

TALES OF HENRY JAMES



SELECTED AND EDITED BY
CHRISTOF WEGELIN
AND HENRY B. WONHAM

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
SECOND EDITION

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THE TEXTS OF THE TALES
THE AUTHOR ON HIS CRAFT
CRITICISM

SECOND EDITION

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UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

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Preface to the First Edition

Henry James published his first story in 1864 and in the half-century that followed produced twenty novels and a hundred and twelve shorter narratives that he usually called tales. Although probably best known for his novels, he took his shorter works just as seriously: when he came to represent his life's work in the so-called New York Edition he called it *The Novels and Tales of Henry James*. Some of the novels are short and some of the tales very long, so that the distinction between them may seem arbitrary. Of course length is not the only difference between novels and what today we call short stories. But publishing conditions forced James to be concerned with questions of length, and the nine tales in the present collection illustrate his range in this regard. "Brooksmith," with barely eight thousand words, is one of James's shortest tales; "The Aspern Papers," with almost forty thousand, approaches novel length. The nine tales also exemplify other formal variations. They are told from different points of view, for instance, in the first or third person, by narrators either detached from the action or participating in it to varying degrees. Some of James's favorite subjects and themes are here—the international scene, problems encountered by writers and artists, the human being haunted by visible and invisible ghosts, the exposure of children in the adult world, tyranny in its many guises, among them the willingness to make use of others, which is the closest approach Jamesian characters make to villainy.

The nine stories span most of James's long career. They are reproduced here as they first appeared in books (all but one originally appeared in magazines) and presumably as proofread by the author himself. The texts here presented therefore illustrate the development of his prose style. Occasional inconsistencies in spelling, e.g., *dependant* in "The Middle Years" and *dependent* in "The Beast in the Jungle," have been left standing. But rare typographical errors have been corrected silently, quotation marks have been brought into consistent accord with American usage—double instead of single—and the occasional and now strange printing of contractions—e.g., "had n't" for "hadn't" or "did n't" for "didn't"—normalized.

James was also a practicing critic throughout his career, and his essