Miss Jewett's readers will be glad to have brought together in this form.

The Chautauquan 11 (August 1891), p. 649.

Miss Jewett's graceful realism has nowhere a greater charm than in the newly gathered "Tales of New England." Each story is an exquisite idyl of country life.

Atlantic 66 (November 1890), p. 719.

Tales of New England, by Sarah O. Jewett. (Houghton.) A volume in the tasteful Riverside Aldine Series, and, like others in the set, it is not a new book, but a selection from the several volumes of Miss Jewett's stories. Whatever favorites one may miss from the collection, he will have no fault to find with the choice of such stories as Miss Tempy's Watchers, The Dulham Ladies, A Lost Lover, An Only Son, which form a portion of the contents. The touch of this writer's hand, when she has a first-rate theme, is so firm, yet so light, that the result is literature.

The Spectator (London) 71 (September 2, 1893) , p. 308.

MISS JEWETT'S tales are rather very lively sketches than tales, and, indeed, furnish us with a very good second to Miss Wilkins's admirable tales like "A Humble Romance," "A Far-away Melody," and "A New England Nun." But they have not nearly as much of the narrative-interest in them as Miss Wilkins's, though in other respects they have much the same graphic texture and simplicity of outline. Miss Jewett not seldom reminds us of Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford*. Her picture of "The Dulham Ladies," her second story, is cast in exactly the same mould, and might illustrate the unity of the English race, for these Dulham ladies, becoming gradually aware that their hair was turning grey, and that they needed some artificial help to recover the personal consideration of their neighbors, and then going to buy fronts which end in making

even their own servant wonder at their innocence and their little knowledge of the world, is as like Mrs. Gaskell's picture of some of the quaint doings at Cranford as if Cranford had been situated in New England, instead of three thousand miles away. The dialect is different, and the old servant evidently feels herself more nearly on an equality with her mistresses, -- if not, indeed, in some respects their superior, -- than the old servant in *Cranford*. But in all other respects, and especially in portraying the innocent self-satisfaction felt by the Misses Dobin over the new device to set-off their elderly persons to advantage, the humour of Miss Jewett's sketch is set in precisely the same key as the humour at *Cranford*. Indeed, Miss Jewett seems to us to describe generally a kind of society which is somewhat more English and less New English, than Miss Wilkins's. She is always reminding us of Miss Mitford or Mrs. Gaskell, while in Miss Wilkins's pages we are more struck with the difference than with the likeness between the old and the new stock. Perhaps the reason is the Miss Wilkins in her pictures of New England concerns herself a great deal more with the tenacity of purpose, and the trials to which that tenacious fibre of character is exposed, than Miss Jewett. Miss Jewett, on the other hand, dwells less on the hardship of the New England life, less on its poverty, less on its Puritan frugality, than Miss Wilkins. She paints the same kind of life, but she studies the general *sentiment* of the situation more than the resolute volition of her heroines and heroes, -- which last seems to have grown to an almost preternatural rigidity in the New England character; and we find, therefore, more in common between the New England of Miss Jewett and the old England of Miss Mitford or Mrs. Gaskell, than we do between Miss Wilkins's sketches and the truest pictures of village life in our own land. Perhaps, too, Miss Jewett had moved in a New England society which, though hardy and frugal, is a little less close to the edge of absolute want than Miss Wilkins's. For the most part, her sketches are sketches of a middle-class rather than of those who have to work themselves to the bone to earn their living. Miss Jewett's society is less close-run by a few shades of comfort than that in displaying which Miss Wilkins exhibits so much art and skill. Miss Jewett studies New England nature where it is not quite so much on the strain, a little more at its ease, than Miss Wilkins; and the consequence is that her sketches have less explicit development in them, less of beginning, middle, and end, than those of Miss Wilkins, which almost always tell you how some set purpose was worked out, or some perverse habit of mind came to its crisis. Miss Jewett's most characteristically New England tale is "A

Native of Winby," narrating how a Winby lad who had gone to the Far West, made his fortune, become a General in the war with the South, and had been elected to the Senate, comes back to his native place, revisits the school in which he had received his first lessons, and finds the greatest difficulty in conveying to the new generation of children the inarticulate romance of his present memories and of his childish aspirations. That is an admirable sketch of a go-ahead man's reserve and awkwardness in imparting his experience to the children who are now learning on the very benches on which he conned his early lessons; and it is told with consummate skill. But "The Dulham Ladies" and "A Lost Lover," either of which, with very slight alterations, might be sketches of English middle-class life, interest us more than those which have all the sternness and curious hardness of outline which seem to characterize the simplicity of the New England character. "An Only Son," again, is pure New England, and much more like one of Miss Wilkins's stories than any other in this volume. There is the same unconquerable reserve in it which Miss Wilkins, too, delights to depict, the same tenacity of resolve, and the same not ungenial ending. It is evident enough that Miss Jewett and Miss Wilkins have both the same general social characteristics before them, and that both sketch them with great truth; but Miss Jewett on the whole commands a landscape of somewhat less severe features than Miss Wilkins. Both of them delight in sketching the reticence of Puritan self-sacrifice, of which the following passage gives a happy specimen. Two good women are watching together in the house of a friend who is just dead, -- one of those people who did not let their left hand know what their right hand did. One of the watchers tells to the other this story of her departed friend: --

"I can tell you the biggest thing she ever done, and I don't know's there's anybody left but me to tell it. I don't want it forgot,' Sarah Binson went on, looking up at the clock to see how the night was going. 'It was that pretty-looking Trevor girl, who taught the Corners school, and married so well afterwards, out in New York State. You remember her, I dare say? '-- 'Certain,' said Mrs. Crowe, with an air of interest. -- 'She was a splendid teacher, folks said, and give the school a great start; but she'd overdone herself getting her education, and working to pay for it, and she all broke down one spring, and Tempy made her come and stop with her a while, -- you remember that? Well, she had an uncle, her mother's brother out in Chicago, who was well off and friendly, and used to write to Lizzie Trevor, and I dare say make her some presents; but he was a lively, driving man, and didn't take time to stop and think about his

folks. He hadn't seen her since she was a little girl. Poor Lizzie was so pale and weakly that she just got through the term o' school. She looked as she was just going straight off in a decline. Tempy, she cosseted her up a while, and then, next thing folks knew, she was tellin' round how Miss Trevor had gone to see her uncle, and meant to visit Niagary Falls on the way, and stop over night. Now I happened to know, in ways I won't dwell on to explain, that the poor girl was in debt for her schoolin' when she come here, and her last quarter's pay had just squared it off at last, and left her without a cent ahead, hardly; but it had fretted her thinking of it, so she paid it all; those might have dunned her that she owed it to. An' I taxed Tempy about the girl's goin' off on such a journey, till she owned up, rather'n have Lizzie blamed, that she'd given her sixty dollars, same's if she was rolling in riches, and sent her off to have a good rest and vacation.' -- 'Sixty dollars!' exclaimed Mrs. Crowe. 'Tempy only had ninety dollars a year that came in to her; rest of her livin' she got by helpin' about, with what she raised off this little piece o' ground, sand one side an' clay the other. An' how often I've heard her tell, years ago, that she'd rather see Niagary than any other sight in the world!' The women looked at each other in silence; the magnitude of the generous sacrifice was almost too great for their comprehension."

Miss Jewett is sometimes a little too discursive. "The Courting of Sister Wisby," though it ends in a very humorous sketch of New England manners and whims, is much too long in getting to the point. Even a sketch which is not exactly a story, should have a perspective of its own. There Miss Wilkins never fails; Miss Jewett sometimes does.

Saturday Review (London) 76 (September 9, 1893), p. 301-2.

It is difficult to believe that the *Tales of New England*, by Sarah Jewett, were not written by Miss Mary Wilkins, so striking is the resemblance they bear to *A New England Nun, and other Stories* &c. by that charming author. But, in spite of the great similarity between the two, there is no question of imitation -- the portraits are too vivid, the style too simple and spontaneous for such an accusation. There is a rather wearisome monotony in these little tales -- usually narratives put in the mouth of some village dame concerning the life history of another of her kind, in which the return of a lover or husband supposed to be dead is a much-favoured incident. But these pictures of village life are so faultless in their true touches of human nature that they may be described as

perfect within their sphere. "The White Heron" and "The Lost Lover" are among the prettiest and most delicately touched.

Strangers and Wayfarers 1890

The Critic 14 (27 December 1890), p. 335.

From Jewett's Correspondence

15 March 1890 to Horace Scudder

I wished to ask you at once if it would not be better to push this book through and let it come out before summer, since it simply makes one of a series, and if I should make up another volume of short stories in the autumn they might get into each other's way and 'trip up!' You see, I betray a sad lack of confidence in my children! You do not express any disapproval of the title which I put on the cover: Tales of New England. It says itself well and easily and perhaps will do as well as another, though I was not sure of that first. You do not think it is too ambitious? But what are they Tales of, if not ----? -----!

AS WELCOME to the eye as the first daisy espied under the hedgerow in springtime, and like it bedight with white and gold and tender green, is the volume of short stories by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett styled 'Strangers and Wayfarers.' Most of the pilgrims here assembled have been met with on their halt in the magazines; but we are doubly glad of an opportunity to welcome them housed and enshrined as they deserve to be. The old world grace and stateliness and withal deep pathos of 'The Mistress of Sydenham Plantation' made a mark upon our affections months ago which has not yet been effaced. But it is in her unmistakable, inimitable and therefore -- to borrow a phrase from the æsthetics -- 'distinctly precious' New England local color, that we prefer to view this author. Every line of such a sketch, for instance, as 'A Winter Courtship' conveys the impression of the scene, the elderly lovers jogging along the frozen road behind the old mare in the mail-wagon, Mr. Jefferson Briley's slow apprehension of the fact that it is time for him to speak, the Widow Tobin's 'sudden inspiration of opportunity,' and the *finale* as satisfactory as it is prompt! 'The Town Poor,' 'The Quest [Guest] of Mr. Teaby,' 'Fair Day,' 'Going to Shrewsbury' and the 'Taking of Captain Ball' have also found a place in this choice repertory.

Epoch 8 (19 December, 1890), p.319, by Kate Upson Clarke.

There are eleven of Miss Jewett's sketches in this pretty volume, all of them characterized by the delicate finish, the conscientious fidelity to nature and the fascinating humor which make everything that she writes such pleasant reading. New England is the theatre in which most of her actors play their parts, but here is one southern study, -- "The Mistress of Sydenham Plantation," and one Irish story, -- which would make a good temperance tract, -- "The Luck of the Bogans." "A Winter Courtship" and "The Quest of Mr. Teaby" are two courting scenes as full of quiet fun as anything that the writer has ever done. All of these sketches have been well received as they came out in the magazines, and in their collected form, tricked out attractively as they are in fresh and spotless green and white, they should have a generous sale.

" San Francisco *Chronicle* (21 December 1890), p. 7.

A collection of Sarah Orne Jewett's stories is issued under the apt title "Strangers and Wayfarers.": It includes several tales that have appeared in the various magazines, and others which we think have not been printed before. All are marked by Miss Jewett's rare skill in depicting New England scenes and characters, and all are enlivened by her quite humor, which is as enjoyable as her style. The book has been given a dainty dress that fits it for the holidays.

Cottage Hearth 17 (January 1891), p. 25.

It is pleasure to turn from the unwelcome task of exhibiting flaws in a fine piece of work, to an author whose touch is true, and who never offends in portraying simple, sincere life among common folk. Most of the essays in the book are familiar to readers of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The pathos of "The Mistress of Sydenham" has rarely been surpassed; "The Quest of Mr. Teaby" is a fair example of the genuine and gentle humor which pervades Miss Jewett's work; and "The White Rose Road" is sweet with the fragrance of country lanes and roadside blossoms. Not one of the eleven pieces in the book could be spared.

Boston *Herald*, (4 January 1891), by Louise Chandler Moulton.

How different from this ghastly tragedy is the tender and unaffected pathos of such short stories as Miss Sarah Orne Jewett gives us in "Strangers and Wayfarers." I remember the surprise with which a certain little girl once saw me cry over a book. "Why, it's all a made-up story, mamma," she said, with a highly superior air, "and I shouldn't think you'd cry over stories. You know they're not true; you make 'em yourself." I was glad that little girl did not see me when I was reading "The Town's Poor," for I should have been "crushed again."

Did even Miss Jewett ever write a tenderer, more entirely lovely and perfect story than this? I think not. I have lived in a New England country town myself, and I know the type of the Janes homestead, with its gnawed dooryard fence, and the two or three ragged old hens in the yard. I can see Mrs. Janes come to the door, with her face tied up in a handkerchief, and suffering from ague. I am acquainted with kindly Mrs. Trimble, and with Rebecca Wright, spinster; but it was Miss Jewett's happy fortune to discover

"the Miss Brays," so generous and hospitable in their poverty, so patient in their forlornness, so pathetic in their simple dignity. I am glad to know them. Life is richer because they are in the world.

Note: This text is from a clipping Moulton mailed to Jewett on 4 January 1891. The letter and clipping are held by Colby College Special Collections, Waterville, ME: JEWE.1. Subseries, Letters to Sarah Orne Jewett: Louise Chandler Moulton. Undated. 1 ALS. Boston, MA. 2 p.

The Independent 43 (29 January 1891), p. 164.

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's *Strangers and Wayfarers* contains eleven of those delightfully artistic, yet oftentimes depressing and enervating stories of poverty-stricken or ignorance-stricken folk, for which this author has become justly famous. Miss Jewett has genius, and she has literary conscience. We always go to her work sure that she will not disappoint us with it; but her sketches of New England life nearly always leave the impression that New England is a dreadfully doleful and undesirable sort of country. She certainly paints bleakness and barrenness of soil and life with the hand of a master.

The Chautauquan 12 (March 1891), p. 826.

Miss Jewett's fresh, wholesome stories of genuine New England people always make satisfactory reading, and are never wearisome. A pretty volume bound in green and gold contains eleven of these stories.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine 82:491 (April 1891), pp. 804-805, by William Dean Howells.

Something of the same motive that governs us to the frank avowal of our pleasure in him, makes it easy for us at all times to recognize the worth of what is our own in literature, and to shun at least the kind of provinciality which ignores it. This kind seems to us upon the whole a worse kind than the kind that boasts our own because it is our own; and we have lately seen with satisfaction some reluctance in our criticism to accept the short stories of Maupassant as the best work of the sort that has been done. It seems to us not at all true that they are the best at all times, or so good at the best as the work of certain of our own writers; they are not so richly imagined, so finely wrought. They have for us the charm of strangeness, the fascination of coming from far, and they are undoubtedly done

admirably, with perfect knowledge of technique, and that feeling for art which would make a Frenchman Greek if such a thing were possible. But their average seems not so good as that of Miss S. O. Jewett's little stories, which are as delicately constructed upon as true a method, and which abound with every grace of Maupassant's best, and are penetrated with the aroma of a humor which he never knew. If the reader cares to take her latest volume, *Strangers and Wayfarers*, and compare "A Winter Courtship," or "Mr. Teaby's Quest," or "Going to Shrewsbury," or "By the Morning Boat," or "In Dark New England Days," with any of the thirteen tales of Maupassant in the first of the Odd Number Series, we think he will see the truth of what we say. We think a comparison of these sketches with those of any other French writer will be as much to their advantage. Even the *Tales by François Coppée*, which form the latest issue of the same series, delicate and finished as they are, with that air of elegant unfinish, do not rival Miss Jewett's New England studies. It is not only the delightful mood in which these little masterpieces are imagined, but the perfect artistic restraint, the truly Greek temperance, giving all without one touch too much, which render them exquisite, make them really perfect in their way; and we hope it is with a joy in their beauty far above the chauvinistic exultation of knowing them ours, that we perceive we have nothing to learn of the French in this sort, but perhaps something to teach them.

Overland Monthly 17 (June 1891), p. 661-2.

In *Strangers and Wayfarer's* Miss Jewett has collected eleven of her delicate and sympathetic sketches of New England rural life. Many of our readers will recognize some of these as old friends, from their appearance in the magazines. All of them are filled with the light but sure touch, the close observation, and the fine human sympathy that make anything that Miss Jewett writes attractive.

The proud but poor old women in "The Town Poor," the pathetic story of the Bogans and their sorrows with their intemperate son, the delicate humor in "The Taking of Captain Ball," and, it might be said, the special good point in each of these sketches, are sure to make friends and admirers for Miss Jewett wherever they go.

The Saturday Review (London) 71 (June 13, 1891)

One of the pleasantest of the many little collections of American short stories is Miss

Sarah Orne Jewett's *Strangers and Wayfarers*. There is a poetic sympathy and perception of the tenderer side of the rude New England exterior which make them interesting. "A Winter Courtship" is an American version of a famous idyl. In "The Mistress of Sydenham Plantation," a sketch of an old lady whose mind has been shattered by the deaths of her husband and sons in the Civil War, and who is led by a delightful old nigger, faithful to his service in his new freedom, to see her old home, existing no longer, the pathos is true and deep. Miss Jewett knows the Irish, either in Ireland or in America, very well, and can write the brogue as well as the New England twang or the negro dialect. "The Luck of the Bogans" is full of genuine Irish feeling, and the Irish priest is extremely well drawn, true to life of one of the best types, unhappily scarcer now than former days. As with most of these slight stories, the later in the volume are less good than those placed first.

The Atlantic Monthly 67:404 (June 1891), p. 845-850, by Horace Scudder.

THERE are two periods in the life of a country when the short story is peculiarly adapted to display the characteristics of the people: the first is when the country is virgin soil for the novelist; the second is when the soil, in agricultural phrase, is worn out. At the present time, the South, and more particularly the Southwest, illustrates the former of the two periods, New England the latter. By means of the rapid sketches and brief stories of Miss Murfree, Mr. Cable, Mr. Harris, Mr. Page, Miss French, and others, we have been introduced to a society and a condition of life so novel, so full of contrasts to the familiar, that we welcome each new contribution as a distinct addition to the bundle of particulars from which by and by we shall begin to generalize; for we have caught the scientific spirit in literature, and ask a knowledge of details before making our inductions. Under these conditions, the short stories easily take the character of studies for larger pictures.

On the other hand, when a country has been appraised by the historian, the political economist, the sociologist, the philosopher, the novelist, there comes to be a certain common significance attached to it, so that as soon as it is named the mind responds with a tolerably definite concept of the character embodied in the country and people. This is the case with New England. It bears a stamp, and, however much a company of intelligent Americans may differ in their estimate of the worth of New England, they are not likely to be very far apart in their understanding of its characteristics. Now

is the opportunity for the short-story writer. He -- or more likely she -- may with entire confidence assume this general knowledge, and proceed at once to expend art upon the nice details, to individualize, to discriminate, to disclose distinctions which the casual observer may overlook. There is a strong inclination, under these conditions, to use a small canvas and take great pains with minute touches.

This disposition is confirmed by two influences. The whole strain of New England life, through the loneliness of social relations in the country and the extreme individualism inculcated by religion and politics, has tended to develop what are specifically known as "characters," highly intensified and noticeable persons, though the exaggeration may be of unimportant qualities. Again, the prevailing temper of the realistic school, which is in literature what specialization is in science, calls for microscopic study of human life, and it is easier to secure this, without loss of regard for the main theme, in the short story than in the novel.

How completely one may cultivate a single phase of local life is illustrated by Mrs. Slosson in her *Seven Dreamers*.¹ Her introductory note cleverly strikes the keynote to her group of stories. A New England woman recites in rich dialect a number of instances of eccentric neighbors, who are plain, intelligible persons in the main, but are each "off" on some one point, the point being expressive of some form of idealism. Cap'n Burdick remembers the millennium;

Uncle Enoch Stark beguiles himself with the fancy that his sister Lucilla, who died a baby before he was born, still lives somewhere in the vague West; Wrestling Billy was so called because he could give account of an experience similar to that of the patriarch Jacob; Jerry Whaples found a world of comfort in the Biblical passage, apparently so inapplicable to everyday haps, "At Michmash he hath laid up his carriages."

"They have different names for sech folks," continues Aunt Charry. "They say they 're 'cracked,' they've 'got a screw loose,' they're 'a little off,' they 'ain't all there,' and so on. But nothin' accounts for their notions so well, to my mind, as to say they're all jest dreamin'. . . . And what's more, I believe, when they look back on those soothin', sleepy, comfortin' ideas o' thirn, that somehow helped 'em along through all the pesterin' worry and frettin' trouble o' this world, -- I believe, I say, that they're glad too."

Thereupon, having given a hint of what the reader is to expect, Mrs. Slosson narrates at length the cases of a half dozen New England idealists, each with some whimsical yet always lovable fancy. Her first tale, *How Faith Came and Went*, scarcely comes under the category of

her title, and is somewhat out of harmony with the rest of the book; for in it she avails herself of a physiological fact, perhaps as familiar in fiction as in real life, -- the obscuration of memory for a time, and the consequent unhinged life led by the person thus affected. But the rest of the stories are the expansion of idiosyncrasies which, let the doctors discuss as they may, derive their main interest from the contribution they make to the history of the human soul.

Although Mrs. Slosson deals thus with idealists, her mode of treatment is quite closely naturalistic. Her oddest people and incidents are reported with a sympathetic but candid spirit. Her characters for the most part tell their own stories, but whenever she appears in person, it is always with the affectionate, considerate manner of one who respects the fancies of these humble people, not with the professional air of the alienist; and this fine spirit of reverence,

so apparent throughout the book, guards her from the exaggeration into which her sense of humor might betray her, and makes good taste prevail. Once only do we think her liveliness carries her a step too far. In the amusing, bewildering story of *Butterneggs*, where the fun is stretched almost to the snapping-point, her lively spirits have provoked her into a sly insertion of local historical names, a little to the detriment of good literary manners.

A very charming element in the book is the homely and familiar acquaintance shown with wild flowers. Some of the stories turn on this loving regard for flowers, and it is plain to see that the author herself is drawing upon a store of full, simple experience. There is an artistic fitness in this close association of nature with the finer, even if fantastic side of human life, which steals upon the reader imperceptibly; so that for a while he is aware, as it were, only of a delicate fragrance somewhere, until, by inspection, he perceives that this fragrance is from the book he is reading.

There is a slight bond between Mrs. Slosson's work and that of Miss Wilkins in the disposition of Miss Wilkins to single out for her subjects highly accented phases of New England life, but the manner of the two writers is quite distinct. They are alike in this, that they leave the reader to his own conclusions, and rarely impose their reflections upon his attention. In her latest collection² Miss Wilkins has included twenty-four stories. The book is charged with tender sentiment, yet once only, so far as we remember, at the close of the moving story of *Christmas Jenny*, does the author introduce anything which may be likened to an artistic use of sentiment. In this story the figures of the girl and her lover make the kind of foil which we are used to in German sentimental literature. The touch here, however, is so slight

as almost to escape notice. It serves chiefly to remind one how entirely Miss Wilkins depends for her effects upon the simple pathos or humor which resides in the persons and situations that are made known through a few strong, direct disclosures. The style is here the writer. The short, economical sentences, with no waste and no niggardliness, make up stories which are singularly pointed, because the writer spends her entire strength upon the production of a single impression. The compression of these stories is remarkable, and almost unique in our literature, and it is gained without any sacrifice of essentials and by no mere narrowness of aim, but by holding steadily before the mind the central, vital idea, to the exclusion of all by-thoughts, however interesting they may be. Hence it happens frequently that the reader, though left satisfied on the main issue, is piqued by the refusal of the story-teller to meet his natural curiosity on other points. Thus in *A Discovered Pearl* the affairs of Lucy and Marlow are settled, but one is left to his surmises as to what the actual history of Marlow has been; and in *A Pot of Gold*, though Joseph Tenney is rehabilitated, the reader is as consumed with curiosity as Jane to know just what the box contained; then he is ashamed of himself, and confesses that the story-teller is above the weakness of satisfying merely idle curiosity.

Mrs. Slosson depends upon the interlocutors for the most telling effects in her stories; Miss Wilkins, with her passion for brevity, her power of packing a whole story in a phrase, a word, although she gives her characters full rein sometimes, naturally relies chiefly upon her own condensed report of persons, incidents, and things. Sententious talk, though not unknown in New England, runs the risk of being unnaturally expressive, and Miss Wilkins shows her fine artistic sense by not trusting to it for the expression of her characters. As a rule, the speech of the New England men and women in her stories is very simple and natural; her art lies in the selection she makes of what they shall say, the choice of a passage which helps on the story. Thus the brevity of speech which is in itself a characteristic of New England people is not made to carry subtleties or to have a very full intrinsic value, nor is it a mere colloquialism, designed to give color and naturalness, but it is the fit expression which conveys a great deal to the reader, because, like the entire story, it is a condensation, an epitome.

Of the genuine originality of these stories it is hard to speak too strongly. There is, indeed, a common character to the whole series, an undertone of hardship, of loss, of repressed life, of sacrifice, of the idolatry of duty, but we suspect this is due more to the prevailing spirit of New England life than to any determining

force of Miss Wilkins's genius. For the most part, she brings to light some pathetic passage in a strongly marked individuality, and the variety of her characterizations is noticeable. Now and then she touches a very deep nature, and opens to view a secret of the human heart which makes us cry out that here is a poet, a seer. Such an effect is produced by the most powerful story in the book, *Life Everlastin'*. More frequently she makes us exclaim with admiration over the novelty, yet truthfulness, of her portraiture, as in *The Revolt of "Mother"* and the story which gives the title to her book. Always there is a freedom from commonplace, and a power to hold the interest to the close which is owing, not to a trivial ingenuity, but to the spell which her personages cast over the reader's mind as soon as they come within his ken. He wonders what they will do; and if he is surprised at any conclusion, the surprise is due, not to any trick in the author, but to the unexpected issue of an original conception, which reflection always shows to be logical and reasonable.

The humor which is a marked feature of Miss Wilkins's stories is of a pungent sort. Every story has it, and it is a savor which prevents some, that otherwise would be rather painful, from oppressing the reader unduly. Of another sort, more pervasive, more genial, more kindly and winning, is that which we are accustomed to associate with Miss Jewett's work, and is agreeably manifest in her latest collection of tales.³ The readers of *The Atlantic* are well acquainted with this writer, and the volume before us contains several sketches and stories which had their first publication in these pages. We have but to name such as *The Town Poor*, *The Quest of Mr. Teaby*, *By the Morning Boat*, *Going to Shrewsbury*, to recall at once stories which are fresh in our minds to-day, no matter when we may have read them. Of one in particular, *The Town Poor*, it is easy to say that it stands very near the head of Miss Jewett's work for the exquisiteness of its touch in portraying the dignity of one side of New England life. The tenderness with which these ancient townswomen, admirably distinguished, are set before the reader is beyond the power of art to affect, but the delicacy with which every stroke is drawn is the result of very careful study and clear perception of artistic values.

We own, however, to have been especially interested in Miss Jewett's story of *The Luck of the Bogans*. In *The Mistress of Sydenham Plantation* she essays to draw from observation of South Carolina scenes; and though there is a subtle beauty in the picture, it has a faintness, as if the artist were not wholly at home in her subject. The figure is that of a New England gentlewoman, such as Miss Jewett knows well

how to paint, transferred to another clime, and given a South Carolinian name. But in *The Luck of the Bogans* an attempt has been made to stay at home and paint, not natives, but intruders. It is noticeable, when one comes to think of it, how little really has been done in the way of setting forth artistically the Irish New Englander. Perhaps this is due to the half-instinctive jealousy which the native New Englander feels toward this new-come. He has been here, it is true, for more than a generation, and his face is not unfamiliar; but the assimilation has been slow, after all, and it is hard for the New Englander to admit to himself that the Irish stock is taking root in the soil, and is to be counted as native. The Irish are as native here as the descendants of the English Puritans; the only difference is in time: they came a couple of centuries later, but they were driven here by misrule at home, just as the early Puritans were. If they take a lively interest in Irish politics, it is no more than the first New Englanders did in the politics of England. This is by the bye, however. The point we make is that New England authors have held somewhat aloof from the material to be found in this large component of the present New England. It is true that their mind has been somewhat retrospective, and in stories has dwelt chiefly upon the rural New England of two generations back; but even where, as in the case of Miss Jewett's stories, the material is contemporaneous New England, it is only now and then that careful studies are made of this element.

We are glad, therefore, that Miss Jewett has tried her hand at a picture of New England Irish life, as she has done in this story of *The Luck of the Bogans*; and singularly enough, as soon as she steps out of her familiar field she acquires an access of dramatic power, as if the exercise had stimulated her and given a new freedom to her imagination. The same charity which lights all her stories illumines this, but beyond there is a recognition of sharp passages in the drama of life, as if the author needed to go away from familiar scenes to discover what others have found in her own domain. Be this as it may, she shows an insight, an appreciation, of the Irishman's nature which intimates a possible new vein in the quartz which she has worked so industriously hitherto.

These three writers all make use of the New England dialect, and with equal precision, though with varying fullness. One observes how fixed and well formulated this dialect is, and how even the highly elaborated form which Mrs. Slosson affects scarcely adds any new feature to what has become familiar. In her desire to give richness of color to the speech, Mrs. Slosson falls upon some very ingenious combinations, as "tennerate," and puts in more

individual expressions, but the total effect is merely a little more embarrassing. Both Miss Wilkins and Miss Jewett recognize the very subordinate value of dialect. They give just enough to flavor the conversation, but rely more on the homely phraseology of the ordinary New England speech than on very sharp accentuation.

It may be said of all three of the books considered that they appeal to the artistic sense, and do not merely entertain one with bits of life. Mrs. Slosson shows her art mainly in the skill with which she seizes upon a very illusory yet perfectly recognizable element of the New England character, and models out of it consistent figures, firm in outline, palpable, tangible, but all the while compacted of so strange a substance that in the hands of a less subtle artist they would be either grotesque impossibilities or unreal phantasms. She appears to require but a suggestion in real life to quicken her fancy. Miss Wilkins impresses us as one who, by a swift power of appropriation, has under her control the life of New England men and women as a plastic material, and works in it, re-creating shapes which are the eidola of her imagination, yet instinct with the virtue of the material in which she has wrought. It is as if New England, in its more solitary manifestations of human life, had been revealed to her in a moment of time, and she was now, thoroughly conversant with types, busily engaged in making New England men and women, not after individual models, but in perfect conformity with the fundamental nature of these models. Miss Jewett, for her part, though her characters have a more social turn, and are not so highly individualized as those of the other two writers, neither takes refuge in types nor follows too closely specific examples, but deals rather with human figures of the New England variety. She knows this variety from close and familiar acquaintance; but it is, after all, the common humanity which touches her, and thus her stories are interpretations of life, not mere recitals of incidents in life. It is the art in the writers whom we have been considering which separates their work from much similar literature that has an external fidelity to nature, but since it springs from no anterior vision, so appeals but little to the mind behind the eye. True artistic creation wakens the creative reception, and for the time being makes the reader also an artist.

When that is done, the work of art stands complete.

¹ *Seven Dreamers*. By ANNIE TRUMBULL SLOSSON. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1891.

² *A New England Nun, and Other Stories*. By MARY E. WILKINS. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1891.

³*Strangers and Wayfarers*. By SARAH ORNE JEWETT. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1890.

Catholic World 52 (July 1891) , p. 613.

There is some excellent work in Miss Jewett's new volume, and none that is not very good. "In Dark New England Days" there is a certain weird, half-tragic force very simply attained, as most fine touches doubtless are. "The Luck of the Bogans" is also very sympathetically told. As a painter of New England life Miss Jewett is more subjective, more obviously reflective than her great rival in that field, Miss Wilkins. But though her stories have not the crisp alertness and unavoidably contagious sense of humor which distinguishes the work of the author of *Sister Liddy*, they are, and possibly for that very reason, not less veracious as transcripts of ordinary New England life. Miss Jewett's style is very charming.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine 86: 513 (February, 1893), pp. 338-359.

"Whittier, Notes on His Life and of His Friendships," by Annie Fields

Of Sarah Orne Jewett he was fond as of a daughter, and from their earliest acquaintance his letters are filled with appreciation of her stories. "I do not wonder," he wrote one day, ["]that *The Luck of the Bogans* is attractive to the Irish folks, and to everybody else. It is a very successful departure from New England life and scenery, and shows that Sarah is as much at home in Ireland and on the Carolina Sea Islands as in Maine or Massachusetts. I am very proud that I was one of the first to discover her." This predisposition to think well of the work of others gave him the happy opportunity in more than one instance of bringing authors of real talent before the public who might otherwise have waited long for general recognition. (341)

From Jewett's Correspondence

February 1890 to Sarah Wyman Whitman

And about *Strangers and Wayfarers* -- would it be any help to have a suggestion that being wayfarers you could use a staff and a scallop shell but please do make it even prettier* than Folly Island* because it is our book ----

1 August 1890 to Horace Scudder

had given up the idea of making up a new book of stories this autumn because I thought that *Tales of New England* would in a measure take the place of it. But if you think that it would be a good plan, and a better piece of business than to wait until the spring, I shall be glad to abide by your judgment. There are more than enough stories for a volume and I could put them together with very little trouble.

4 January 1891 from Louise Chandler Moulton

Your "Strangers and Wayfarers" so greatly delighted me that I wish to thank you for the pleasures of it.

Note: See Moulton's review above.

6 January 1891 to Louise Chandler Moulton

I thank you sincerely for your kind words; it gives me great pleasure to think that you like the stories of my *Strangers and Wayfarers*, and "have made no strangers of them" as we say in the country!

A Native of Winby 1893

Vassar Miscellany, Volume XXIII, Number 2, (1 November 1893), by K.V.C.S.

No one looking for a new volume of short stories could do better than to buy Sarah Orne Jewett's latest book entitled, *A Native of Winby and Other Tales*. They form a collection particularly adapted for the evening hour when one wants "something good to read aloud," for her picturesque handling of incident and delicate finish is marked throughout. There is nothing in Miss Jewett's stories to indicate a seeking after the bold character study of which we are a little tired, nor does their main interest depend upon striking incident, in fact they often lack originality; but to the short story lover they are always inviting because of their charm as a whole, their pleasant readableness.

The author finds most of her material in the small New England village. But in writing up the types of character to be found there, she neither picks out all the most tight-fisted deacons, the poorest, loneliest old maid, and the most prying, garrulous neighbors; nor, on the other hand, does she look at this phase of country life from its purely picturesque standpoint. The real and the ideal are mingled; no story without its tone of pathos and few without their vein of humor. We find just such characters as might be met with in like places any day, and their very naturalness makes us wish that we might wander into some of her "country by-ways." Some of these stories have appeared before in one or another of the current magazines, but they are among the best and the book would be incomplete without "Jim's Little Woman," and "The Little Captive Maid." Neither of these are sketches of New England life, although "Jim's Little Woman" was a brave little Yankee. But she went South for Jim's sake and we can only think of her as wandering up and down the pier at St. Augustine and waiting for the "Dawn of Day." Nora, the little maid, and Johnny, her lover, waiting patiently in the "auld country" until "Norey, his darlin' shall get rich and come back," are so irresistibly Irish that we almost wish ourselves to "land aisy on the tinder in the cove o'Cork, and slape next night in the fine hotel Glengariff, with the say forninst the garden wall." In fact, these sketches of Irish character lend quite as much interest to the book as do to the better known types of New Englanders.

A new book by Miss Jewett is always an event in literature, and "A Native of Winby and Other Tales" will not be found less attractive than her other works. There are nine clever stories in the book, seven of which are character sketches of New England life, with women in the home as central figures, and the other two of Irish-American life. Many of the stories will be recognized as old friends, having been previously published in some of the leading periodicals.

Godey's Lady's Book, 127 (December 1893), p. 762, by John Habberton.

Here are Miss Jewett's short stories that have appeared in the magazines in the last year or two. They are unlike any other stories, although the author has many affectionate imitators. No one else tells so well of lives which, from their surroundings, would seem tame and uneventful. Each of her books is a collection of appreciations of the older type of Yankee which still remains in New England.

The Literary World (2 December 1893), p. 423.

Miss Jewett's latest collection of tales shows that her hand is not losing its cunning. Of the nine stories here reprinted "A Native of Winby" seems to us the best among those relating to New England life, but there is much delicate humor in "The Passing of Sister Barsett" and "Miss Ester's Guest," and true pathos of two kinds in "The Failure of David Berry" and "The Flight of Betsey Lane." The stories that take the reader among others scenes and characters than those common in Miss Jewett's books – "Between Mass and Vespers" and "A Little Captive Maid," for instance – show that she can do large justice to more than one field; but we miss here the finer touches and more delicate strokes of the New England tales. The Irish stories show that Miss Barlow can interpret her Ireland more felicitously but no more happily than Miss Jewett can render her peculiar province.

The Independent, 45 (7 December 1893), pp. 17-18.

A Native of Winby, and Other Stories. By Sarah Orne Jewett. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.) Nine short stories of excellent workmanship by an author who from the beginning of her career has pursued the art of word painting with conscience and with growing

power. These pictures present life, mostly of the lower classes of New Englanders; sturdy, rather dry and a trifle hard they appear; but Miss Jewett manages to reach the common human heart as often as any writer we know. She frequently chooses most unpromising subjects and then proceeds to extract romance from them as charming as it is surprising. The same publishers have issued a new and beautiful edition of Miss Jewett's "Deephaven," with preface and illustrations.

The Nation, 57 (14 December 1893), p. 452.

Miss Jewett's *Native of Winby* is another example of the natural and proper unity of idea and expression. It would be hard to name stories better from any point of view than are four at least of those included in her latest volume. There was a time when she trembled on the verge of fashionable art, the art of writing a tale wherein no tale is discoverable; but she never went over to the unintelligibles, and is now firmly reëstablished on the old, sure ground of something to tell. One of the most vivid of general impressions about New England is given by those innumerable women very interesting for reasons which have nothing to do with being in love or being made love to. Most of them have passed, happily or unhappily, the years when love-making is very important. They are reticent and inexpressive to the stranger, who can only guess at their sorrows, personal or vicarious, from physical signs and tokens. It has been given to Miss Jewett to express these women, to paint their external life and manners, to reveal the secret emotions of the heart and yearnings of the soul. The dominant tone is sad, but the wail of despair is seldom heard; poverty does not shriek for alms, nor sickness of body or soul for pity. The "Stern Daughter of the Voice of God" compels repression, and the beneficent spirit of national humor in its most delightful mood lightens profoundest misery. A poor-house would not be half bad if one could be sure of the company of a Betsey Lane. Several writers have won success in Miss Jewett's field, but not one has a similar grasp of situation and character, her tenderness or anything like her sense of proportion. So free is she from strain and extravagance, so easy and adequate in expression, that she goes far to remove any doubt about whether great naturalness is or is not the final phase of great literary art.

The Writer (Boston, MA) 6 (December 1893). p. 227, by William H. Hills.

"A Native of Winby" includes, besides the story of the Honorable Joseph K. Laneway's return to the little red country schoolhouse where he thumbed his primer and whittled his desk cover in his youth, seven other tales, entitled "Decoration Day," "Jim's Little Woman," "The Failure of David Barry," "The Passing of Sister Barsett," "Miss Esther's Guest," "The Flight of Betsey Lane," "Between Mass and Vespers," and "A Little Captive Maid." The two last named are Irish-American stories, but in this somewhat new field Miss Jewett's success is no less great than in her sketches of New England life. "Decoration Day" is one of the best stories that she has ever told. The binding of the book is exquisite, and it is printed in the best style of the Riverside Press.

Overland Monthly. 23: 134 (February 1894), pp. 216-220.

The latest collection of Miss Jewett's stories goes farther afield than many of her books. There are two Irish stories and the scene of another is mostly set in St. Augustine, -- a sailor tale, on the same strain that Mrs. Phelps Ward touches in "A Madonna of the Tubs" and similar stories. Miss Jewett's is more true to life, it seems, than Mrs. Ward's and its pathos is certainly less evidently sought. The name story is a touching sketch of a prosperous politician and an old-time school sweetheart, who, cooped up in her little native hamlet, yet follows his career and in intellectual matters keeps herself the peer of this senator and man of the world. "Decoration Day" is a pretty story of the veteran of thirty years after the war; and "The Flight of Betsy Lane" is a narrative of a little woman who goes from a poorhouse to the Centennial. But it is unnecessary to tell the charm of each of Miss Jewett's stories, they are her stories and in her best vein, and that is enough for the discerning reader to know.

The Critic. 21 (10 March 1894), 165.

"A Native of Winby, and Other Tales," is a volume of short stories by Sarah Orne Jewett. There is a great deal of human nature in the native of Winby when he returns to his early home, after having achieved unusual success in the great world. He has pictured it to himself, and has thought that the intense quiet of the village would be grateful to him. He has become too much accustomed to adulation, however, and when no one recognizes him and he is

allowed to walk about unmolested, he feels disappointed. His evening, spent with an old friend who cooks his supper herself and gives him the things he ate when a boy, is almost his only pleasure during the visit. One of the most amusing stories in the volume is called "The Passing of Sister Barsett." Two friends are weeping together over the death of a neighbor, and one is consoling the other for having lost her occupation and her sense of being of some use in the world in the demise of this person whom she has been in the habit of nursing. She insists upon her eating a little "taste-cake," and assures her that she shall come and do for her at the last. In the midst of the conversation a messenger arrives to say that the dead patient has revived and is herself again. These sketches are clever in the extreme, most artistically put together, and filled with humor. The human nature that pervades them impresses itself upon the reader at every turn.

From Jewett's Correspondence

22 January 1896, Marie Thérèse de Solms
Blanc to Annie Adams Fields

I would like, without too much delay, to do a translation of her *A Native of Winby*, one of the most touching and profound stories she has given us

The Life of Nancy 1895

Atlantic 76:456 (October 1895), p. 559, by
Horace Scudder.

Miss Jewett never quite parts with that air of fine breeding which gives grace and beauty to her work, and makes her characters the objects of a compassion born of fuller knowledge than they possess of themselves.

New York *Times* (19 October 1895), p. 3.

Miss Jewett's charm is perennial. In one of this new batch of stories she strays as far away from home as Virginia, and shows her power to portray life in the South soon after the war, with its profound melancholy, as surely and as gently as Miss Woolson used to in her best moods. But the dry humor and dumb pathos of New-England farm and village life are what we look for in Miss Jewett's stories. Some of these New-England tales are veritable little masterworks. There are nine of them, already known to magazine readers, but all worth reading again.

"The Guests of Mrs. Timms" is the one we should pick out for a prize. It is almost as good as "The Passing of Sister Barsett." Of course, its materials are the simplest, and almost every sentence seems to strike a sympathetic chord in the mind of a New-England-bred reader. It was natural enough that Mrs. Flagg and Miss Pickett should take Mrs. Timm's invitation seriously and visit her the first pleasant day in the week after the conference meeting, and equally natural that Mrs. Timms should receive them coldly and not ask them to remove their bonnets; and the affair hardly seems important. Yet it is the foundation matter of a highly finished sketch, the reading of which reveals, as it were, long vistas of pleasant comedy on every page.

Literary World (Boston) 26 (11/16/1895), p. 388.

Some of Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's most delightful work is to be found in the stories which make up the volume entitled "The Life of Nancy." The one from which it is named -- the tale of Nancy, the fresh, dimpled country maid, on her first visit to Boston, counting all things as delight, and accepting each small kindness as evidence of a real, underlying friendliness, and the same Nancy years after lying helpless on her bed in the country neighborhood which she has done so much to cheer and elevate, and still feeding on the thought of that happy visit -- is simply and pathetically beautiful. Even better,

perhaps, is the story of "A War Debt," with its picture of the picturesque, half-ruined Virginia manor house, the shadows of the Civil War still brooding over it; and we are grateful to Miss Jewett for the hinted hope of the last sentence, added since the tale appeared in the "Century." But it is difficult to choose where all are so good. The gentle drollery of "Fame's Brief Day," the homely but no less genuine pathos of "The Only Rose," the charm of childhood in "Little French Mary," the delicious New Englandism of "The Guests of Mrs. Timms" -- each and all are admirable in their way. And it is a way that is Miss Jewett's own, the ripened fruit of a lifetime of experience and observation, and widely distinct and distinguishable from the way of other people, from the gaunt, sordid, painful, crotchety New England which we find in some other novels and stories; for Miss Jewett's keenness of vision is tempered with a tenderness no less discriminating, her records are as kind as they are accurate, and her own sweetness of good breeding finds a way into the recesses of the true courtesy, honor, and worth which often underlie the rugged exterior of her country people.

The Daily Picayune (11/22/1895), p. 9.

Whatever this author writes is sure to possess interest enough to be worth reading, and the one who reads the ten charming short stories and sketches in this book mayhap to find them interesting enough to be worth reading again. They are very clever.

Current Literature . XVIII: 6 (Dec. 1895), p. 473.

... The Life of Nancy from the press of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., is a collection of Sarah Orne Jewett's delicious sketches of New England life. The book also includes a pretty tale, half Southern in interest, the scene changing from Boston to a Virginia Plantation, where Miss Jewett seems equally at home in depicting human life and interest.

The Chautauquan 22 (12/1895), p. 380.

Several entertaining short stories by Sarah Orne Jewett, bound in a single volume is entitled "The Life of Nancy." The first shows how in a condition of physical helplessness one can be happy, and the second, "Fame's Little Day," is an amusing account of how a simple news item increased the self esteem of two plain old

people. Each of the succeeding stories is equally interesting and well written.

The Independent 47 (12/12/1895), p. 1689.

The Life of Nancy, by Sarah Orne Jewett (Boston Houghton, Mifflin & Co., \$1.25), is the title given to a collection of short stories by Miss Jewett, whose work is always excellent. There are ten sketches in the book redolent of that flavor so often found in the fiction of the Atlantic Monthly. Miss Jewett in her own way is inimitable; her style is charming; but we cannot help stopping short and staring at a construction like "All this placidity and self-assurance were," etc., on page 2 of The Life of Nancy. "This were" quite a shock and a surprise to us when we read it.

Atlantic Monthly 77 (February 1896), p. 279,

The title story of this collection of ten tales might well stand as a representative title for a very large part of Miss Jewett's work. She has done precisely this, -- got at the life of "Nancy," the homely New England maiden whose city sister is "Annie;" not at the mere external circumstance of Nancy, but at her life, what she thinks about, dreams about, knows in her soul; not, again, at some sharp moment in Nancy's experience, some acidulous drop into which her life has been distilled, but at her common experience as it flows on year after year. With each new volume Miss Jewett shows a finer power over language, while preserving the old, simple flavor of sympathy and strong sense of what is humanly probable in the characters she portrays.

Godey's Lady's Book 132 (2/1896), p. 210.

We are too prone to think of style as a mere dexterity in words. It is rather a dexterity with ideas, the throwing of countless little side-lights, the analysis of seemingly solid colors into rainbows of richness, the suggestion of constant little excursions of thought without losing sight of the main pathway. It is this industry that makes it possible for a great "stylist" to write about nothing at all in the most entertaining manner. The narrator of stirring events can spare this ability. The ultra-realist is a pauper indeed without it. It is this fact that makes so many studies of New England life as bald and stony as their own fields. Miss Jewett seems to lack the kaleidoscope of style, and her histories of the

inconsequential betray the poverty of their subject. Or if the plots have intrinsic interest, they are smothered in a mass of detail ill-chosen and lazily narrated. The present volume contains ten short stories, none of them without occasional bits of delightful observation. Cloth, \$1.25. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston and New York.)

The Nation 62 (2/27/1896), p. 181-2.

Miss Jewett is content, and most heartily contents us, with the American at home, almost restricted to the New Englander working his unproductive farm, fishing on the more responsive sea, and gossiping up and down the village streets. The incidents in the volume entitled 'The Life of Nancy' are simple almost to bareness, but they are exalted by a sympathetic revelation of human nature and by an exquisite literary representation. The fussy old maids, kind or cross, the unconsciously humorous and self-complacent sea-faring men, the taciturn husbands and loquacious, irrelevant widows, all are in a way characteristically of New England, but Miss Jewett goes deep enough to link them with a wider world and to insure them greeting as kin, irrespective of geographical limitation and local accident. When a thing is perfectly well done, it is profitless to try to explain how and why. Nature's special endowments defy analysis, and those curious about seemingly wonderful achievements are restricted to guessing what has been added by care and industry to the original, inexplicable faculty, the unknown and incalculable quantity. What Miss Jewett appears to have gained by her sincere and loving application to letters is facility of expression which shows neither haste nor waste, and a classic beauty of form and serenity of manner. She has certainly proclaimed that beauty and truth are not antagonistic, and that the real and the ideal are inextricably woven in the warp of human life.

Overland Monthly Volume: 27, Issue: 159, (Mar 1896), pp. 349-351.

No sweeter stories of New England life have ever been told than the ten short tales collected under the title of the first. They are filled with that sympathetic tenderness, and humorous pathos that all students of the Yankee seem to find in their lives.

It is useless to relate the stories of her stories here, for the mere mention of the fact that Miss Jewett has published another volume of New England sketches is enough to arrest the attention of her vast audience in this country.

But whether the reader cares for the New England scene and the New England character or not, he will be amply repaid for the time devoted to this little book. There is a tear and a smile on every page.

From Jewett's Correspondence

16 October 1895 from Rudyard Kipling

The Life of Nancy came yesterday and I read it then and there. I knew and had laughed over "Fame's Little Day": seen The War Debt in one of the magazines and read The Only Rose almost with tears but the others are new to me and altogether delightful -- specially "All My Sad Captains{}": which is a perfect title. But who am I to send you compliments? I will for a change protest. Did you in the War Debt* (serial form) put in those four lines italic at the end: because I don't remember having seen them and -- I don't like them. They explain things and I loathe an explanation. Please cut 'em out in the next edition and let people guess that he married Mrs Bellamy's grand daughter. I think the best of the lot in its manner (I wonder if you think this way) is "The Guests of Mrs Timms.{}" To my thinking Miss Jewett can be when she thinks fit, masculine enough to equip three small average male story-tellers and in "The Guests of Mrs Timms" she gives proof of it. It's a kinder dry-point, firm handed work that pleases me all over.

Then the Hilton's Holiday is another of the best in another manner. It's worthwhile spending three winters in New England to be able to draw the full flavour out of your stories: and when you come to think of it, I am about the only Englishman in the business who could turn in and review such a book from the more or less inside stand point.

11 December 1895 from Horace Howard Furness

The 'Life of Nancy'* is charming. You remember that in the enumeration which Hamlet* gives of the evils which only the dread of death makes tolerable to man there are the 'pangs of disprized love" (or so I prefer to read it, rather than 'despised love')

With these pains as a theme, I cannot imagine how the soul of goodness, which lies even in them, could be more exquisitely exemplified with its refining, elevating influences, than in Nancy, -- failing in avowed homage of one heart she gathers in the homage of us all. It is charming from the first word to the last.

If 'Fame's Little Day' were not treated with such tenderness, 'twould be cynical -- but of this there isn't a trace -- But the simplicity of these two good old people, with their yeas and honest noes, verges on the pathetic. Why, oh why, don't you tell us how they deported themselves on their return? Like Noah Claypole, I love dearly 'to go round follerin' people unbeknownst --' but, dear Miss Jewett, just at the exciting point don't slam the door in my face!

The Country of the Pointed Firs 1896

The Review of Reviews: An International Magazine 15 (December 1896), p. 743, by Hamilton W. Mabie.

It is a pleasure to add that Miss Jewett's latest story, "The Country of the Pointed Firs," shows her true and delicate art in all its quiet and enduring charm. This unaffected and genuine artist will have a place in our literature as distinct and secure as that which Jane [Austin] Austen fills in the literature of our kin beyond seas.

The Independent 48 (December 3, 1896), p. 1651.

In this sketchy account of a sojourn in a Maine village Miss Jewett is delightfully garrulous, so likewise is Mrs. Todd, the chief character of the book. It would be no easy task to point out just the charm, just the secret of interest in writing like this; but reading Miss Jewett's pages is like a visit to Dunnet, like a series of chats with Mrs. Todd, during which one feels the sea air and smells the pine breath. It is a summer outing among good, honest folk, a free and easy exploration of a neighborhood, of a region where conservatism is truly provincial and where rural honesty stoutly prevails. The gossip of the people is delicious, and the story throughout holds the reader with a gentle yet firm grip. The whole book is the outcome of a month's summering in a cottage with Mrs. James T. Field[s], on a part of the Maine coast new to them both. Readers who are interested in Miss Jewett's works, and who have followed them, will find this one of the most graphic and satisfactory of them all. It is a noble picture she has given in one of her characters of a New England woman in the proud dignity of her ancestry. She writes in perfect sympathetic touch with New England life, and not as from a superior plane observing or studying it.

The Literary World 27 (December 12, 1896), p.457.

Miss Jewett never disappoints us. We can always rely on her fine instincts, her singular keenness of observation, her artistic sense, her perfect literary workmanship. Nothing crude or careless ever comes from her pen. But excellent as all her work has been nothing has been so enticing and so satisfying as *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. We know Dunnet Landing as if we

too had spent a summer there. We are thoroughly acquainted with the small flower garden, the tiny house, the pasture and country roads, and all there is to be seen and heard and told, the neighborly ways, the harmless gossip, the simple outings, the daily life; and it is all very tranquil and helpful and calculated to strengthen our faith in our fellow beings and make more precious the amenities of daily intercourse. But chief of all, we have added Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Blackett to our list of friends. Fortunate the two women whose pen portraits are in this book! The ability to bring them before us is as rare as to write the pure, English prose for which Miss Jewett is distinguished.

Overland Monthly 29: 169 (January 1897), p. 106.

MRS. JEWETT'S last book is as good as the rest cure. After living with her among the old fashioned, easy-going fisher-folk of a little Maine village through two hundred pages, one is ready to go back to the bustle of the city thankful for even so short a vacation. There is no attempt at a story in the work. The tale runs along in a rambling sort of a way, halting from time to time to make the acquaintance of a new friend or digressing to take a short excursion among the sunny islands that line the coast. There are bits of gossip, amusing and pathetic; life histories told in a sentence, glimpses of lovemaking and funerals, and peeps in upon family skeletons. The book is enjoyable from cover to cover, and will find a place for itself in many hearts.

Atlantic Monthly 79 (February 1897), p. 272-73.

It has been a pleasure, repeated at intervals the past few years, to have in convenient form collections of Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's stories, but the pleasure is heightened at this time in the appearance of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (Houghton) by the light thread of identity of place and character on which the stories are strung. Miss Jewett has, in effect, made a seacoast of her own, a mirage lifted just above the horizon of actual land, and peopled it with figures that are images of reality, also. She herself moves among them, and her warm sympathy is the breath of life which animates them. Her art has devised no more enchanted country, or given a more human substance to the creatures of her imagination. The book has the freshness of *Deephaven* with the mellowness of matured power.

The Bookman 5 (March 1897), p. 80-81.

Readers who know the work of Sarah Orne Jewett open a new book written by her with that same sense of quiet delight and gratification which possesses the connoisseur who examines a delicate bit of painting wherein the subdued, exquisitely shaded tints blend into an effect – true not only to that in nature which all may see, but also to that something else which only an artist can divine and reveal.

Nor will such readers be disappointed in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. As in all of Miss Jewett's writing, the touches are delicate rather than striking, and the tone is subdued and quiet, admitting of no white lights or black shadows. But the work is very fine and very true. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is a story of wholesome, simple, rural life, with the breath of the sea for tonic and the sunshine of summer for warmth. The picturesque delineation of character, the writer's close contact with nature, and her appreciative insight, all contribute a reality and charm to the book which are very convincing. Miss Jewett, one is persuaded, spent a summer at Dunnet Landing, lodging with Mrs. Todd. Any one might recognise the house, with its herb garden and its large-bodied, large-minded mistress. She is full of quaint wisdom, and knows something of human nature. "There's more women likes to be loved than there is of those that loves," she says, and her own life's story taught her the truth. Of an entertaining visitor she remarks, "She may not be considerate, but she's dreadful good company;" and who does not recognise the truth and beauty of this bit of imagery?

"There's sometimes a good hearty tree growin' right out of the bare rock, out o' some crack that just holds the roots; . . . you lay your ear down to the ground, an' you'll hear a little stream runnin'. Every such tree has got its own livin' spring; there's folks made to match 'em."

Truly "Mrs. Todd's wisdom was an intimation of truth itself. She might belong to any age, like an idyl of Theocritus."

Mrs. Todd's mother, who lives out on Green Island, moves in a luminous atmosphere of lovingkindness, into which it is a privilege to enter. The day's visit with her on Green Island is a treat that readers will enjoy. Captain Littlepage is very entertaining, and the vague mystery which clings about his personality is not cleared away at the end of the book, which is a great merit. Poor Joanna, who retired to her desert island because of an unhappy love affair, occupies more space than we should be willing to yield her, were it not that Mrs. Todd, with the help of her entertaining visitor, tells the story. They sketch in side characters with a very happy

touch, especially that of the minister who paid a duty visit to poor Joanna.

"Well, there's a difference in gifts. Mr. Dimmick was not without light."

" ' 'Twas the light of the moon, then,' snapped Mrs. Fosdick.

"He seemed to know no remedies, but he had a great use of words."

When Mrs. Todd's summer lodger sails away from Dunnet Landing the little volume comes to its quiet ending, leaving the impression that, suggestive and delightful as such books are, they cannot, save in rare instances, leave any deep impression. Miss Jewett possesses the artistic power, the knowledge, and the self-control to venture more. These delicate sketches of life hold the same place in literature as do their counterparts in painting, but no artist can rest an enduring popularity on such trifles light as air.

The Critic 27:782 (February 13, 1897), p. 110.

"The Country of the Pointed Firs" illustrates anew the fact that a work of art can be produced from very tenuous material. The subject-matter of Miss Jewett's latest volume may be said to be practically non-existent. Certainly it is a negligible quantity when compared to the skill which is exercised upon it. To make so good a book upon so slight a theme is in reality to create it, and the creation is a comely thing. The little volume will be found dignified, gracious and restful. If it is not able bodied, it is at least strong in spirit. The author tells the story of a seaside summer on the coast of Maine. She lives with a fine old countrywoman, who is a gatherer and dispenser of herbs; she talks to an old sea-captain of infirm but interesting mind; she sails out to the island where her landlady's mother lives, accompanies her good friends to a family reunion, listens to another old captain as he talks of his dead wife, and leaves the quiet village with regret when autumn comes. These are the homely events of the book. The thread upon which they are strung is the writer's fine and constant appreciation of whatever is individual and excellent in nature and humanity as it lies about her. We do not see that Dunnet [Dennett] Landing is absorbing, but that Miss Jewett is absorbed. Her interest is unflinching, and she invests each incident for the reader with the same gentle glamour which it obviously has for herself.

It is impossible not to compare "The Country of the Pointed Firs" with "Deephaven," that other record of a seaside summer with which the author began her career as a maker of books. In the earlier volume, the chronicler is a little more eager, more positive, more convinced of the

romance of her seaport, and more strenuous in setting it forth. She showed the same appreciative spirit, but demanded more substance upon which to exercise it. The years which have ripened her talent and perfected her workmanship have made her less and less exacting as to material, and in contrast to the feverish search after some new thing which current literature in general reveals, such repose and content are wonderfully refreshing. If Miss Jewett has not a bunch of orchids to offer, she will at least present to us some blades of grass with an inimitable grace. She may, like Virgil's shepherd, sing a slender song, but her vocalization is beyond reproach and almost beyond praise.

The Academy 51 (March 13, 1897), p. 301.

A good book was never made of slighter material than that which Miss Jewett has so deftly manipulated in this pretty story of a New England fishing village. From beginning to end there is nothing in the nature of what we call incident, nor is there a single love passage -- indeed, there is hardly a character under sixty years of age, -- yet to readers at all fond of quiet humour and gentle, simple folk, and unaffected, unassuming literary grace, this book will be real enjoyment. The intimacy of the home among the lowly is a sweeter thing in Scotland and New England than it is with us. The English are neither as simple nor so contented. Contentment is, indeed, the great secret. Similarly, Scottish and New England writers are more in love with this beautiful hearth-life than are English writers: they see it with clearer vision and describe it with more tenderness. Miss Jewett's book is a little epic of contentment; and it is here that she differs most markedly from Miss Wilkins, whose eyes are more ready to see what is melancholy. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is rich in human kindness; and Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Blackett are notable additions to that gallery of good women which most readers like to wander in now and again.

The Book Buyer 15 (October 1897), p.249-50, by Alice Brown.

The Country of the Pointed Firs is the flower of a sweet, sane knowledge of life, and an art so elusive that it smiles up at you while you pull aside the petals, vainly probing its heart. The title is exacting, prophetic; a little bit of genius of which the book has to be worthy or come very "tardy off." And the book is worthy. Here is the

idyllic atmosphere of country life, unbroken by one jarring note; even the attendant sadness and pathos of being are resolved into that larger harmony destined to elude our fustian words. It is a book made to defy the praise ordinarily given to details; it must be regarded *au large*. For it takes hold of the very centre of things. The pointed firs have their roots in the ground of national being; they are index fingers to the stars. A new region unrolls before you like a living map, whereof The Bowden Reunion and Captain Littlepage are twin mountain heights, warm in sunshine and swept by favoring airs. The Reunion indeed bears a larger significance than its name. It stirs in us the dormant clan-spirit; we understand ancestor-worship, the continuity of being. All the delicate humor, the broidery of the day, "like fringe upon a petticoat" — the pictorial pies, the alien guest with her pseudo-likeness to "Cousin Pa'lina Bowden about the forehead," the woman who "wouldn't get back in a day if she was as far out o' town as she was out o' tune" — this thrills you with a fine and delicate pleasure; but meanwhile your mind marches grandly with the Bowdens, you throb like them with pride of race, you acquiesce willingly in the sweet, loyal usages of domesticity. The conception has its tap-root in the solid earth; but Captain Littlepage's story of the unknown country "up north beyond the ice" takes hold on things remote: it breathes the awful chill and mysticism of the Ancient Mariner. Here are the powers of the air portrayed with Miltonic grandeur. Less tangible even than the denizens of the Beleaguered City, they throng and press upon the mind, making void all proven experience. It is as strange and true a page out of the unseen possibilities of being as Kipling's story of the dead sea-snake. It is not, moreover, the only hint of the inter-relations of known and unknown. Even the herbs in Mrs. Todd's garden could not all be classified. There was one that sent "out a penetrating odor late in the evening, after the dew had fallen, and the moon was high, and the cool air came up from the sea." You would not know that herb for a world of science. It is mystical as moly, and so it shall remain.

Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Blackett are as real as the earth. For pure fascination, Mrs. Todd can never expect to vie with her mother; she did "lurch about steppin' into a bo't"; it was not she who put forth the grave axiom that it was scarcely "advisable to maintain cats just on account of their havin' bob tails." But she is the colossal figure of a simple woman dowered with sorrow and loss, who set her feet firmly on the ground — To crush the snake and spare the worm, who made personal grief no reason for bickering with the universe, whose moral life went sanely with the stars, and whose nostrils were delighted with sweet savors from the earth

which had denied her. Too often we are taught that great grief and finer feeling are the concomitants of revolt; but it is the larger mind which links them to sweetness, serenity, and obedience. Here is quiet revelation of human tragedy, but none of that fierce rebellion through which individual suffering eats its own heart and the heart of the onlooking chorus. Even the self-exiled Joanna, pursued by the phantom of the unpardonable sin, cannot afflict us irremediably; for still was she surrounded, as with a sea, by faulty human love, and still, as we read, the tranquil company of the firs bids us be patient till her affliction shall be overpast.

To pluck the flowers of humor, quaint philosophy, and legend here is as hopeless as to make a Poyser anthology. You are simply bewildered by the richness and life-giving balm of this herby garden. It is the acme of Miss Jewett's fine achievement, blending the humanity of the "Native of Winby" and the fragrance of the "White Heron." No such beautiful and perfect work has been done for many years; perhaps no such beautiful work has ever been done in America.

The Spectator 79 (October 9, 1897) p. 467.

The New England fishing villages are a favourite "hunting ground" for tale-writers in America. Some of the characteristics of the old stock, before it became so largely modified by other influences, are to be seen there, and supply a subject which lends itself readily to an attractive treatment. There is a decay about these regions which is pathetic rather than squalid. The types are of an older world. Miss Jewett's [Jewett's] book is as delightful to read as any that we have seen -- and we have seen several -- dealing with this topic. Mrs. Todd, the gatherer and prescriber of simples; her delightful old mother, for a mother she has, though herself not far from seventy; 'Lijah Tilley [Tellus], with his silent sorrow for his wife, whom, though she had been dead eight years, he "misses just the same every day," are given with a graphic touch that makes them live. There is not a jarring word in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*.

The Athenæum 3619 (March 6, 1897) p. 311.

This is a very favourable specimen of a class of work in which American ladies excel. It is a collection of studies, more or less consecutive, of life in an out-of-the-way fishing village -- the experience of a long summer holiday. An English reader must fail to catch the exact flavour of the place described, somewhere on the coast of Maine; but a well-drawn picture of

human beings is attractive in any circumstances, and in Miss Jewett's pleasant passages one finds a bit of life consistent, original, and vivid in presentment. It requires some effort to realize the amount of artistic skill which goes to the composition of such a piece of work -- one that in its method, though not in its detail, recalls Mrs. Gaskell. The little book is marked by good taste throughout, it is at times gently pathetic, at others delicately humorous, and it is always free from exaggeration. For the English market it would have been better to alter some of the spelling. Besides the usual words -- "neighbor," "traveler," "gayety" -- there are some which are still more objectionable to English eyes, such as "woolen," &c. Less objectionable -- for one likes the phrase -- but hardly correct, is the spelling "readied up."

The Elementary School Journal 27 (September-June 1927), p. 144.

From Olga Achtenhagen, "Health Hazards for Teachers."

There is such a thing as being too conscientious, of being a slave to deadening routine, which is in itself a health hazard, as well as a hazard to one's love of life. In one of those delightful stories which Sarah Orne Jewett has given us, she has a Mrs. Todd of New England say, "Some folks washes Monday and irons Tuesday the whole year 'round, even if the circus is going by!" A bit of variety, of doing things on the spur of the moment, will help ever so much to establish our relations with the pupils and, consequently, our general well-being and state of mind. I remember a class in literature in which we had been reading nature poetry one May day, just before the noon hour. Within five minutes after we had assembled, we sent a message to the principal asking for permission to go to the woods and read our poetry. In our message we quoted: "And come I may, but go I must, and if men ask you why, you may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the white road and the sky." In a short time, we were on our way, with plans for a picnic dinner. There was not time to go far, but we walked and talked and enjoyed the fresh air and sunshine, and the next day we decided that "we had grown taller from walking with the trees."

From Jewett's Correspondence and an Annie Fields diary

From a conversation at Rye, UK, with Henry James, reported by Annie Adams Fields in her diary of 1898.

After we returned to the parlor Mr. James took occasion to tell Sarah how deeply and sincerely he appreciates her work; how he re-reads it with increasing admiration. "It is foolish to ask, I know," he said, "but were you in just such a place as you describe in the 'Pointed Firs'? --" "No," she said, "not precisely; the book was chiefly written before I visited the locality itself --" "And such an island?" he continued. "Not exactly," she said again. + "Ah! I thought so," he said musingly; "and the language -- It is so absolutely true -- not a word overdone -- such elegance and exactness." "And Mrs. Dennet [*meaning* Todd] -- how admirable she is," he said again, not waiting for a reply. I need not say they were very much at home together after this.

16 August 1896 to Olivia Howard Dunbar Torrence

Might not I suggest in answer to the question of your kind and delightful letter that you seem to have already found Dunnet Landing! At least if that suggestion does not satisfy you I fear that I have no other answer to give -- I have often sailed by your Ocean Point, you see, from Mouse Island up the bay, where I love dearly to go in July when one can have the little green field and shady fir woods pretty nearly to oneself. I know the sea-faring town of St George too, farther east, with its many villages, but I did not go there to know it well until The Pointed Firs was well under weigh as a book of stories. You can hardly persuade me now that somewhere between Booth bay and Penobscot bay there is not a place so like Dunnet Landing that this writer would not feel at once at home there -- you have already guessed as much; but one makes a map in ones head, sometimes, with perfect freedom, not like the real one.

October 1896 to Sarah Wyman Whitman

I have not seen my Pointed Firs book* yet but hear about its cover from others.

I have put Alice Howe's name in it because she liked the sketches and I wished to make her a pleasure if I could, but this great secret she does not know yet until she gets the book in hand & finds it for herself one day next week.

Late 1896 from Margaret Thomson Janvier

But for me, all that is over I am "so fast in prison that I cannot get forth," & my prison is a bed. So now you can imagine my joy in journeying with you through your Country of the Pointed Firs -- First by means of the Atlantic Monthly & again more lately through the book, ... Just think of the flood of pessimism ... & how few are trying to

stem it. A girl whom I love, & who is beginning to write well, resented, at first, my strictness on her pessimism -- & the other day came a letter full of capitulation -- she had grown weary in a search for much needed cheerful reading. And to her I have sent a copy of The Country of the Pointed Firs.

11 January 1897 to Kate Knowlton Foote

Thank you for all the kind words you say about the Pointed Firs which seems to me like a later Deephaven in a sort of way though I did not think about that when I was writing --

January 1897 from Rudyard Kipling

It's immense -- it is the very life. It's out and away the loveliest thing of yours I've ever read. It -- made me homesick! ... So many of the people of lesser sympathy have missed the lovely New England landscape; and the genuine breadth of heart and fun that underlies New England nature...the reallest New England book ever given us.... Joanna alone is an idyl worth fifty average pretentious books; and Mis' Blackett is worth another fifty. It's all a most perfect piece of art, truth, beauty and tenderness; and I'm proud as a peacock to think I've met and known you....I don't believe even you know how good that book is.

9 June 1896 to Harriet Prescott Spofford

I were delighted with the coming of your book of exquisite poetry on her [Annie Fields's] birthday -- I never had seen the poem of the old woman singing, and it went to my heart -- Wasn't it strange that each of us corrected, you and I should have had the pathos of that so near to our hearts at the same time. I tried to make people feel it in my Pointed Firs page where old Mrs. Blackett sang -- but I should like to borrow your words and be sure that they were read!

29 August 1897 from William James

Having just read your Country of the pointed firs, I can't hold in from telling you what exquisite pleasure it has given me. It has that incommunicable cleanness of the salt air when one first leaves town. The proper reaction upon it is the uncontrollable expression of pleasure in ones face and not a pretense of analytic words from ones pen -- and the expression is in my face whenever I think of it....My wife is just the same.

4 November 1898 to Ernest Dressel North

I am at a little loss to know whether you mean my favorite book in general or my favorite book in particular: that is to say, my favorite among the books that I have written. I should say in answer to this last (at least at this moment!) that the la it would be The Country of the Pointed Firs.

The Queen's Twin 1899

Notice of coming publication. *Atlantic* 84 (July 1899) p. 31.

This volume will contain the following stories: The Queen's Twin; Where's Nora; Bold Words at the Bridge; Martha's Lady; The Coon Dog; On New Year's Day.

When "The Queen's Twin" appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, it was greeted with the heartiest welcome as one of the best stories of the year, and one of Miss Jewett's most delightful tales. Of its kind it is simply perfect, and its kind is of the most interesting and most wholesome elements in modern literature. If the Queen were to read the story, she would love her loyal, simple-hearted twin, and be glad that so true and sympathetic artist had portrayed her. The story properly holds the place of honor in Miss Jewett's new volume, but it is only the first of a group of stories of which all bear the impress of fine observation, notable skill in description, generous humor, and a peculiarly delicate but firm literary touch.

Publisher's Weekly 1444 published the same ad (September 30, 1899) p. 524.

Except that the list of expected stories was different.

This volume will contain the following stories: The Queen's Twin; Where's Nora; Bold Words at the Bridge; Martha's Lady; The Coon Dog; Aunt Cynthia Dallet; The Gray Mill[s] of Farley; The Night before Thanksgiving.

Current Opinion 26:6 published a "review," essentially quoting these ads (December 1899) p. 507.

... The Queen's Twin, Where's Nora, Bold Words at the Bridge, Martha's Lady; The Coon Dog, Aunt Cynthia Dallet, The Gray Mill[s] of Farley, The Night before Thanksgiving..

Omaha *Bee* (December 8, 1899)

One of Matthew Arnold's most beautiful poems begins

Saint Brandan sails the Northern Main,
The brotherhood of saints are glad.

A like gladness comes to a large circle of readers when Miss Jewett brings out a new book. And in all her charming books there is no story more characteristic than "The Queen's Twin," which opens her new volume and gives it its name. This and "A Dunnet Shepherdess," which follows, reintroduces the scenes and characters which figured in Jewett's exquisite

story, "The Country of the Pointed Firs." The other stories can hardly have higher praise than to say they are worthy to be associated with "The Queen's Twin." and "A Dunnet Shepherdess."

The above review appears in the Harvard University - Houghton Library collection of clippings on "The Queen's Twin": Sarah Orne Jewett Compositions and Other Papers, Series III, MS Am 1743.26 (17).

The Outlook 63 (December 16, 1899), p. 934.

Miss Jewett's art shows no sign of flagging interest, although many volumes stand to her credit on the bookshelves. She still holds undisputed possession of her own field; an accomplished artist, who never attempts that which she cannot do, and holds her work to the highest standards with unflagging earnestness and freshness.

The Literary World 31 (January 20, 1900), p. 29.

Miss Jewett's stories are always most welcome in book form; and, unlike those of some authors, they are just as good on the second reading. She develops an unlooked-for gift in the Irish "Where's Nora" and "Bold words at the Bridge," while even more unexpected is "The Coon Dog"—all of which are bright and fresh; but the finest representation of this favorite author is in such an exquisite bit out of life as "Aunt Cynthia [Dalleth] Dallett," and that fine idyl or pastoral, "A Dunnet Shepherdess." These would be known as Miss Jewett's without her name.

The Critic 36 (February 1900), p. 170.

One can often find good wafers when wholesome bread is unobtainable. Novels nutritious to the soul of man may be rare, but short stories which are "food and drink and pretty good clothes" are more plentiful than ever. In spite of its forbidding title, "Holly and Pizen" by Ruth McEnery Stuart, is one of these, and "The Queen's Twin," by Miss Jewett, is another. To enlarge upon the qualities of these writers at this late date is superfluous. It is enough to say their qualities are all here and as good as ever -- perhaps better, for Mrs. Stuart never wrote a better story than "A Note of Scarlet," and even Miss Jewett's self has never done a more charming, human thing than "The Queen's Twin."

The Independent 52 (Feb 1, 1900), p. 324.

Miss Jewett is one of the few writers who spring no disappointments for their readers. All that she writes is good. The eight short stories here bound together are delightfully literary quality and at the same time quaintly fascinating as bits of life-like fiction. No reader will fail to catch from them something worth keeping.

The Spectator (February 24, 1900), p. 80-81.

Miss Jewett, like Miss Wilkins, is an admirable delineator of the amenities of rural life in the States, and her graceful talent has never been more happily displayed than in the quaintly named volume before us, *The Queen's Twin, and other Stories*. Life in America, according to Mr. Dooley, is not suited to a tired man; in his picturesque phrase the person in need of rest is like a man trying to read *The Lives of the Saints* at a Clan-na-Gael meeting. But if American city life involves an undue strain on the nerves, there are rural retreats in New England and elsewhere, where the current of existence flows on as placidly and tranquilly as anywhere in the old country. It is the peculiar merit of Miss Jewett that she is able to seize and transfer to her pages the grace and sentiment and courtesies of this homely, leisurely life. The scene of the best stories in the book is laid on the coast of Maine among the fisher-folk and farmers, where the narrator is supposed to be spending her summer holidays, and in atmosphere and characterisation they bear the unmistakable impress of veracious as well as sympathetic observation. We have seldom read anything prettier in its way than the unexpected romance of the elderly fisherman and the middle-aged shepherdess -- a really heroic figure of filial devotion -- whose mutual attachment is sustained by a single meeting in the year. Mr. Blackett, the taciturn fisherman, is also a most engaging person, one of his traits being that "he had a peculiar way of giving silent assent when one spoke, but answering your unspoken thoughts as if they reached him better than words." The tale which gives its name to the volume is also charming; it was not easy to avoid the pitfalls of snobbery on the one hand and absurdity on the other, but Miss Jewett has succeeded perfectly, and the result is altogether touching. We cannot say that the Irish-American stories are particularly successful; for one thing Miss Jewett's dialect abounds in outrageous solecisms. No Irish woman ever said "coom" for "come," or "shild" for "child."

The Saturday Review (March 3, 1900), p. 280, advertisement.

NEW VOLUME BY SARAH ORNE JEWETT
Just published, *The Queen's Twin, and Other Stories* by Sarah Orne Jewett

Spectator, -- "We have seldom read anything prettier in its way than the unexpected romance of the elderly fisherman and the middle-aged shepherdess. The tale which gives its name to the volume is also charming."

Nation 70 (March 29, 1900), p. 245.

Of the story-tellers who restrict themselves chiefly to one locality, none escapes more completely than Miss Jewett from the flat, stale, and unprofitable. Yet her range is narrow -- a bit of New England Coast or upland, a few plain women, generally old, and some garrulous seafaring men. The author appears as a perpetual summer-boarder, constant to farm and fishing-boat, loving the land and sea and people with a love that extracts beauty from barrenness, and divines a heroic soul beneath the most unpromising exterior. Without falsifying either inanimate [inanimate] or human nature, she transmutes their ruggedness into pure gold and arranges a harmony without one jarring note. In her latest volume, "The Queen's Twin," "A Dunnet [Dunnett] Shepherdess" and "Aunt Cynthia Dallett" illustrate that perfect rendering of her subject which she has come to through love and patience.

The Athenaeum #3783 (April 28, 1900), p. 527.

Miss Jewett (like Miss Wilkins) is of the New England school, but she is a little less severe. She seems to take less delight in describing the drear austerities of religious life. Miss Wilkins often dwells upon the past, Miss Jewett is content with the present. Miss Jewett's stories, therefore, seem to have something more human about them, though they are, perhaps not so ingeniously constructed as Miss Wilkins's stories. 'The Queen's Twin' is a description of a visit to an old woman in Maine who was born at the same time as Her Majesty, who married a man named Albert, and who called her children by the same names as those of our own royal family. She had once been in London and had seen the Queen, and with this recollection and these facts her old age was comforted. This pretty fancy as Miss Jewett works it out, makes a touching little study. One or two of the other stories in the volume are a little difficult to read on account of the Irish-American dialect, but there is a pleasant genial spirit about them all.

Notes

Smith, Elder & Co.: Jewett's British publisher.

Miss Wilkins: This review begins with a discussion of Mary E. Wilkins (later Freeman's) *The Love of Parson Lord, and Other Stories*.

From *Jewett's The Night Before Thanksgiving, A White Heron and Selected Stories*, Sarah Orne Jewett. With introductory notes, and questions and suggestions by Katherine H. Shute, Head of the Department of English in the Boston Normal School. Houghton Mifflin Company [c1911], 1905, p. 45

"The Night before Thanksgiving" occurs in Miss Jewett's last volume of short stories, *The Queen's Twin, and Other Stories*. You would enjoy many of the stories in this volume, especially "The Queen's Twin" and "The Coon Dog." There is a very sweet and humorous little Irish story in the collection, called "Bold Words at the Bridge"; and the story called "Aunt Cynthia Dallett" is an incidental account of a New England woman's perverted notion of hospitality, which is deliciously humorous and worth reading and discussing even without the rest of the story.

It is very interesting to find how much Miss Jewett has made us see in this little Thanksgiving story without writing long descriptions....

A good short-story writer does not talk a great deal about the people in the story, but makes us acquainted with them by telling us what they do and say....

British Notices of the February 1899 publication of the title story in *Cornhill Magazine* (London, n.s. 6:145-161).

These are collected in the Harvard University, Houghton Library folder of clippings on "The Queen's Twin": Sarah Orne Jewett Compositions and Other Papers, Series III, MS Am 1743.26 (17). Citations in this collection are not complete.

The Christian World, "From the February Magazines."

'The Queen's Twin,' by Sarah Orne Jewett, is a pretty story in *The Cornhill Magazine*, relating the experiences of an old lady who, having been born at the same time as Her Majesty, devoted her life to pointing out the similarities between the Royal existence and her own. 'And,' she once remarked, 'I married a man by the name of

Albert, just [the same] as she did, and all by chance, for I didn't get the news that she had an Albert too till a fortnight afterward ... My first baby was a girl, and I called her Victoria after my mate; but the next one was a boy, and my husband wanted the right to name him, and took his own name and his brother Edward's, and pretty soon I saw in the paper that the little Prince o' Wales had been christened just the same. [...] I didn't want to break the chain, so I had an Alfred, and my darling Alice that I lost long before she lost hers, and there I stopped. If I'd only had a dear daughter to stay at home with me, same 's her youngest one, I should have been so thankful! But if only one of us could have a little Beatrice, I'm glad 't was the Queen; we've both seen trouble, but she's had the most care.'

Crieff Journal (February 4)

Cornhill opens with a beautifully-pathetic story by Miss S. O. Jewett, about an old lady, a native of the State of Maine, who fancied herself in some queer way to be "The Queen's Twin," from having been born on the same day as Her Majesty. She believed that there was some occult spiritual influence linking their two lives together. This belief filled her thoughts, sleeping and waking, and helped her to sustain her solitary existence in a quiet patient dignity of the queenly sort.

The Guardian (February 8)

A romance of still life is finely imaged by Miss Sarah Orne Jewett in "The Queen's Twin."

Newcastle Leader (February 9)

It opens with a pretty story of Maine by Sarah Orne Jewett. "The Queen's Twin" is an old world lady, who was born on the same day as the Queen, married an Albert, had several children which were christened after the Queen's children, and took a pride in dwelling on the life of the Queen.

From Jewett's Correspondence

February 1899 from Alice Greenwood Howe

I have wanted to say, face to face, what I feel about "The Queen's Twin" my dearie,... In the first place, I consider the opening paragraph just perfect, in style, in English, & a certain grasp of the whole condition. Then as to Mrs Todd, I was so glad to see her again that I fell upon her

sustaining heart -- For calm strength she is the Pyramids, & for wisdom, far & away greater than Marcus Aurelius ... -- And the color & perfume of New England, all the same that our book [*The Country of the Pointed Firs*] holds -- And the woman of imagination shining like a lovely little flame in that lonely place -- Also dear, it is charming, & charming, & charming!

16 February 1899 from Emma Forbes Cary

The Queen's Twin is exquisite. Only you since Hawthorne have shown that sense of the unseen which belongs to us New Englanders. And let me thank you, dear friend, for your valiant stand made for the Irish Catholics, as you made it for your own people and my own people. It is a great work well done.

Sunday Morning, February 1899 to Mary Rice Jewett

It was one of those times but who should appear but dear Mrs. Agassiz who had come all the way in a-purpose to talk about the Queen's Twin, and we had to leave everything and sit together and hold hands, and she said she had smiled and laughed, and then she had to cry. I cant tell you all she said -- but it was such a pleasure to give her any pleasure -- as you know.

2 August 1899 to Mary Rice Jewett

I feel very low about my new book of stories [--] I was over them all morning especially as I took up the Life of Nancy book today & felt how much better those stories were than these, but the Queen's Twin & Where's Nora, just swing the rest, & Martha's Lady which I always liked myself, whatever others may have thought!

31 December 1899 from Louise Imogen Guiney

No one thing helped more to make my Christmas merry; and though the golden Reading-hours never seem to come any more, I have already read *The Queen's Twin* (at meals!) and "'Where's Nora?' crossing the Garden to the Library, and weeping frost-tears on the page, in the cold. But pretty soon I hope to give the dear flower-hearted book a better time of it.

End of 1899 from an unknown correspondent
Many warm thanks -- we have enjoyed them -- I am so sorry the sweet stories are coming to an end -- I wonder if the Queen has had sometime the Queen's Twin* sent her. I should like her to have it if she hasn't -- How often one has felt that -- that

"She may feel my love staying her heart sometimes & not know just where it comes from

--" I think one does have that strong tender feeling sometimes when some one thinks kind thoughts & doesn't have time to tell me perhaps. I hope you do, for they are often here for you.

5 January 1900 from Charles Dudley Warner

Your Twin did come to me, and we are both very thankful for it, since we not only love you very much -- holidays and other times -- but we think you the best of all New England writers of fiction living now, and we put you beside the best that are gone.

9 January 1900 from Katharine Prescott Wormeley

I am so grateful to you for sending me that dear book. I never can believe that your tales are tales; and I dont think I ever could in my inner consciousness be persuaded that they are. Some, of course, there are that I see you have made -- but others -- like the "Queen's Twin" and the "Pointed Firs" and "Deephaven" I know are all true stories of true people that you are telling. I am with them -- not with you.

It is a great gift; it must make you happy -- your face shows it; and it certainly makes others so.

20 January 1900 to Dorothy Ward

... I like to take comfort from this, and other signs, and remember how much closer Old England and New England have come together in the last two years. That is good, at any rate. I had a most delightful proof of it in the way that many quite unexpected persons felt about a sketch I wrote (and meant to send to you!) called "The Queen's Twin." It was most touching to see how everybody approves it, and told little tales to prove that it might be true -- and was at any rate right in its sentiment!

6 February 1900 from Dorothy Ward

I thought "The Queen's Twin" full of enchanting work, and I was particularly struck with the vividness & force of the Irish stories. They contrast excellently with the pure New England tales, -- and I put down the book full of envy and admiration! How are you able to get as near the fact as that? -- I can't! --

February 1900 from Natalie Lord Rice Clark

But since "The Queen's Twin" came out, I have been deciding that I must take a moment of your time to thank you, very sincerely & earnestly, for the realities in that book.

I think that wholly apart from the literary quality of the work, and inherently there, there is something that appeals to women -- perhaps especially to younger women -- in a way that calls out their belief in the goodness of life -- in the possibilities of life that may grow richer, even if the outward & material things grow poorer -- What I want to thank you for, & yet express so poorly, is that there is no poverty of soul in any outward poverty of which you write, -- but that such women as yours take their place as real souls in the world, and are of an infinite encouragement to other women, either in just such or wholly different surroundings -- It is this New England faith that I deeply thank you for -- I could say a good deal more, but after all this is the real kernel that may be daily renewing its strength or beauty of soul, where its bodily weakness is daily more apparent. And if younger women can just begin to believe this fact, & live it out, there is never a chance of their having that sort of unlovely age that not a few writers have been content to show in its unloveliness, without any bit of cheer or encouragement in their work. But your women -- and men too -- have set astir in the world an actual force of encouragement -- of patience & cheer & hope. --

The Tory Lover 1901

Marketing Materials

A Houghton, Mifflin Brochure on the book publication of *The Tory Lover* by Sarah Orne Jewett

"Something more than merely a good historical novel." - *Boston Herald*.

THE TORY LOVER

By Sarah Orne Jewett

Price, \$1.50

For sale at all bookstores.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

Boston and New York

NOTICES FROM NEW ENGLAND

It is one of the most pleasing, dignified, and artistic historical novels of the last five years. Indeed, one would be at a loss to point to a modern historical romance that equals it in all those qualities and features that make a book worth reading twice. - *Boston Herald*.

It is a book which will bring especial delight to New Englanders, but its characters and the treatment of them are great and broad enough to win admiration anywhere. It will long outlive the year of its appearance. - *Editorial in Boston Journal*.

It is the emphatic verdict of all who have learned to admire the subtle imaginative power, the refined humor and exquisite literary form of the writings of Sarah Orne Jewett, that she has put her best work thus far into *The Tory Lover*. The story as a story moves with stately grace; the historical setting is perfect. - *The Beacon, Boston*.

The story is told with great spirit, and the atmosphere of the period is well preserved. - *Cambridge (Mass.) Tribune*.

The reader is bound to recognize in *The Tory Lover* a faithfulness of incident, locality, and character which makes it a novel of unusual merit, easily ranking among the very best productions of its class. - *Portsmouth (N. H.) Journal*.

NOTICES FROM NEW YORK

Of all the historical gallery to which our novelist friends have introduced us of late, *Mary Hamilton* is easily the most winsome. - *Oct. Book Buyer*.

Miss Jewett carries all the finesse which characterizes her short stories into her new novel It is a thoroughly wholesome and charming book. - *N. Y. Evening Post*.

The love story is fine, delicate, charming in every line, while the literary quality of the work is of the best sort. The Tory Lover ranks with the best fiction of the year. - *Brooklyn Eagle*.

The pictures of the life in rural Maine have a stamp that is all their own, and gives them charm and freshness, after all the work that has been done in this field by innumerable romancers of Revolutionary days. - *N. Y. Mail and Express*.

Has already attracted sufficient attention to make its popular success a foregone conclusion. - *N. Y. Commercial Advertiser*.

It tells an admirable story of courage and devotion to country, and is at once strong, brilliant, spirited, graceful, and true. - *N. Y. Press*.

NOTICES FROM THE WEST

That exquisite spirit pervades it, - a reflection of Miss Jewett's own loveliness of feeling, - a spirited beauty with which she has unconsciously invested her heroine, Mary Hamilton. Miss Jewett's painting of Berwick (her home in Maine) has the touch of unerring sincerity. - *Chicago Inter-Ocean*.

The difference between the average historical novel and this work of Miss Jewett's is the difference between the vital and the spectacular elements in literature and life. Where others have laid hold of the surface facts merely, she has grasped the inner meaning. - *St. Paul Globe*.

Her fine literary style assures the book a welcome among all readers fond of good literature. - *San Francisco Chronicle*.

A story of surpassing interest, skillfully blending history and fiction and presenting a most artistic series of famous pictures. - *San Francisco Bulletin*.

A good story . . . The characters of Mary Hamilton and Roger Wallingford are eminently sympathetic and awaken a genuine admiration. - *New Orleans Picayune*.

A beautifully finished piece of literary work. - *Indianapolis Journal*.

PAUL JONES IN THE TORY LOVER

Her picture of him is so vital and convincing that it supersedes any other. One seems to see the real man. - *Octave Thanet in Oct. Book Buyer*.

Miss Jewett's Paul Jones is more human, more convincing, less striking, and nearer to

completeness than that of Mr. Churchill. - *Boston Herald*.

Miss Jewett has studied John Paul Jones carefully, with perhaps even more than due charity for his vanity. - *New York Times*.

The little man with the soul of a hero is drawn here as he lived, and it is not too much to say that he impresses one more vividly than in Winston Churchill's pages. - *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Perhaps the thing the reader will be most thankful for is the splendid picture of John Paul Jones, which Miss Jewett has given us. Within the past few years a dozen "lives" of this masterly "sea-wolf" have appeared. None of them has set forth the character of Jones with such life-like reality, with such flesh and blood "humanness" as does this story. - *St. Paul Globe*.

She adds to the charm of her locality the best picture of Paul Jones that has appeared in fiction. - *Holyoke (Mass.) Transcript*.

THE ONLY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

The Tory Lover - a pretty story, well written and properly heralded, but which the present writer declines to review . . . Sarah Orne Jewett is well and pleasantly known to novel readers. . . . In writing The Tory Lover she has improved on some of its popular predecessors. And there is nothing more to be said. - *Flora Mai Holly in Oct. Bookman*.

The sad blow has fallen. Another idol has crumbled to ashes, another reputation has been pulled down. Miss Flora Mai Holly has declined to review The Tory Lover. Miss Jewett, its author, she impartially admits, is "well and pleasantly known to novel readers, but she was tempted and she fell." . . . Miss Jewett is "well and pleasantly" known to American readers. To students of letters she is the brightest jewel in that coronet of short story writers which is the chief adornment of contemporary American literature. Who is Miss Flora Mia Holly? Why, she is the young lady who has declined to review The Tory Lover. - *Editorial in New York Mail and Express, Oct. 5*.

[*This document is available courtesy of Wendy Pirsig, The Old Berwick Historical Society.*]

From an advertisement in *Public Opinion* 31, (7 November 1902) p. 576.

The Tory Lover is Literature
The New York Mail and Express says: Miss Jewett's historical romance has one quality that distinguishes it from and places it above many of

the current popular books in the same field of fiction -- it is literature.

Reviews of the *Atlantic* Serial Publication

Boston *Evening Transcript*, 16 October 1900, p. 8.

The call to take up her pen and write historical fiction has reached Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's ears, and as a result we are to have in the November *Atlantic* the first chapters of a story of hers called "The Tory Lover," the scene of which is laid in England and France. New England will miss her most truly appreciative author even for this excursion. Every characteristic of our soil and every trait of human character to be found here has Miss Jewett elaborated, though she has written but seldom of any but the loveable ones. People didn't mind her little trips to sea -- everybody in Maine goes to sea either for profit or for pleasure -- for they knew she would come back to them. But they aren't sure that she won't find artistic attractions so great in England and in France, whither her new novel takes her pen, that it will be loath to return to the pale blooms of New England pastures and the quiet scenery of our North Shore salt marshes.

The Lewiston *Daily Sun*, 20 October 1900, p. 3

A bitter blow for Mr. Howells and all the school of realists and veritists who have been praying for the tide of interest in historical fiction to turn is the news that Miss Sarah Orne Jewett has succumbed to the fever and forsaken her familiar walks for the ways of romance. The *Atlantic Monthly* announces that a story of her, having for subjects the fortunes of New England loyalists, will run through six numbers of the magazine, beginning with the November issue. -

- Transcript.
Portland Journal 11/23/1900

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett hasn't moved her scene from Maine, in the opening chapters of her long-expected historical novel, "The Tory Lover." On the contrary, she gives a glimpse of a Maine mansion and its inhabitants of the long ago that reveals a tasteful, well ordered luxury in upper circles in summer that we have not come across any too frequently in American stories of the last century. It's the other half of the stress and storm people who set the Revolution in motion from that we have usually had presented to us in semi-historical accounts of the American revolt against Great Britain, and it's also a different plane of Maine society than that with

which Miss Jewett has hitherto dealt. Furthermore, it is undoubtedly authentic, and most carefully and sympathetically studied. All of which makes it reasonable to forecast that it will be one of the popular serials not only of the coming year, but standard for many years to come.

The Boston *Evening Transcript* 25 September 1901, p. 19

In her latest novel, "The Tory Lover," Sarah Orne Jewett has painted Old Berwick and the country about it with the faithful hand of one who knows and loves the town in which she has lived so long. She is as much at home in the country of the pointed firs as Thomas Hardy is in his beloved Wessex.

From Jewett's Correspondence

7 March 1900 from Marie Thérèse de Solms Blanc of 7 March 1901, translated from Blanc's French.

I am reading with increasing interest your *Tory Lover*, where your personal impressions blend so happily with the story because you have seen Quiberon through the eyes of your hero and he sails with you into the mouth of the Loire. Your travels in Brittany serve you well in rendering the region's atmosphere truthfully. The scene concerning the ring is perfect, the two realistically rendered men acting each according to his temperament.

I really like old Sullivan's memories of France. It is somewhat risky to present him as having been acquainted with Fenelon, who died in 1712, but it is possible, after all, if he was a child, and his tribute to Fenelon is so charming. May I offer some advice? In your book, simply put in one word regarding the Abbot of Châteauneuf, -- on his way to Mademoiselle, not Madame, de Lenclos. The music was, I think, their least concern, the abbot having succeeded the Cardinal "as King Louis succeeds Pharamond," said Victor Hugo.

Note

Blanc refers here to Chapters 17-21 of the serialization, which were included in the March 1901 installment.

Reviews of the Book Publication

New York *Times*, (31 August 1901), p. BR12.

Magnanimity is easy for victors, and, from the days of "Lionel Lincoln," American novelists have scrupulously endeavored to adorn the

novel of the Revolution with at least one noble Briton, and, in later years, even the Tory has been granted the grace of toleration, but Miss Sarah Orne Jewett is the first to make Tory and Whig equally lovable. In her "The Tory Lover," she has introduced her first villain, and he is neither Tory nor Englishman, but a pretended patriot, devoured by a gnawing envy of all superiors. Through him, bitter sorrow and long suspense come to the fair, courageous patriot heroine and to the brave and loving loyalist great lady, and through him ruin almost comes to John Paul Jones, and in the end he earns a traitor's doom and is left despised of all men. Miss Jewett has described him perfectly, yet without one of those acrimonious phrases which few authors can refrain from bestowing upon their villains.

This is not the only piece of reserve in the story: it is not even the most remarkable. "The Tory Lover" is a war novel without a battle, and with the merest sketch of Jones's daring but fruitless attack upon Whitehaven, to satisfy those who like talk of guns and drums and swords.

Miss Jewett has studied John Paul Jones carefully, with perhaps even more than due charity for his vanity, and his raging desire to exercise his genius for command under one flag or another, but all her views of him are tinged by well-beloved traditions absorbed in childhood from narrators speaking with earnestness and conviction as sincere as if they and not their sires had trodden the deck of the Ranger.

Mary Hamilton, heroine of the tale, is beloved not only by Roger Wallingford, the hero, but by Jones, and hardly knows to which she has given her heart until the news of Roger's captivity in England and doubts of his faithfulness to the patriot cause come to her ears. It is love of her which gives Roger to his country, for an English education and his mother's loyalty have made him a King's man, but once he opens his mind to patriot argument he gives no half-hearted devotion to the cause and sails with Jones, accepting a commission. The villain contrives to make him appear a traitor, and inflicts a well-nigh fatal wound upon him, and he tastes the mercies of a military prison. He owes his pardon and release, not to Mary alone, but also to Master Sullivan, the father of Gen. Sullivan, the schoolmaster to whom Berwick acknowledges great debt for the noble training of her boys, the exiled companion of Derwentwater and the first Pretender. He gives her letters to the kinsmen of his former companions in arms, and her success is instant.

The story of her voyage to England with Madam Wallingford, of the love of the mother country swiftly springing up in her heart, and giving her clearer understanding of loyalists, is

beautifully narrated, but the most exquisite touch in the story is the last. In the very last pages of the book, when, all troubles past, all perils vanished, united and happy, the lovers speed up the river through the evening shadows of their firesides shining warmly from the windows of their house for a beacon, and a great company of their friends coming down the terraced gardens to meet them.

The frontispiece of the book reproduces a miniature long on Miss Jewett's possession, an inheritance from the days of Mary Hamilton, and Mr. and Mrs. Woodbury add other pictures, among them a view of the Hamilton mansion, a superb Colonial house, quite warranting the boast that life in the Piscataqua plantations was as stately as in Virginia.

The *Pittsburgh Press* (29 September 1901), p. 11.

"The Tory Lover" is the best book Miss Jewett [Jewett] has yet written. It is a very interesting love story in an historical setting. The time is that of the Revolution, and Paul Jones figures prominently in the action. The scenes include Portsmouth and Berwick, changing to France and England. The lover, Roger Wallingford, is tory by tradition, but goes out as a lieutenant from partial conviction of the patriotic cause, and entire conviction of the loveliness of Mary Hamilton. The story is full of stirring incidents and dramatic interest. It is marked by the dignity of sincerity, which characterizes all of Miss Jewett's [Jewett's] work. It is an admirable story of courage and devotion to country, and is at once strong, brilliant, spirited and true.

Boston Daily Globe (2 October 1901), p. 4.

Miss Sara[h] Orne Jewett has added to the delight of new thousands of readers by her sweet and extremely natural story, "The Tory Lover" (Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston). It is full of dramatic movement and wholesomeness. The scenes include Berwick, Me -- which the author has known from her earliest childhood -- Portsmouth, England and France. Roger Wallingford, the "lover"; Miss Mary Hamilton, who he adores, Capt Paul Jones of the Ranger and the patriot cause in revolutionary times are features of this well-told historical tale.

Detroit Free Press (5 October 1901), p. 7.

More threshing of old straw has resulted in the production of another novel of Revolutionary history, "The Tory Lover," Sarah Orne Jewett's

venture in a field that is new to her. The Tory lover is Roger Wallingford, who, hesitating between hereditary loyalty and new-born convictions, remains neutral until his love for Mary Hamilton leads him to give half-hearted service to the cause she espouses. He is suspected of being a Tory at heart, and it is only Mary's influence with Paul Jones, and Jones's desire to get a rival out of Mary's sphere, that induces the captain to allow Wallingford to sail with him on the Ranger. In a raid on the English coast Wallingford is wounded and taken prisoner. His shipmates, believing him among those to whom his sympathies incline, make no effort for his release, and it is not until his mother, accompanied by Mary, goes to England and makes long an diligent search for him that he is found and freed, with the help of Jones, who becomes magnanimous.

Miss Jewett tells a very good story, not overweighted with history, well spiced with adventure: one which if not as good as the best is at least better than the most of romances of its class. That it has appeared serially in Atlantic is in itself a distinction. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Detroit: J. F. Sheehan & Co.)

Lewiston *Journal Magazine Section* (October), pp. 19-24, 1901.

Among all the novels for which the Revolutionary war has furnished material, "The Tory Lover," which Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, publish[er], will have a distinct interest for Maine people and New Englanders in general.

To begin with, the author is a Maine woman and a special favorite of Maine people, Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, and the book was written at her old home in South Berwick, under the shadows of the big trees with the odor of old fashioned flowers coming in at the window; in the same study we have here in the picture before us.

Then there is much local color and local characterization, for in the old historic towns of Berwick and York, not Boston or any Massachusetts towns, are laid the principal scenes.

So strong and true are the pictures drawn of life in Maine farming communities in those trying days and of the hardy Yankee farmers, they come to Maine readers with a sort of familiarity, born of the tales of those troublous times handed down from their forefathers.

The lapse of years has not surrounded the scene with the glamour of romance which, in so many historical novels, removes it so far from our everyday lives and feelings. Miss Jewett tells her story as simply and naturally as though it all

happened but recently. Her readers feel a nearness to these men and women which makes them forget that more than a century separates them.

At the opening we are introduced to a class of aristocracy, whose culture and stately living in the northern wilderness may surprise the reader as it did Capt. Paul Jones who did not expect to find here the manner of life of a Virginia gentleman.

Easily and naturally are the glimpses of rough, rural life brought in and the scene transferred to the broad Atlantic, where Miss Jewett shows her thorough knowledge of seamanship by depicting the daily routine on board the warship Ranger and the little idiosyncrasies and sturdy [study] independence of the Maine sailors on board, who, all unused to naval discipline and restraint chafed under the strict rule of Jones.

For none other than the renowned Paul Jones is the hero of the story and here Miss Jewett gives one of her most intelligent and discriminating character portraits. This has been variously done before, but perhaps never so fully and naturally. Paul Jones is not a hero of the stage here, but a man of history - a great man, it is true, but his foibles appear as clearly as his virtues. We do not have to judge him by what was best and worst in his nature, for Miss Jewett gives us all the gradations between the extremes. We see him in many moods and under many conditions. He is the blustering, abrupt and unyielding captain, who has apparently never learned the value of tact, but he is also the affable, sympathetic and appreciative companion on his official trip to Paris. Now he is moved to sentiment by the moonlight and Mary Hamilton, again he seems to have a mind only for adventure and love of glory. Miss Jewett has tried to avoid any exaggeration and present Capt. Paul Jones as he was, impatient of restraint, of the irksome bonds to opportunity and inspiration necessitated by circumstances, yet ever ready, though sore at heart, to do the best that was in him, to immortalize the little Ranger though the fine ship he had hoped for was not forthcoming.

With the same moderation she presents the varying attitude of the Colonists toward England. The war was a serious thing. There was much searching of heart[,] much doubt and fear. With a fine sense of justice Miss Jewett presents the varied feelings of the people. Roger Wallingford, a Tory by tradition, was no less a patriot because he was slow in the conviction of duty. In truth he was only partially convicted when he started out as lieutenant with Capt. Jones, but he was entirely convicted of his love for Mary Hamilton and she was an enthusiastic patriot. But having undertaken a duty Wallingford was

not one to shirk and he wins the admiration of the reader as he did of Paul Jones who came to put great confidence in the young man.

Mary Hamilton is a lovely and lovable character with a decided individuality, as have all of Miss Jewett's characters. Among the interesting figures who move through the story is Master Sullivan, the aged scholar and gentleman, Mary's adviser and friend, who seems strangely out-of-place in his uncongenial surroundings.

The story, while stirring and full of incident, does not border on the sensational. There is nothing glaring nor artificial. It is distinguished by the mild humor and tender pathos characteristic of Miss Jewett.

On the whole, "The Tory Lover" is an addition [additture] to literature and to Maine people at least, a welcome addition to local and historical lore. The book is attractively illustrated and has as a frontispiece a charming medallion portrait of Mary Hamilton.

Bookman (New York) 14 (October, 1901) p. 195, by Flora Mai Holly.

What can be easier for a writer drilled in the art of novel-making than to turn out an historical novel of the American Revolution? All one needs to do is to study the books of this kind which have flooded the market during the past few years, and to try to improve upon them. The necessary implements for the actual work are a bottle of ink, a writing pad, a good memory, a history or two, and possibly an encyclopedia. For inspiration one may turn to George Washington or Paul Jones or Lafayette. A beautiful young maiden must flit through the pages, and a large, rambling old house with plenty of servants and good old wine must serve as a background. Then, too, there should be several lovers, one of whom is destined to be the favoured one from the very beginning. Of course any number of changes can be rung on this scene, but the result is the same -- an American historical novel which is sure to sell, and to please the masses. In this way the half-educated learn something about the history of their own country, which they have not had the energy to study, and in this way also authors make enough money to buy estates in the country and to retire from the field for a year or so. Then, again, one does not have to be original. History made the most of characters many years ago, and even the heroine does not tax one's ingenuity too far. Revolutionary maidens are pretty much the same. They make pretty frontispieces for a book, and when they get dramatised they make even prettier "stars." All they require is a dash of coyness and of

coquetry, for, whatever they are or whatever they do, the hero wins them in the end, and the orchestra chairs are seldom vacant. Nothing is left to the imagination. Human nature and psychology and analysis are not needed here.

This generalisation applies in particular to *The Tory Lover* -- a pretty story, well written and properly heralded, but which the present writer declines to review. We all know what it is about. Sarah Orne Jewett is well and pleasantly known to novel readers. But she was tempted, and she fell. What if Mary Hamilton is like Janice Meredith, and what if the setting does remind one of Mr. Ford's story? Will the thousands of admirers of *Janice Meredith* object to that? At any rate, Miss Jewett has benefited by others' experience, and in writing *The Tory Lover* she has improved on some of its popular predecessors. And there is nothing more to be said.

The Living Age 231: 2990 (26 October 1901), p. 263.

In "The Tory Lover," Sarah Orne Jewett has done what, for a newer writer, would be counted a really brilliant piece of work. Her venture into the field of historical fiction was viewed with a good deal of natural misgiving by friends who felt that her distinctive talents had already found their line, but the popularity of the story, as it has been appearing in serial form in "The Atlantic Monthly," has justified the experiment. Combining patriotism, adventure and romance in the familiar proportions that the public craves, Miss Jewett gives her narrative a literary quality which the public does not often get and which it ought to appreciate. Captain Paul Jones is the central historical figure. The action of the earlier chapters takes place near Portsmouth, N.H., where Miss Jewett is thoroughly at home, and the country-folk there are sketched with her own deft touch. If this book does not add greatly to its writer's reputation, except in point of versatility, it certainly adds to the number of good historical novels. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. publish it in attractive covers of Tory red.

Book Buyer 23 (October 1901), p.227-8, by Octave Thanet.

ALL Miss Jewett's work is instinct with charm. But her latest novel has power. It deals with a little recognized side of the war of the Revolution and with a new scene. We owe her gratitude, also, in that she has not further muddled our conceptions of Washington by a new portrait. She does bring in Paul Jones; but her picture of him is so vital and convincing that it supersedes

any other. One seems to see the real man, the irritable, vain-glorious hero. She has even given us an insight into the broad and daring vision which separated Paul Jones from the score of able men and good seamen who were his American contemporaries.

The most difficult of an artist's problems is to portray a man of genius. Miss Jewett does indicate the touch of genius in Paul Jones. She does it at the very moment which reveals his weaknesses. You are able to comprehend how his subordinates could criticise and his equals dislike him, and how he failed of winning (what many a man of lesser mould has won) the unflinching devotion of his followers. At the same time you come to recognize the fine and noble strain in the man. You feel toward him the partisanship of an actual acquaintance. You can see how he won love, although he could not always keep what he won. There are few more pathetic pictures than the scene with Mary Hamilton in the cathedral, so delicate and restrained, yet so strong. And, surely, there was never a gentler and more plaintive touch on a chord we all know, than Mary Hamilton's last spoken words in the book: "I am thinking of the captain," she said, after a little silence. "You know how he left us when we were so happy, and slipped away alone into the dark without a word. . . ."

"Oh, look, Madam!" she cried then. "Our friends are all there; they are all waiting for us!" And so with more glad recognition the happy girl to whom Paul Jones has given back her lover, turns again to her happiness and her home-coming, leaving the hero who had loved her, alone in the dark. It is beautifully and most deftly done. A mere suggestion, a touch on the strings of the violin in passing. But in it is the hint of sacrifice and the undemanding pain of a manly heart and a glimpse into a brave and lonely soul.

The real artist's touch is in this subtle final shadow on the portrait. But, after all, it is not Paul Jones whose image will remain longest in the reader's mind; it is Mary Hamilton. A sweeter, braver, more charming creature not even the painter of dainty Betty Leichester [Leicester] has ever drawn. Of all the historical gallery to which our novelist friends have introduced us of late, she is easily the most winsome. She is not startling, or bewildering, or dazzling; one can as soon imagine her playing with her lover as forgetting him; there are no fireworks about Mary Hamilton, and she never poses for the limelight. Even if she do a heroic act (as she does more than once) it is done so unobtrusively and naturally that one is more impressed with its sense than its heroism. She is merely a high-souled and lovable creature, one of the few, notably few heroines of fiction, whom one would like for a next-door neighbor. Did she

live to-day, her husband and children would adore her, her mother-in-law would cling to her, men would admire her and woman love her; and she would have a good name in the intelligence offices -- which means more than any of the other praises! To have made her as she is, and not in the least other-worldly or pretentious -- just a sweet, sane gentlewoman, who could make mistakes, but never loses either her tact or her good manners -- is a triumph.

Another delicious portrait is Madame Wallingford's. "She had never been called beautiful; she had no great learning. . . . She had manner rather than manners; she was plainly enough that unmistakable and easily recognized person, a great lady. They are but few in every generation, but the simplicity and royalty of their lovely succession have never disappeared from an admiring world." "Easily recognized," truly; but not so easily drawn. Both Madame Wallingford and Mary Hamilton are great ladies. How many novelists of this ilk can draw a lady? Miss Jewett can draw a lady without having to think. She never makes a false stroke. It is something to do. Because Miss Jewett does it so easily her achievement is not less. Her gentlefolks are silly, sometimes (brains cannot always be either born or bred!) brutal, even; but they are always gentlefolks.

As Mary is a gentlewoman so is her lover a brave and gallant young gentleman. To have made him keep our respect through his misfortunes and his acting in these misfortunes like a plucky, every-day man, rather than a god-like conqueror of a hero, is another achievement. The lover is a Tory who becomes a very moderate patriot, possibly seeing things more clearly than a more sanguine partisan. The conduct of the so-called patriots to his mother is instructive reading for those of us who are disposed to believe all the virtues can belong to one side. In truth, the patriots treated the royalists with the same ferocious and stupid brutality that the Tories meted out to the "rebels." And among the loyalists were some of the true lovers of their country, men like Thompson and Hutchison. When the colonies exiled such men, they emulated George III.'s stupidity.

Miss Jewett's story deals with the fortunes of a young man who loved his country with his eyes open. He disapproves of her rebellion; but when the die is cast, throws his lot on her side. There is a likeness to some readers between such a tory and the anti-imperialists who utterly disapproved of the Spanish War, but accepted its results. Indeed, an amusing and ingenious parallel might be drawn; so well has Miss Jewett described a certain temperament, as indigenous to the New England soil, to-day, as yesterday.

I seem to be speaking, always, of portraits; but I feel more the power of the human beings (they are no less) who walk through the story as they do through life, than any rush of incident or any excitement of plot. There are a few places where the rich and leisurely flow of the charming narrative grows rapid. The best of these is the attack on Madame Wallingford's house. Those pages stir the blood; so do some about Paul Jones's hawk-like dives at the English coast; and the whole story of the sickening squabbles and bickerings and squeamish timidities which hindered him in France, is vivid to a degree. And as always with Miss Jewett, the style of these narrations is exquisite, simple as finished, the style of a master. But in general, it is not for the plot or for the style that one must believe that here is a book to endure; it is because before us we have the veritable lives and souls of our ancestors. They are before us in their habit as they lived. We not only see; we know them. And such portrayal is the only real creative, the only real enduring force in literature.

Outlook 69 (October 19, 1901), p. 420.

MISS JEWETT'S work has been a long loyalty to art so delicate, finely wrought, and sincere has it been from the beginning. She has never been diverted from her vocation as a painter of New England traits and life -- a painter of sensitive feeling, clear insight, and a finished, reposeful, but individual and vital style. Her quiet fidelity to high standards, wholesome methods, and the realities of character has evidenced that quality in her nature and in her art which stamps her as one of the writers of our time whose place is secure. In "The Tory Lover" she does not leave the field which she knows intimately and with the insight of affection. The larger movement of the story is on the other side of the sea; but the passions and convictions which dominate and shape it are of New England origin, and the air of New England fills the sails of the little craft which bears Paul Jones and his turbulent crew. There is in the story no striving to catch the wind of popular favor which is bearing tales of adventure to such fabulous ports in these days; no attempt to adjust an exquisite art to the taste of the hour. Miss Jewett is beyond the reach of these grosser temptations. Her method is unchanged; her refinement, delicacy, and trained skill are on every page; she has simply varied her material. For any writer of average ability "The Tory Lover" would be an achievement, so admirable is its workmanship. Miss Jewett must be judged by her own standards, however, and by her standards her latest tale cannot be regarded as on a level with her most characteristic work. It is not convincing.

The story of incident and adventure is not her vocation. Fortunately, she has no need of success in a new field; her own field is ample, and her possession of it complete.

New York Tribune 27 (October 1901), p. B11.

Miss Jewett's short stories of New-England life have long been valued for their truth and quiet charm. They occupy a place by themselves, for while the author has more than one capable rival she has communicated always to her work a certain individual quality. All this has prepared us to look with special interest into her new book, a novel of Colonial times. "The Tory Lover" does not quite demonstrate that the author has been well advised to make the transition from a field in which she moves with ease of perfect familiarity to one in which she is practically a stranger. Though she has written a novel before this one, she has been at her best in the brief commemoration of episodes, in the delineation of a single type involved in some small situation. Compelled in writing of this book to spread the action over a good many pages, she has been at loss for material, and fills up with talk long stretches that ought to be filled with incident. There is some excitement, it is true. The hero begins by rousing the wrath of his neighbors in New-England though allowing them to believe that he is faithful to Tory principles. Then, to please the heroine, he ships in the Ranger to accompany Paul Jones to Europe. On the other side of the water he gets into trouble not of his own making, is unjustly suspected of treachery, and ultimately lands in a British prison. Miss Jewett succeeds in interesting us in these matters, but only mildly: her plot is thinly constructed, and she has failed to breathe into it the ebullient spirit necessary to conceal its attenuation. On the other hand, there is a winning simplicity and freshness about the book; the author could not help but lend to it something of that sincere and appealing tone which distinguishes her best work. She has strayed from her true inspiration, but she has carried with her the charm of her individuality as a writer.

Dial 31 (November 1901), p. 365, by William Payne Morton.

We regret that Miss Jewett should have attempted to write a historical romance of the conventional sort. In delicate *genre* studies of New England life and character, she has few equals, and her work in this her chosen field is artistically satisfying to an exacting taste. But in such a book as "The Tory Lover" she is out of her natural element, and the result is a rather

poor example of a species of composition now only to be justified by extraordinary dash and brilliancy. Neither of these qualities is displayed in this story of the Revolutionary War. There is much finish in the detail, but there is nothing of the large imaginative sweep that should characterize historical romance. The best feature of Miss Jewett's book is found in its account of the brutal treatment meted out to the tories in New England during the turbulent days that followed the outbreak of hostilities. This aspect of our revolutionary struggle has been treated in much too gingerly a fashion by the historians, and it is only of recent years that the public has been told the truth about the matter. Miss Jewett tells the truth, and for this we may be thankful. But for the story of heroic deeds she has not the equipment, and her Paul Jones, for example, offers a weak contrast to the figure of that captain as it appears in "Richard Carvel," or even in the slap-dash books of Archdeacon Brady. We trust that Miss Jewett will at once go back to her study of the humors of the New England town.

Critic 39 (November 1901), pp. 469-70, by M. H. Vorse.

"The Tory Lover," a book distinguished in many ways from the ordinary historical romance, is not without some of its faults.

Miss Jewett evidently was at much pains to convey the breath of life into her story of the Revolution, but instead of making the time live for one, she merely writes about it, although it is fair to say that she writes about it sympathetically.

It is as a series of pictures that one thinks of the book rather than as a consecutive story, for one is quite convinced that the somewhat uninteresting Mr. Wallingford, who is rather too conspicuously a perfect gentleman, will come to no harm and will in due time be united with Miss Hamilton. The interview between Mary and Madame Wallingford, the description of the monotonous life on shipboard, with the demoralizing results it has on the men, together with other minor incidents, are what raise "The Tory Lover" above the rank and file of historical novels of the year. The character of Paul Jones is the most convincing of any in the book and the one with the greatest personality.

It is, perhaps, too much to demand that, beside the difficult task of making the personages of a story act as men and women, an author shall enter into the brain of another century and, to the permanent human traits, add that evanescent something that divides the thought of one generation so widely from that of another.

After all, it is a great gift easily to be pleased by the stories one reads and one should be content in the fact that "The Tory Lover" is a graceful story, and attractively written, and that Miss Jewett had been very merciful in that she has spared us descriptions of the horrors of war -- she has so far departed from precedent that not even one Tory is tarred and feathered by indignant patriots

The Literary World 32 (November 1, 1901), p. 218.

Sarah Orne Jewett. With her accustomed grace and finish of style, Miss Jewett tells in this novel the oft told story of Captain Paul Jones and the early days of the American navy. The opening scenes are laid in Berwick from which the gallant little "Ranger" and her crew set forth to demonstrate to the world that the ocean belongs as well to the United States as to the United Kingdom. There is a pretty love story with a happy close, and though we may experience a natural regret that Miss Jewett should ever deviate from the line of work which is especially her own and which she has brought to a point of literary perfection, so carefully wrought and conscientious a piece of work as "The Tory Lover" earns and deserves a large measure of praise.

Arizona Republican (3 November 1901), p. 6.

This favorite author of short stories has again demonstrated her ability to produce an interesting novel. More than this, she has gone into that dangerous but fertile field, the realm of history: a gleaning ground that has been the commencement and the ending of many an aspiring writer. In common with some other writers of the day, Miss Jewett has studied the stirring days of the war of the revolution: she has selected as the bright particular hero of her story a character of the mold of heroes, not physically, but of the lion hearted, where energy, bravery, determination and personality have given him fame and reputation -- John Paul Jones, the old "Sea Wolf," "Daredevil," "Scourge," and worthy claimant to many other titles of affection and dread. The well known reputation of Miss Jewett as a writer coupled with the heroic subject is sufficient to secure a large clientele, but the merit of the story, the excellent manner of handling it, and the absence of rot, and the impossible that so often stalk boldly through colonial novels, should give "The Tory Lover" the most unqualified success.

The lover is Roger Wallingford, and though playing a conspicuous part in the working out of

the story, is of necessity secondary to the pride of the continental navy. There are other men in this novel, well drawn characters, manly and brave: English, and later American gentlemen, with a traitor and intriguer who disturbs Captain Jones' plans at Whitehaven and attacks Wallingford, who is leading a landing party, leaving him wounded on the shore, where he is recaptured [*intended captured*].

The heroine, Mary Hamilton, is every inch a woman. She is a patriot for the love of liberty and her home. She hasn't any doubts of the justice of the cause of the colonies; she knows that her family risks all, and knowing, is willing to take the risk. The development of love in her heart is beautifully told by Miss Jewett. A lifelong friend of Wallingford, she prevails upon him to sail from Portsmouth with Jones, realizing the Mrs. Wallingford, a strong character, a widowed lady of wealth and position, but a persistent and consistent loyalist, will be subject to indignities and loss of home if the son Roger remains at home. He, desperately in love, sails away with a "partial conviction of the justness of the cause and entire conviction of the loveliness of Mary Hamilton."

Paul Jones, as much of a gallant as he was a sailor, admired and also loved Mary Hamilton. For this reason, he accepted Wallingford's enlistment, because Mary demanded it, but Jones regretted it and made it unpleasant until the manly character of the young man and a full conviction of the justice of the case made him his boon companion. In gratitude Mary gives Captain Jones her ring as a charm. A very pretty by-play results when Wallingford notices the ring on Captain Jones' finger. Explanations follow, and while the captain of the "Ranger" holds the ring and denies a promise, he kisses the golden band and vows "to win her yet." Not until Wallingford has been captured, disgraced by being called a traitor, as charged by the real traitor at Whitehaven, does the latent love of Mary Hamilton burst forth in a grand passion. The working out of the story is well concealed and prettily told.

Other characters are introduced in the by-play. Stalwart and dignified Franklin, the duchess of Chartres, and the duke, Jones' good friends, and other characters in England and France at that time.

"The Tory Lover" contains an excellent character study of Paul Jones: the story is one that will ever excite admiration: the love passages delicate, refined, human. Of course all ends well, save that the threat of Paul Jones' love doesn't weave to a successful conclusion, but the young lieutenant takes a price fit for an admiral.

The Sun (Baltimore, MD), (7 November 1901), p. 8, by C. Ernest Wagner.

Miss Jewett's captivating romance, "The Tory Lover," will prove a treat to those who have not already made the acquaintance of her heroes and heroines in the pages of the Atlantic.

One lays down the finished volume with a feeling of sweet content. A romantic love story is good; a romantic love story artistically told is far better, and Miss Jewett's trained hand is equal to this most difficult of achievements. Her touch is sure; the pictures she prints and the characters she draws are convincing. They are not "such stuff as dreams are made of," but men and women whom we love or hate because they are essentially human.

The action begins in old Berwick on the eve of Paul Jones' departure from Portsmouth in the *Ranger*. The figure of Mary Hamilton -- sweet and girlish at the outset, ever sweeter and more womanly as the story advances -- dominates the pages of the book. It is Mary Hamilton, the ardent young patriot, who wins over her Tory lover, Roger Wallingford, and sends him to sea with John Paul Jones. It is Mary Hamilton who unwittingly calls forth the love of this bold adventurer and impulsively bestows on him her ring to serve as a talisman to keep him to his best in the strenuous career he has set himself. It is Mary Hamilton who, inspired by love and a beautiful devotion, leaves her home and goes with Madam Wallingford, the uncompromising loyalist, in search of her cruelly suspected son, languishing in the sailors' pen of an English prison. It is Mary Hamilton who vindicates the honor of her lover and who, in the resolution of the plot, reaps the due reward of her fidelity, her courage and her love.

In Roger Wallingford Miss Jewett has drawn a lover worthy of such a maid. Well-born and well-bred, handsome, strong and brave, gifted with a fine intelligence and a final moral sense, he fulfills every demand of that good old term -- now almost impossible to use because so sadly abused -- a gentleman.

John Paul Jones, in intrepid captain of the *Ranger*, wins in his heroic moods our unbounded admiration and in his tender but no less manly moods our heartfelt sympathy. There is something unutterably pathetic in the loneliness, the aloofness of this masterful man, cut off by force of circumstances from the confidence of his fellows and denied the love of a woman, which, if granted, would have transfigured his life. He plays the hero's part to the end, and as we turn the last page Mary Hamilton's words, spoken in her hour of perfect happiness with a strange, wistful melancholy, usher him from the scene.

"I am thinking of the Captain," she said gently after a little silence. "You know how he left us when we were so happy and slipped away along into the dark without a word."

Independent 53 (November 14, 1901), p 2717.

Those qualities which have made Sarah Orne Jewett a celebrated writer of short stories do not appear to have fitted her for the adventure of compassing a long one. Her delicate, discriminating taste and literary skill are beyond question, but the almost monotonous accuracy of her style grows tedious in the course of a whole book. Besides, history has had such a classifying, leveling effect upon the characters and events of colonial days that the revolutionary romance has long since palled upon the imagination of the average reader. The greater part of this story is taken up with the vaporings and adventures of Captain Paul Jones. But in her analysis of his character she follows so faithfully the records of his deviating course as sailor-soldier of fortune that he fails to show off very grandly in the rôle of an honorable captain of revolutionary fame. As for the "Tory Lover," he is the victim, and not the hero, of the tale.

Los Angeles *Herald*, Volume XXIX, Number 54 (24 November 1901) p. 24.

Sarah Orne Jewett has won most of her well-earned fame in literature as a writer of short stories. There is no one else that can portray the New England character so faithfully and so skillfully. The "Yankee" who reads one of Miss Jewett's New England sketches hears again the dialect familiar to his ears, and mayhap there lives again a character with which, he has been familiar in real life. But now this favorite writer has essayed a broader canvas, and comparison with her work in short stories is inevitable. Probably the weight of opinion will be in favor of the latter. Miss Jewett is at her best in character sketching, rather than in the weaving of a complicated plot.

To say this is not to withhold honors that are justly due. "The Tory Lover," which, as the title would indicate, is a story of the Revolutionary period. Roger Wallingford, son of a Tory family, sails with Captain John Paul Jones in the *Ranger* on the voyage that first gave the great captain fame. The young man's Tory principles were almost balanced by his growing conviction that the colonies were in the right; and when his love for Mistress Mary Hamilton, the beautiful patriot heroine was cast into the tale, there was

no more hesitation on his part. But Wallingford, because of his Tory connections, was wrongfully suspected of being a spy, and grave complications arose because of this. Madame Wallingford, the Tory mother, is an admirably drawn character, and the heart of the reader involuntarily goes out to her.

The many-sided Paul Jones figures prominently in the story, as he does in "Richard Carvel," and here another comparison is necessary. It were better, perhaps, to say that each is complementary to the other. Mr. Churchill makes the great admiral the personification of vanity in a certain form, and a worshiper of rank, but without detracting from his personal worth. Miss Jewett presents him as a hopeless lover, having as a subordinate his successful rival. But John Paul Jones proves to be incapable of petty meanness. The voyage of the *Ranger* to France, the discouraging reception its commander suffered there, the attempted burning of the shipping in Whitehaven harbor and other historical incidents are clothed with much interest. Dickson proves a capable villain, but his machinations end with the defeat they deserved, "The Tory Lover" will add many new friends to Miss Jewett's already large constituency, and she will doubtless feel warranted in remaining in the ranks of "long story" writers.

Nation 73 (November 28, 1901), pp. 417-8.

It must be a mortal temptation to the veteran in other fields who beholds the country houses of the writers of the American historical novel, to take a hand and prove that he, too, can play that fashionable game. One's *amour propre*, hardly less than one's pocket, is concerned in the competition. To such a temptation did Miss Jewett succumb when she wrote 'The Tory Lover,' which answers all the tests of that type of composition. The scene is Berwick, Me., in 1777. The heroine is a charming New England maiden of good lineage, set off by a background of spacious colonial mansion, lavish hospitality, and devoted retainers; her miniature, in the style of the period, adorns the front page. The hero, Roger Wallingford, is lucky in love and in nothing else. After passing through the conventional phase of unjust suspicion, imprisonment, and a visit to England, he is restored to his sweetheart by the sub-hero, in whom we encounter the historical personage essential for the local color. This is Paul Jones of the good ship *Ranger*, who, resourceful as D'Artagnan and unselfish as your genuine sub-hero, puts up with a career of glory without love, and helps his rival to Mary Hamilton's hand. "I could throw my hope of glory down at your feet now, if it were of any use," he

cries; but a little later he meets the hero in distress. "Thank God, I have it in my power to make you amends!" he exclaimed. 'God bless you, Wallingford! Wait here for me one moment, my dear fellow,' he said with affection and disappeared" -- to send in the heroine. The figure of Paul Jones is drawn with spirit, and so is the voyage of the *Ranger*. There is a rather unsuccessful attempt at an historical mystery over an Irish colonist of remarkable learning and exquisite manners, whose name, it appears, is one to conjure with, though it is not confided to the reader. Miss Jewett's name is a guarantee of conscientious work, but we hope that her undoubted success in turning out a novel of the prevalent kind will not induce her to change her *genre*.

Chautauquan 34 (December 1901) p. 321, by W.S.B.

The reader who has not had his fill of historical novels of the Revolutionary period will find in "The Tory Lover" one of the latest additions to this class of literature. Like the other novels of its kind, it is full of "stirring incident and dramatic interest." While fundamentally a love tale, with Mary Hamilton, a patriot maid, and Roger Wallingford, a Tory by inheritance, the principals, the reader will find the chief interest of the story to center in Captain Paul Jones and the first cruise of the famous *Ranger*. The brilliant strategist and sea fighter is followed through his first struggle to maintain supremacy over his motley crew, the weary months through which he waited at Nantes and his final triumph over the host of adverse conditions. The patriot maid finally crosses the sea, the Tory lover leaves his English prison, and all are happy.

The New Outlook 68 (December 1901), p. 1062.

Miss Jewett always imparts to her work a touch of distinction; and, in writing "The Tory Lover" in an entirely new field, she did not abandon either her methods or the ground which she is thoroughly familiar. No one could have written "The Tory Lover" except Miss Jewett; but those who value her work most highly can hardly regard her experiment with pure romance as successful.

The Ottawa Free Trader [Illinois] -- (December 6, 1901), p. 11.

Down East Writer Sarah Orne Jewett and her First Long Story.

Author of "The Tory Lover" Has Laid the Scene Around Her Quaint Home -- How she Works.

Although "The Tory Lover" is the first long story that Miss Sarah Orne Jewett has ever written, the many charming New England tales that have come from her pen have kept her prominently before the reading public in this country for many years. Her new book has caused quite a sensation in literary circles and is like part of her personality, for the scene is laid in her own native town around the beautiful old colonial house where she was born and where she lives today, as her father and grandfather did before her.

Twenty years ago Sarah Orne Jewett's reputation as a writer of New England stories was established with the publication of "Deephaven," and as a painter of "down east" country life a she has never been excelled. Before her day writer depicted the phases of life she treats without making a burlesque of it. and she has shown that the country life and the country dialect hide some of the noblest and kindest hearts in the world. Of her first inspiration to write she says: "When I was fifteen, the first 'city boarders' began to make their appearance near Berwick. and the way they misconstrued the country people and made game of their peculiarities fired me with indignation. I determined to teach the world that country people were not the awkward ignorant set those people seemed to think. I wished the world to know their grand, simple lives."

Miss Jewett was born at South Berwick, Me., in one of the most beautiful old houses to be seen anywhere in New England. It dates back into the early part of the eighteenth century and was an old house even before her grandfather secured it. [*The Jewett house was built between 1774 and 1778. Editor.*] The house stands close to the street amid shrubbery and great elms that lend to it a rich background of green. In this eighteenth century house are many interesting rooms containing the most fascinating old fashioned mahogany furniture, high backed chairs, spindle legged escritaires and china cabinets full of rare treasures.

The author's desk stands in a corner of the upper hall in a cozy with a window looking upon the tree shaded village street. Pictures, flowers and books are everywhere. It is in this "den" that "The Tory Lover" was written, as were also the stories entitled "Deephaven," "A Country Doctor," "A Marsh Island," "The Country of the Pointed Firs" and "Lucy Garron's Lovers," the latter when Miss Jewett was only fourteen

years of age. ["*Jenny Garrow's Lovers*," 1868. *Until 1887, Jewett lived and worked not in the Jewett house, but next door in the Jewett-Eastman House. Furthermore, some of her writing was done in Boston, at the home of Annie Fields. Editor.*]

Miss Jewett's father, who is dead, was a country doctor, and she believes the greatest part of her training for Authorship was acquired when as a child she drove with him through the country to visit his patients and carefully listen to what he said of the people and of nature, The old doctor, from a long and familiar intercourse with his humble patrons, had absorbed a vast amount of folklore and was a great story teller. Not a few of the tales with which he used to entertain his little companion while on their trips have been touched on by the authoress in her popular stories. She got most of her education at home under his wise direction. [*Jewett did attend school, including the Berwick Academy, from which she graduated. Editor.*]

There are few authoresses in this country who can turn out a good story as rapidly as Miss Jewett. She frequently writes 10,000 words a day, and many a delightful magazine sketch has been completed at a single sitting. She is very systematic, and her story is usually outlined in her mind before begun on paper. When she has a long story on hand, she writes from 2,000 to 3,000 words a day five days in the week.

In personal appearance Miss Jewett is tall and dignified, with a high bred grace and courtesy of manner which charm all with whom she comes in contact. She has a bright, piquant face that lights up beautifully as she talks and a low, pleasing voice. In conversation she is vivacious and interesting, selecting her words with a quick discrimination which shows her appreciation of the use and power of language

The New England rustic has attracted the attention of many writers, but few have shown an insight into this character equal to that of Miss Jewett. James Russell Lowell said of her just before his death, "Nothing more pleasingly characteristic of rural life in New England has been written than that from the pen of Miss Sarah Orne Jewett."

Note

This piece contains a number of questionable and factually incorrect statements, some of which have been noted in the text. Most notable perhaps is that, depending on how one counts, this was the fifth or sixth of her "long stories."

The *Nashville American*, (8 December 1901), p. 30.

For love of charming Mary Hamilton, Roger Wallingford throws off his allegiance to King George and enlists under the banner of that gallant American, Paul Jones. A traitor on the ship, Dickson, betrays Roger, who is captured by the British. Dickson lead Jones and others to believe that he has only been a spy. But Mary Hamilton never doubts him, and sets about securing his release, which is finally accomplished, and the tale ends as all good romances should.

Of course, there is much of Paul Jones in the books and Miss Jewett writes a new character for him. He has been generally conceived as a rather profane and strenuous and noisy naval commander, who would rather [vie ?] in the thunder and smoke of a sea fight against great odds than linger in the most fascinating female society. Miss Jewett reveals him as a lover, tender and true. Her description of the interview between Mary Hamilton and Jones, when the latter learns definitely that she loves Wallingford, is exquisitely done. There is a pathos in his words: "Oh, that I had only spoken! Glory has been a jealous mistress to me, and I dared not speak; I feared 't would cost me all her favor, if my thoughts were all for you. I could throw my hope of glory down at your feet now, if it were any use. I can do nothing without love. Oh, Mary, must you tell me that it is too late," and Mary "stood there as a ghost might stand by night to pity the troubles of men: she knew, with a woman's foresight, the difference it would make if she could only stand with love and patience by his side."* The story of Jones' baffled love is, throughout, portrayed with a fine and delicate touch which characterizes all of Miss Jewett's work. The story has plenty of stirring incident and dramatic interest. It is a tale of courage and devotion to country, reassuring sincerity, and satisfactory literary style which fascinates the reader.

Note

side: The reviewer has made slight alterations in the text of the quotation.

Boston Daily Globe, (14 December 1901), p. 3.

The longest and strongest story Miss Sara[h] Orne Jewett has yet written, "The Tory Lover," (Houghton, Mifflin Co. Boston), ranks well among the best selling books of the season. France, England and America contribute scenery for the clever and engaging story, which is full of adventure and bright analysis of

character. It affords a truthful and sympathetic picture of actual conditions in the heroic and historic days of gallant Paul Jones. Mary Hamilton's portrait forms the frontispiece of the exceedingly attractive holiday edition.

The Athenaeum 3876 (February 8, 1902), p. 173.

The author's real hero is that renegade Scotsman, John Paul or Paul Jones, but one can understand a good deal of sentiment in his favour from an American author. Here he appears as a gallant lover and perfect cavalier, though his rough methods at sea are not ignored. Perhaps the story would have gained interest had Jones's really valiant fight with the Serapis been included in its scope. His raid with the Ranger strikes one as rather impudent than heroic, though he did get Lady Stirling's silver spoons and frighten the fishermen at Whitehaven. The Tory lover, the nominal hero, is not wholly satisfactory. He sails with Jones, against his inclinations, in order to win the fair patriot Mary Hamilton; and the best part of the book deals with his life at sea, and the false position of a gentleman and a loyalist in such a galley. It must be acknowledged that the lady is a prize worth winning. Miss Jewett has a happy gift of description, and the old colonial families she introduces, with their neighbours and quaint dependents, are aptly depicted.

Atlantic Monthly 89 (June 1902), pp. 22-3.

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett's Revolutionary story has been very fortunate in winning the hearty favor of judicious critics as well as good readers. The Portsmouth *Journal*, which is published where the story opens, remarks that "the reader is bound to recognize in 'The Tory Lover' a faithfulness of incident, locality, and character which makes it a novel of unusual merit, easily ranking among the best productions of its class." *The Book Buyer* says that "of all the historical gallery to which our novelist friends have introduced us of late, Mary Hamilton is easily the most winsome." The St. Paul *Globe* thus makes a very good point, and an important one: "The difference between the average historical novel and this work of Miss Jewett's is the difference between the vital and spectacular elements in literature and life. Where others have laid hold of the surface facts merely, she has grasped the inner meaning." The San Francisco *Bulletin* pronounces it "a story of surpassing interest, skillfully blending history and fiction, and presenting a most artistic series of famous pictures." The public appreciation of

"The Tory Lover" is shown by the fact that it has reached its sixth large printing.

The Saturday Review. (London) 93 (March 29, 1902), p. 405.

New England is always in evidence in American fiction, and neither Miss Jewett* nor Miss Wilkins shows any signs of fading interest in a background of social life which both have brought before the imagination again and again with that freshness which comes from intimate knowledge and quick sympathy. In "The Tory Lover" Miss Jewett puts boldly to sea with Captain John Paul Jones and tells a stirring story, full of action and incident quite out of her customary field; but the starting-point of the novel is one of the most attractive homes of the colonial period, and the group of adventurers are typical New England characters of the Revolutionary period. "The Tory Lover" is written with care and with a skill born of long and loving practice, but Miss Jewett is not at her best in a novel of incident; she is a born painter of the quiet life.

Note

The reviewer spells her name "Jowett."

"Le Roman Historique aux États-Unis" by Th. Bentzon (Marie Thérèse de Solms Blanc), *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1 March 1906) pp. 699-704.

A Tory Lover [American title: *The Tory Lover*] has just taken its place in one of our most popular libraries (1), under the title *The Story of a Loyalist*. Praising its author is no longer necessary in France. Twenty years ago, readers of the *Revue* first encountered Sarah Jewett, who has become the official portrayer of New England, second only to Hawthorne, though without his degree of pessimism. Her impressions of nature, confined to the state of Maine, even then revealed a writer in the full sense of the word. Later, she presented artlessly, but with the penetrating originality which marks all that she touches, a novel derived from her own childhood, *A Village Doctor* [American title, *A Country Doctor*] (2). Since then, from year to year, have come strong and serious new titles, in which humor excludes neither tenderness nor sweetness.

The novelist, who has traveled since, always returns to her village of South Berwick in search of familiar landscapes and friendly faces; in this way she has brought us these small, genuine masterpieces: "Miss Tempy's Watchers,"

"Decoration day," "The Queen's Twin," "A Native of Winby," and so many others, one after the other, all of equal value, like pearls in a necklace. Nothing, however, not even the great success of one of her most recent books that is richer if not more perfect than the others, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, could lead one to suppose that the author of these brief sketches of provincial life would yield one day to the temptation to approach a genre that so easily falls into convention and banality, the historical novel, a genre preferred, quite wrongly, over the novel of manners. Wasn't she sure to produce a work below her usual standard? This did not happen. Miss Jewett followed her familiar methods, knowing how to add to her usual precise observation of the facts all the necessary dramatic movement without departing from simplicity or truth.

As always, Jewett remains faithful to her method of painting only what surrounds her. It was in Berwick and in Portsmouth, places she knows so well, that her hero, Paul Jones, prepared the famous expedition of the *Ranger*, that poor little ship, which carried all the way to France, to have it recognized there, the nascent fortune of a great nation. Near her own family home in South Berwick flows the leaping Piscataqua River, on the banks of which Jones, the Scottish adventurer who had sworn himself to serve the future republic, receives in the first chapter the opulent hospitality of Colonel Hamilton. This introduction surprises in its depiction of colonial life, with a solid luxury and severe dignity unsuspected by those who persist in denying America a past. Around the captain, ready to carry to France the news of Burgoyne's capitulation, are grouped figures who, against the familiar background which Miss Jewett excels in rendering, stand out in relief with the frank realism of good Dutch portraits: Major Tilly Haggens, who fought often against the Indians, tall, heavy, rough-built and nevertheless not without a certain elegance, like a plump bottle of old burgundy; other notables in ruffles, cuffs, a red coat with velvet collar; the minister, of high ecclesiastical lineage, who, with his three-cornered hat, his ample frock coat, his long waistcoat with large pockets, the white collar that holds his chin very high and that is fastened behind his head with a silver buckle matching the buckles of his tight breeches and the other wide, flat buckles that adorn his shoes, looks, as much as a man can, like a serious folio with a clasp, his costume seemingly made for his person and corresponding to his interior equipment; and then the host, in a blue coat with red lapels, robust, with powdered hair and features marked with a willful and serious expression, that sort of brusque maturity which explains the success of a great ship owner, a

merchant prince who has succeeded in all his land and sea ventures. A few well-chosen words are enough to characterize each of them. The negroes as well, servants of these local powers, have the same air of well-nurtured importance as their masters. In the midst of this comfortably prosperous society, which Jones himself has never known, he passes, bowing to the right and to the left, as a sovereign might, with a stiffness he attributes to ship's cramp, the poor and lean captain, who nevertheless towers above them all by the force of his will and resolve, impatient, driven by his demon of military glory: "On his sailor's face with its distinctly marked features, in his lively eyes which did not seem to observe his immediate surroundings, but to look with a long gaze full of hope towards the horizon, there was an intense energy. He was small and a little stooped from living between decks; his sword, too long for him, struck the ground as he walked."

Though worn down by adversity, still Paul Jones falls in love, insofar as this is possible for a man for whom ambition is a tyrannical and jealous mistress. He sets his heart upon the most noble, the most endearing heroine that we have encountered in literature for a long time. Mary Hamilton is the fully realized American patriot or rebel, a person of both head and heart. Mary uses the power she has over the captain to get her young lover, the Tory Wallingford, on board the *Ranger*, and she uses Wallingford's youthful passion for her to win him over to the American cause, the party of freedom.

We are surprised that a female author could weave a solid fabric where the adventures of love and war intermingle, lending the book the double interest of history and psychology. On the other hand, would a masculine writer have been able to draw certain portraits of women; the great Tory lady standing up to the pitiless patriot mob that attacks her house; the servant-mistress Peggy and the helpers she leads with a beating drum, the young ladies, who are laughing and adorned in the evening, but are ready on the morrow for any sacrifice to resist English oppression and prepare the future of their liberated country. But could a man present this Mary Hamilton, who stands over them all, her rare type still to be found in the country where she is shown to be prudent and courageous, adroit and sincere, pushing self-control to the point of heroism, so reserved, so patient that one could see in her sometimes a coldness which is nothing but extraordinary self-possession? This poise is most vivid when she intrepidly crosses across the ocean in quest for the man she loves, to snatch him from the abominable English prison where rot the captives of rebellion. That he has betrayed his country she does not believe. Her faith in him

endures these false accusations. Such women -- may their species multiply in all lands! -- embody the eternal feminine which elevates men above their limited selves; these women seem born to lead the men they enthrall toward greatness, while remaining faithful to them even in the worst adversity.

This is a novel not to be considered light reading. It includes diverse episodes of the highest order that we cannot recommend too highly. Among these are discussions between [Benjamin] Franklin and Paul Jones, his night attack on the English coast at Whitehaven, the meeting of Jones and Mary in Bristol's old abbey, concerning her search for Wallingford, with Paul Jones in disguise as he daringly scouts in England despite the price on his head. Even more impressive, perhaps, is the short, vibrant passage in which sounds the first salute accorded by a French warship to the American flag, which no nation had yet recognized.

The poor little *Ranger* is miserable and needing supplies and repairs when Jones arrives on the shores of France. Jones does not know what awaits him, disdain or sympathy, and there he is, on the coast of Brittany, near Quiberon, passing slowly, with the proudest air possible, between the formidable vessels of the French navy. The *Ranger* fires the thirteen guns of the regulation salute. Will we answer him, or will his salute be neglected like that of a pleasure boat whose passengers have waved their handkerchiefs?... Suddenly we see a puff of white smoke rising; then the powerful guns of the flagship shake the atmosphere one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine times... After which, they are silent, but the slopes of Carnac send back long echoes. Paul Jones calls to his helmsman: "-- You can tell the crew that this is France's salute to our Republic and the first tribute to our colors." All hear, and all understand that they have just born witness to the baptism of a great nation, while the little captain, raising his hat, stands motionless, his eyes fixed on the American flag.

The precision of the smallest details in this chapter, as sober as it is moving, reveals how thoughtfully Miss Jewett traveled in Brittany, following step by step along the coast, the actual route of the *Ranger*. On all points, she has researched in the same way in the most vivid and reliable sources. It would seem as if in Paris she had overheard Franklin restraining Paul Jones's teeming ambitions, and that in Bristol she had actually conversed with the emigrant royalists who were so surprised at being coldly received in the mother country where they no longer seem to belong. Everything has been closely studied, documented, reconstructed. If the French version of *The Tory Lover* had appeared a year earlier, we think that the public

would have been more interested in an event that went almost unnoticed: the return of the ashes of the exiled Paul Jones. We little knew this great mariner who had the misfortune outlive his fame in obscurity.

[English translation by Terry Heller and Jeannine Hammond.]

From Jewett's Correspondence

5 October 1901 from Henry James

The "historic" novel is, for me, condemned, even in cases of labour as delicate as yours, to a fatal *cheapness*, for the simple reason that the difficulty of the job is inordinate & that a mere *escamotage*, in the interest of each, & of the abysmal public *naïveté*, becomes inevitable. You may multiply the little facts that can be got from pictures, & documents, relics & prints, as much as you like -- *the* real thing is almost impossible to do, & in its essence the whole effect is as nought. I mean the evolution, the representation of the old CONSCIOUSNESS, the soul, the sense, the horizon, the action of individuals, in whose minds half the things that make ours, that make the modern world were non-existent. You have to think with your modern apparatus a man, a woman -- or rather fifty -- whose own thinking was intensely otherwise conditioned. You have to simplify back by an amazing tour de force -- & even then it's all humbug. But there is a shade of the (even then) humbug that *may* amuse. The childish tricks that take the place of any such conception of the real job in the flood of Tales of the Past that seems of late to have been rolling over our devoted country -- these ineptitudes have, on a few recent glances, struck me as creditable to no one concerned. You, I hasten to add, seem to me to have steered very clear of them -- to have seen your work very bravely & handled it firmly; but even you court disaster by composing the whole thing so much by sequences of speeches. It is when the extinct soul talks, & the earlier consciousness airs itself, that the pitfalls multiply & the "cheap" way has to serve. I speak in general, I needn't keep insisting, & I speak grossly, summarily, by rude & provisional signs, in order to suggest my sentiment at all. I didn't mean to say so much without saying more, now I have touched you with cold water when I only meant just lightly & kindly to sprinkle you as for a new baptism -- that is a *re-dedication* to altars but briefly, I trust, forsaken. Go back to the dear Country of the Pointed Firs,* *come* back to the palpable present *intimate* that throbs responsive,

& that wants, misses, needs you, God knows, & that suffers woefully in your absence.

11 October 1901 from Silas Weir Mitchell

I am not going to write any more historic fiction either, but I have wished for many years to write this story. I began it the year that you were writing Hugh Wynne, but I was ill & had to put it by. You were at the head of the procession with your great Hugh Wynne and I am trailing at the end, but I am just as ready to cheer my leader as -- I ought to be!

23 October 1901 to Silas Weir Mitchell.

I wonder why there should be two schools: if there are any real differences between the historical novel and the realistic? Is there any distinction between last summer and last century? and why cannot we feel and think one as we do the other. You know this wonderfully drawn adventuress this Sydney Archer [from Mitchell's *Circumstance* (1901)] just as well as you knew Hugh Wynne but no better, and I can't find any difference in the realities of Madam Wallingford & Mrs. Todd of Dunnet Landing: if we can get atmosphere between ourselves & them: perspective; illusion of a sort; we get hold of Art in regard to them and do our work well. Mr. Henry James and I are now writing letters to each other, and he always believes in an 'extinct soul' of the last century but I do not. (How could I, when one of my most intimate early friends was a Harvard man of the class of '05, and I have seen fashions far back into the 1700's parading up the aisle of our old Berwick Church?) But I am trying to begin a talk -- and this alas -- is only a letter. I must send you my most affectionate thanks and be done.

25 November 1901 from Rudyard Kipling

I think it's the biggest thing you've done yet and also I think that you've pulled it off - a result that not always attends the doing of big things. But what - apart from its felicities - interested me as a fellow craftsman was the amount of work - solid, laborious *dig* that must have gone to its making: and the art with which that dig is put away and disguised. I love that sort of work where only the fellow-labourer can see where his companion went and how far, for the stuff that seems to turn up so casually and yet so inevitably in the fabric of the weaving.

For the whole letter and more comments on the novel, see Thomas Pinney, ed. *The Letters of Rudyard Kipling* v. 3, pp. 78-9. University of Iowa Press, 1996.

Sunday, March 1903 to Annie Adams Fields.

What do you think I read yesterday but a good piece of *The Tory Lover*! You know how long it takes before you can sit down to a book of your own with any detachment -- as if somebody else had written it? I have taken it up now and then and [found *corrected*] that it only worried me but yesterday was different -- it seemed quite new and whole! and I really was delighted with my piece of work. I have never succeeded in doing anything except the *Pointed Firs* that comes anywhere near it -- my conscience upholds this happy belief, and whether it was a hundred years ago or now, is apart from the question altogether. The book of *Ruth* was so an historical novel in its day. The *French Country House* is no more real to writer or reader because Mrs. Sartoris had made the visit & imagined she made some episodes a few summers before ---- I can't think what people are thinking of who didn't like the *T. L.* as much as some of my books of slight sketches which -- are mostly imaginary! or even as well as the *Pointed Firs* -- but as Brother Robert frankly remarked "They don't!" ---- I can't help being sure that somebody now and then will like it. (and if H. & M. were as good publishers as they are printers it would have been done better --) However it did very well and let's not grumble about any thing. I think it wasn't very well fitted for a *Serial* - - I am sorry for all that part of it, and for the foolish exhausting hurry I was led into.

Selection from *Charles Dudley Warner* (1904) by Mrs. James T. Fields.

Warner's faith in literature led him to be a prop and inciter to young authors. Where he could discern real talent and character he was ready to become a mainstay. Only those shivering upon the edge of a plunge into the sea of literary life can know what a help he was and what happiness his hope in behalf of others gave. His advice was born out of wide experience. There is a record of one of the many cases of his helpfulness, where he writes to Sarah Orne Jewett, who had confided to him the actual beginning of a story which he had first suggested and she had long been planning, "*The Tory Lover*"; "I am not in the least alarmed about the story, now that you are committed to it by the printing of the beginning, only this, that if you let the fire slow down to rest for a week or so, please do not take up any other work, but rest really. Do not let any other theme come in to distract your silent mulling over the story. Keep your frame of mind in it. The stopping to do any little thing will distract you. Hold the story always in solution in your mind ready to be precipitated when your strength permits. That is to say, even if your fires are banked up, keep the story fused

in your mind." He wrote also to the same friend: "The Pointed Firs in your note perfumed the house as soon as the letter was opened, and were quite as grateful to me as your kind approval We are greatly rejoiced to know that you are getting better. I quite agree with you that being sick is fun compared to getting well. I want to see you ever so much and talk to you about your novel, and explain to you a little what I tried to do with Evelyn in my own. It seems to me possible to educate a child with good literature as well as bad; at least I tried the experiment. Most affectionately yours."

Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett 1911

Edited by Annie Fields.

The Christian Science Monitor, (9 October, 1911), p. 2

In one of his sprightly and thoughtful essays, Augustine Bissell, who like Woodrow Wilson, has been deflected from literature by politics, says that Dr. Johnson is fortunate in that he is a "[*unrecognized word*]* personality," and this not only because of Boswell's incomparable service, but because of Johnson's own letters. "To be able to say what one means in a letter is a great gift, but at the same time to show what you are is immortality," adds Mr. Bissell.

Now it is the [*unrecognized word*] of the "letters of Sarah Orne Jewett" (Houghton Mifflin & Co.) that they do transmit to the reader the personality of the writer. They show precisely the sort of sensitive, gracious, loving, aspiring woman that she was. It is a woman who can best be described in her own quotation from Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, "Too useful to be lonely, and too busy to be sad."

There is much in these collected letters that lets light on the artistic method and aims of one of the finest American writers of short stories whose work, while she lived, attracted the attention and won the admiration of Kipling and many of the masters of French fiction, along with the unusual honor of translation into French. These epistles, in most cases addressed to the editor of the collection, Mrs Annie Fields, give side lights on the higher intellectual life of New and Old England, and, to some extent, France during the last of the nineteenth and the opening of the twentieth century, that will always be invaluable both in their judgments of men and women and their books and of artists and their craftsmanship. They also give pen pictures of rural landscapes in Maine and France that are gems of verbal delineation, and they have scattered through them etchings in [*unrecognized words*] of human types, urban and rural that are admirable. No person [*unrecognized words*] as Miss Jewett did during the latter half of her life, the friendship of Mrs. Fields and all that this implied for contact with the [*unrecognized word*] men and women of literature, [*unrecognized words*] visiting Boston, or with distinguished Europeans visiting [*unrecognized words*] seeing and hearing [*unrecognized words*] naturally found its way into the letters and thus was gathered up [

unrecognized words] with delight by coming generations.

Yet the chief value of the correspondence [*unrecognized words*] disclosure of a personality that Mrs. Alice Meynell said was the [*unrecognized words*] that she had ever known. [*Unrecognized words*] meant not the one with the least personality; far from it; but rather the least selfish, most mindful of the needs of others.

At a time when much of the literature by women and about women, whether in the form of autobiography, the novel, or the elaborate treatise on love or marriage is keyed to the note of self-assertion, revolt against convention, and criticism of established codes of conduct for women, and when women no longer can be counted upon invariably as religious, the appearance of a collection of human documents like this is the more noticeable. Here the underlying assumptions of the womanly ideal are that "life is duty as well as beauty," that the normal condition of human association is service, that affairs of sex are not to be the subject of general of promiscuous discussion, and that the chief end of an artist is not to be a pessimistic realist but an optimistic idealist. So that even if no formal biography of Miss Jewett ever appears, if the world never gets the other side of the interesting friendships and correspondences that are indicated by these letters, it will still be possible to refer to them any person who, happening long, asks what the best type of unmarried New England woman was doing and thinking as the one century ran out its sands and the new one came in.

It was an unusual group of woman interpreters of the modernized yet still Puritan New England which Harriet Beecher Stowe led. Of them the only survivor now is Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford. Rose Terry Cooke, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Gail Hamilton, Celia Thaxter, Lucy Larcom, Harriet Waters Preston, Louisa M. Alcott and Sarah Orne Jewett. What a group they made! None of them major figures like George Eliot, but nevertheless a combination that have left in prose and verse a record of a New England that is passing and changing, and that will find daughters of a different race, stock, and faith to depict much of its future life, rural as well as urban.

It is not claimed for these letters of Miss Jewett that they have the rare charm of Madame de Sevigne's or Fanny Kemble's, or that the judgments of men expressed in them are always those of a dispassionate critic. Certainly Matthew Arnold's praise is pitched too high, as Gladstone's too low; and it is evident that Mrs. Humphry Ward was too dear a friend to be judged fairly as a writer of fiction by the Maine authoress. There is no revelation of an abiding

and meaningful friendship between the writer and a man, such as existed between Judge French and Gail Hamilton or Miss Mitchell and Phillips Brooks. What is depicted with the rare beauty of delineation is the complete trust of the younger for an older woman, an utter sharing with her of the impressions that men and books made upon one who was singularly reverent, [sane ?] and kindly disposed; there is also the gain in breadth of vision, mastery of technique and sympathy of understanding of an author fortunate enough to enjoy both the society of the intellectual and spiritual elite of her time, and to travel profitably beyond seas. That she never traveled much in her own land is to be regretted. That fact explains a provincial note, a limiting of the horizon, a perfect satisfaction in an orbit that had two foci -- North Berwick and Boston.* Hence also an inevitable future limitation of her audience, save as a perennial interest must turn all Americans of all time toward New England as the matrix in which much of national life was cast, just as countless future generations of Canadian, Australian and South African readers must turn back to Jane Austen and George Eliot for pictures of the society of old England, whence the new nations sprung.

Note

word: The copy of this review available from Proquest is of poor quality. There is a good deal of guesswork in this transcription, and some words could not be discerned or guessed.

The Independent 71 (Oct 12, 1911), pp. 820-21.

"Not many, since Cicero, have been able to write easy, charming letters about nothing and everything; and one who could was Sarah Orne Jewett.... We warmly commend the volume to any of those who have loved one of the purest and most tranquil of all our better writers, and to others who would enjoy the touches of description of a multitude of literary celebrities, all told in that pellucid style which flows easily through fresh meadows of epistolary conversation.

Nation 93 (Oct. 12, 1911), p. 344.

One could wish that Mrs. James T. Fields, in her introduction to the Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett, had not started the reader wrong by likening them to 'the famous journal of Dean Swift to Stella.' A more unfortunate comparison you would not easily conceive; it merely calls undue attention to the weaker side of these letters. For

it cannot be denied that there is in them a little too much of the 'dear' and the 'good' of that peculiar sweet optimism, in a word, which has been the bane of so many New England writers among the epigoni -- even the 'Georgics' of Virgil are 'pretty' in Miss Jewett's vocabulary. This was not exactly the character of Swift's 'little language.' But it need scarcely be said that the author of *The Country of the Pointed Firs* has also better stuff in correspondence than falls under such criticism. The book offers, indeed, a variety of interests.

New York *Tribune*, (15 October, 1911), p. A6.

Miss Jewett's stories of New England life will be cherished we believe, when more ambitious work is forgotten. Of their kind they are perfect, and taken together they form a social document of genuine value. The generation with which she dealt so sympathetically has nearly if not quite passed, and with other times have come other manners. The traits and emotions that appealed to this painter of real life were as old as the world, but they developed in an atmosphere of simplicity and reticence that does not belong to the twentieth century. If some critic of the future shall venture to say that she has unduly idealized her rustic characters he may be confronted with passages in these letters which show forth the real people whom she drew or from whom she gathered one hint or another for portraiture. Witness her mention of the death of one of these old friends: "My stories are full of her here and there, as you know," she says, "and she has made a great part in the rustic side of my life and so in the town side." Happy the period, the place and the people that have had a chronicler so loving and loyal in feeling and understanding.

There is a pleasant fragrance of friendship in these letters, there is a gentle refinement and there are evidences of appreciation of all that is beautiful in human life, art and nature. The reader closes the book with admiration for the feminine character winningly revealed therein. But it must be admitted that this is not one of the collections of letters which the world cannot do without. It is perhaps the lack of humor which causes them to leave us cold, for that is a grievous lack indeed in your epistle to a friend. The sentiment sometimes seems to drop into sentimentality, but that, no doubt, is the fault of hard type -- it might not seem so on the written page meant only for the eye of affection. As for the literary judgments expressed there, we do not find them always sound. Some of them are due to either a failure in taste or to a personal liking for the author whose work is discussed with undeserved enthusiasm. We must not

neglect to note, however, that there are many passages testifying to their writer's perception and enjoyment of what is noblest in literature. There is a suggestive paragraph on story writing in one of the letters of 1896: "I think we must know what good work is before we can do good work of our own, and so I say study work that the best judges have called good, and see *why* it is good; whether it is in that particular story, the reticence or the bravery of speech, the power of suggestion that is in it or the absolute clearness and finality of revelation: whether it sets you thinking or whether it makes you see a landscape with a live human figure living its life in the foreground." As for her own methods, it is worth while to quote this bit of experience:

Good heavens, what a wonderful kind of chemistry it is that evolves all the details of a story and writes them presently in one flash of time! For two weeks I have been noticing a certain string of things and having hints of character, etc., and day before yesterday the plan of the story comes into my mind and in half an hour I have put all the little words and ways into their places and can read it off to myself like print. Who does it? for I grow more and more sure that I don't!

We note with pleasure the charming glimpses of our author's intimacy with the cheerful outdoor world -- in the garden she is "neighborly with the hop toads and with a joyful robin who was sitting on a corner of the barn", she was a true lover of birds and of faithful dogs. She had, too, a childlike love of fun sometimes, as this little winter scene shows:

This morning I was out taking a drive about town with John, and I saw such a coast from way up the long hillside down to the tavern garden, and directly afterward down in the village I beheld Stubby faring along with his sled, which is about as large as a postage-stamp. So I *borryed* it, as you say, and was driven up to the top of the hill street, and down I slid over that pound-cake frosting of a coast most splendid, and meekly went back to the village and returned the sled. Then, an hour later, in bursts Stubby, with shining morning face: "There were two fellows that said Aunt Sarah was the boss, she went down side-saddle over the hill, *just like the rest of the boys!*"

We will end with an extract on a graver key -- the description of the last coming of Phillips Brooks into the church in which he had done so noble a work:

When the coffin came up the aisle, carried shoulder high by those tall young men, the row of grave young faces, the white lilies, and the purple pall! -- it was like some old

Greek festival and the Christian service joined together. The great hymn as they went out again -- "For All Thy Saints Who from Their Labors Rest"; the people beginning it as if with a burst of triumph, and the voices stopping and stopping until hardly anybody was left to sing at all, and all the people standing and crying as if their hearts would break -- you can't imagine what it was! But nothing has ever been such an inspiration -- it has been like a great sunset that suddenly turned itself into dawn.

Note

The reviewer has revised the punctuation of the passage from the Fields volume, adding and deleting commas. Similar small alterations in punctuation have been made in the other quoted passages in this review.

Louisville *Courier-Journal*, (21 October 1911), p. 8.

To many who cherished Sarah Orne Jewett for her books or that charm of personality which so attractively marks her writings, these letters will be welcome. They have been collected and edited by Mrs. James T. Fields, to whom many of them were written.

The letters are in no sense remarkable. But they are so human, so infused with fervent love for nature, beauty, friends, books as at once to charm and stimulate the reader to finer appreciations. Her "Country of the Pointed Firs" is background in many of the letters. She begs a friend to go see some of the "most superb creatures that ever grew ... and standing so tall that their great green tops seem to belong to the next world." Of no less charm than her casual vignettes of her Maine woods are her happy touches here and there descriptive of something in the Old World -- the Apennines, green valleys on the way to Brindisi, or the Parthenon and the Grecian marbles -- "the Orpheus and Eurydice and the Bacchic Dances... row upon row. It is quite too much for a plain heart to bear."

Among the recipients of the letters were Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Mrs. Meynell, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Misa Sara Norton, Mrs. Whitman. Celia Thaxter is a dim but fond memory in the letters -- one of which laments the death of dear Sandpiper, as Miss Jewett named her. There are a few letters describing visits to Tennyson -- "it is the high court of poetry at Aldworth whatever one may say." It was a visit rich in inspiration -- "the great dignity and separateness of his life comes clearer than ever to mind. He seemed like a King in captivity, one

of the Kings of old, of divine rights and sacred seclusions."

Not one of the letters but has that character and intimate charm which makes the beauty of familiar letters.

Literary Digest 43 (Nov 4, 1911), p. 811.

The editing of Sarah Orne Jewett's letters could not have fallen into better hands than those of Mrs. James T. Fields, her life-long and intimate friend, who brings to the work personal affection, deepest appreciation, and a comprehension of all the characteristics that contributed to Miss Jewett's personality. Letters -- good ones -- always reveal the real character of the writer, and these letters certainly stand the test....each glows with the ambition of the writer, her appreciation of the work done by others, and her great desire to communicate to them her tribute of admiration....No topic of current events is too trivial to be considered by her....The birds, the clouds, the green fields, are all messengers of beauty, and her method of expression is so whimsical that the reader must see with her own eyes.

Dial 51:1 (November 1911), pp. 337-9, by Annie Russell Marble.

Recalling her parents, Miss Jewett emphasized three qualities which prevailed in the atmosphere of her early home: "wit, wisdom, and sweetness." These traits were transfused into her own personality, which has been so fully and tenderly revealed by her friend, Mrs. James T. Fields, in the volume of letters which are edited with fine taste and judgment. The graciousness and "sweet dignity" which characterized Miss Jewett are found also in this revelation of her life through her letters to various friends in America and England. By far the larger number were written to Mrs. Fields, and the occasional words of the editor are full of understanding and affection, as well as a true appreciation of the literary worth of one of New England's most charming and sincere storytellers.

From the days of her childhood -- the "white mile-stone days" when she rode with her father in his doctor's chaise and learned to love nature and humanity -- to the end of her productive years, Miss Jewett was impelled by one great purpose: "to make life a little easier for others." She accomplished this service in her neighborly relations, and also in her work as writer. She sympathized deeply with the domestic joys and

trials of her fellow-villagers, and carried the same tenderly responsive heart into all places where she went. Toward the people whom she chose as models for her vital characters, many of whom lived near her home, she always kept the attitude of mind of a neighbor and friend; never did she assume a touch of the patronizing or curious visitor to the country. She rejoiced to be a part of the life which she depicted, and one of her early ambitions was to bring city and country people into more intimate and sympathetic relations. Mrs. Fields writes:

"Her *métier* was to lay open, for other eyes to see, those qualities in human nature which ennoble their possessors, high or low, rich or poor; those floods of sympathy to be unsealed in the most unpromising and dusty natures by the touch of a divining spirit. Finding herself in some dim way the owner of this sacred touchstone, what wonder that she loved her work and believed in it?"

In spite of her native dignity and a certain remoteness of manner, Miss Jewett entered into every phase of life with keen senses. She delighted to drive, to row, to picnic, and to coast — on one memorable occasion on a borrowed sled down the village hillside with such success that her nephew was proud of her reputation among his boy-friends, for "she went down side-saddle over the hill *just like the rest of the boys*." She loved nature with the trustfulness of a child. Like Thoreau, she personified the pines and considered them her noble friends. The scenic beauty of her stories, from "Marsh Rosemary," "White Heron," and "The Country Doctor," to "Deephaven" and "The Country of the Pointed Firs," was inspired by her walks and drives within a short distance of her Berwick home, and such tales reflected her loving comradeship with trees and flowers and birds. The letters contain many exquisite nature-pictures, often warmed by tender sentiment. A few examples may be given.

"Hepaticas are like some people, very dismal blue, with cold hands and faces. . . . I believe there is nothing dearer than a trig little company of anemones in a pasture, all growing close together as if they kept each other warm, and wanted the whole sun to themselves, beside. They had no business to wear their summer frocks so early in the year." . . . "But, oh! I have found such a corner of this world, under a spruce tree, where I sit for hours together, and neither thought nor good books can keep me from watching a little golden bee, that seems to live quite alone, and to be laying up honey against cold weather. He may have been idle and now feels belated, and goes and comes from his little hole in the ground close by my knee, so that I can put my hand over his front door and shut him out, -- but I promise you

and him that I never will. He took me for a boulder the first day we met; but after he flew round and round he understood things, and knows now that I come and go as other boulders do, by glacial action, and can do him no harm. A very handsome little bee, and often to be thought of by me, come winter."

Although Miss Jewett localized her backgrounds and characters, and thereby gained in vitality and genuineness, she carried her keen observation and clever descriptive pen upon trips abroad, and wrote delightful impressions of Whitby and Nassau, of the lilies and nightingales of France, and the romantic associations of Haworth and the Brontë vicarage. One of the rare experiences of her foreign visits was her acquaintance with Tennyson, whom she revered. "He seemed like a king in captivity, one of the kings of old, of divine rights and sacred seclusions. None of the great gifts I have ever had out of loving and being with you seems to me so great as having seen Tennyson," so she wrote to Mrs. Fields.

These letters give a partial record of Miss Jewett's literary likings and indulgences. They show wide range of subjects, and "heavy doses," so that one appreciates her fear that she "has been overeating with her head." Her impressions of books are keen and critical, including comments on anatomy and politics as well as distinctive literature. In preparation for her "History of the Normans," and her historical novel "The Tory Lover," she covered much ground in history. Thackeray and Carlyle were favorites with her, and to Dorothy Wordsworth she gives merited praise, both for literary skill in "A Tour in Scotland" and also for her stimulating influence upon her poet-brother and upon Coleridge. Miss Jewett acknowledges a debt to Mrs. Stowe's "Pearl of Orr's island," as an early incentive to her own simple New England stories. Although in her later work there was greater variety of structure and characters, yet she maintained her chosen type of fiction and gave life to what Mr. Kipling calls "the lovely New England landscape and the genuine New England nature." She always defended the art of realism.

"People talk about dwelling upon trivialities and commonplaces in life, but a master writer gives everything weight, and makes you feel the distinction and importance of it, and count it upon the right or the wrong side of a life's account. That is one reason why writing about simple country people takes my time and thought." Again, in 1907, she wrote to Mr. Woodberry words of sane, sweet philosophy about her work and a writer's supreme efforts.

"What a joyful time it is to be close to the end of a long piece of work, and sad too, -- like coming into harbour at the end of a voyage. The more one has cared to put one's very best into a thing the surer he is to think that it falls far short of the 'sky he meant.' But it is certain that everything is in such a work that we have put in. The sense of failure that weighs the artist down is often nothing but a sense of fatigue. I always think that the trees look tired in autumn when their fruit has dropped, but I shall remember as long as I remember anything a small seedling apple-tree that stood by a wall in a high wild pasture at the White Hills, -- standing proudly over its first crop of yellow apples all fallen into a little almost hollow of the soft turf below. I could look over its head, and it would have been a heart of stone that did not beat fast with sympathy. There was Success! -- but up there against the sky the wistfulness of later crops was yet to come."

In passages like this, the reader finds reflections of the love of nature and mankind, the poise and resourcefulness and the bravery and faith of Miss Jewett as woman and author. Although her health was often poor, she never intruded a complaint, and her letters, like her stories, are always hopeful and refreshing. Even after the accident which cramped her later years of activity, she wrote with patience and often with humor. "Though I feel like a dissected map with a few pieces gone, the rest of me seems to be put together right!" Bowdoin College honored itself when it conferred upon Miss Jewett the degree of Litt.D., and she delighted "to be the single sister of so many brothers at Bowdoin." The beautiful memorial window to her father at this college was one of her dreams come true. Writing to her friend, Mrs. Whitman, its designer, she expressed the key-note of her noble spirit and her life of service.

"But how the days fly by, as if one were riding the horse of Fate and could only look this way and that, as one rides and flies across the world. Oh, if we did not *look back* and try to change the lost days! if we can only keep our faces towards the light and remember that whatever happens or has happened, we must hold fast to *hope*! I never forget the great window. I long for you to feel a new strength and peace every day as you work at it, -- a new love and longing. The light from heaven must already shine through it into your heart."

Outlook 99 (Nov 25, 1911), p. 785.

At the farthest remove from the mood which makes Montaigne's essays an intimate record of personality are the Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett, edited by her friend Mrs. James T. Fields; a slender volume full of the quiet energy, the revealing sympathy, the patient modesty of the author of half a dozen books of stories that are likely to be read when many vociferous and loudly trumpeted novels are forgotten. There is very little about art in these letters, for their writer was more concerned with the practice of art than with his philosophy; but there are delightful glimpses of the background of Miss Jewett's life, of the landscape of her sympathetic and veracious studies of New England character, of her attitude of mind and her habits of work; in a word, this book of gentle memories is as near an autobiography, perhaps as near a biography, as we have a right to expect of a writer whose fine distinction had its root in her rare personality."

A. L. A. *Booklist* 8 (Dec 1911), p. 152.

A collection of letters to friends, almost complete enough to form an autobiography. They are delightfully simple and informal and contain much interesting comment on the literature and the writers of the past thirty years, many charming descriptions of persons and places, and some wise counsel to young writers. Illustrated with two attractive portraits and facsimile of Miss Jewett's poem 'In Gloucester.' A sketch of her life and appreciation of her personality is furnished by the editor, Mrs. J. T. Fields.

American Review of Reviews 44 (Dec 1911), p. 757.

The *Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett* have been collected and published by Miss Jewett's life-long friend, Mrs. James T. Fields. They present an interesting picture of the life of the authoress and reveal much of the gentle, womanly wisdom that came to us in her book *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. There are bits of nonsense and winsome humor in many of the letters, and one can trace many similarities to Swift's 'little language' in the journal to Stella. The book is illustrated with three portraits and one facsimile of a page of manuscript.

Indianapolis *Star*, (9 December 1911), p. 6.

Miss Sarah Orne Jewett, who wrote some of the best short stories in American literature, stories that portray native life and characters with an intimate and delicate comprehension that no one else has equaled, also wrote, it appears, equally delightful letters. Mrs. James T. Fields, who was for years Miss Jewett's close friend, publishes a volume of these letters. They were nearly all written to Mrs. Fields and extend over a period of many years. They almost form a diary, so continuous are they and so expressive of the writer's inner self. They disclose a beautiful personality, a sweet and gentle soul, a lover of the finer things of life and literature. She comments freely on books -- new ones as they appear from time and old ones that she also rereads to renew the first joy in them -- and what she says in her informal graceful way is discriminating and illuminating and causes wonder and regret that she never indulged in essay writing on similar themes for the public. Her stories were written with the simplicity of great art; in these intimate letters there is no thought of form or studied effort, yet they have their own charm and beautifully supplement her fiction. They will be read with interest by all who admire her work. Miss Jewett died in 1909.

New York *Times*, (18 February 1912), p. BR89.

It is a pity more people do not realize what they miss in leaving Sarah Orne Jewett's books unread. They are as thoroughly feminine in their understanding and view of life as are Jane Austen's, possessing nothing of that masculine grasp which makes the books of Sand and Eliot rather the work of artists than of women. But for this very reason the New Englander's stories have a quite particular charm and value, a quality inherently womanly, yet none the less human, wise and rich. A sense of fun runs through them all like a silver brook, and a rare sympathy for everyday folk unites them. Village annals, sincere and simple, in which joy and suffering, sorrow and self-sacrifice, good and evil go about quietly, without fuss or parade. They are full of drama and singularly alive.

It is not the seven slender volumes* of fiction she left behind her of which we have here to speak, however, but of the collection of Miss Jewett's "Letters" made and edited by Mrs. Annie Fields, (Houghton Mifflin Company, \$1.50,) a book largely made up of extracts from letters written to the latter, though many letters to other people are included, notably a number to the T. B. Aldriches, Aldrich then being editor of *The Atlantic*, in which so many of Miss Jewett's stories appeared; to George

Woodberry, Sarah Norton, Mrs. Ward and Mrs. George Howe. The volume opens with a short, informal sketch of the main incidents in an uneventful life, and an appreciation of a character whose felicities the ensuing pages confirm and emphasize. The letters are indeed a treat.

Most of them are written from the small village in Maine where Miss Jewett was born, and where she lived all her life, South Berwick, a quaint little place up the river from Portsmouth, N. H. She loved this place dearly, and most of her characters and plots are concerned with it. But she went several times to England and the Continent, meeting many of the literary people of the day, and of these travelings and encounters others of the letters give charming glimpses. In all of them is perceptible a fine and serene temperament, a mind awake to everything beautiful and capable of finding it in unlikely spots, a keen sensitiveness to the experiences of her friends, with youthful, fresh enthusiasm that lasts to the end.

Altogether it is an admirable book to take up, revealing a rare personality, one lovable and generous. It ought to send many readers to Miss Jewett's stories, the stories of which their author says in one of the letters: "Who does them? I'm sure I don't." Certainly no one else could, for they are as individual as is the correspondence itself, though they have to do with other people's experiences and are hardly ever autobiographical.

Note

seven slender volumes: This number probably refers to a then recent collected edition of Jewett's short fiction. In fact, during her lifetime, she published some eighteen volumes of fiction, not all of them slim.

From the Jewett Correspondence

6 May 1910 Annie Fields to Isabella Stewart Gardner

I am busy now preparing a book of letters of my dear Sarah. I hope all her friends will send me any which they may have preserved. I do not mean to make a large or a tiresome book, -- one only large enough to show her qualities of mind and heart.

12 June 1910 Annie Fields to George Edward Woodberry

Meanwhile I am going on with the congenial easy service of putting the little book of S.O.J.'s

Letters together, among which yours take such a foremost place, I have made a brief introduction to my own letters with which the little volume will end -- because it appeared to be needed to round the whole into form....

I have endeavored to cut profitably for Sarah's keen taste and judgment, without cutting out the dear human natural element which was a distinguishing quality or her honesty.

5 March 1911 Annie Fields to Louise Imogen Guiney

It seems to me on the whole pretty sad work this printing of letters! And yet what a joy letters have been to the world! But they do require a vast deal before and after and undertaking! of acquirement, of fulfilment of native character, of wit and wisdom, of unselfishness or devotion -- all this to make them useful and to be desired by the human race.

1 October 1911 Robert Collyer to Annie Adams Fields

The Book came safe and sound and I am head on and heart on to page 85 at bed time last evening -- with my pencil in my hand, and only wish your Introduction was longer -- The story so far is a new revelation of her life to me, and will be to the end. Tender to tears now and then or wreathed in smiles to which I answer unbeknowing as like as not -- only you could have made the selection as it stands and if she could speak from the heavens she would thank you, but her host of friends and yours will thank you as I do....

27 October 1911 Mary Augusta Ward to Annie Adams Fields

The charming book has arrived, and Dorothy and I have been browsing in it ... But I have read enough to see how truly & purely these letters reflect the schöne seele that dear Sarah was, & how tactfully & wisely you have put them together.... How beautiful is the frontispiece!*

Verses 1916

Clara and Carl Weber, in *A Bibliography of the Published Writings of Sarah Orne Jewett*, explain that this posthumous selection of Jewett's poems was prepared by Mark A. DeWolfe Howe and printed by D. B. Updike, the Merrymount Press, Boston (24).

This privately printed book received no reviews in the major American magazines. I have collected two letters from friends responding to this publication.

23 March 1916 Josie Dexter to Mary Rice Jewett

I am so pleased to have the book -- The little dear Stories -- do bring out dear Sarah's delightful humor -- like nobody else --

19 October 1916 Lily Fairchild to Mary Rice Jewett

The precious little volume has come. I have of course read it through before telling you of its arrival. I say I have read it -- but truly I have heard dear Sarah's voice in my ears, and have seen her lovely face on every page. You have given all her friends this boon of intimacy I know, & we are all together this day in the companionship out of earth which always means for me "The Communion of the Saints." Surely in some such way of love shall we all meet --

I find I didn't know the "Boat Song" and the "Top of the Hill" -- but I know the first is for the Lower Landing (as I shall always think of it) and the second a place Sarah drove me to -- was it Sarah or was it you, dear Mary? You two are so mingled in my thoughts! But I know the place: just how the land stretches away from the deserted dwelling.

I cannot be too thankful that you have done this thing and preserved the lovely verses. And I send corrected my dearest thanks to you for my copy. The next time you are here I must show you my Dunluce -- because I sadly miss in the book the other stanzas she wrote for me.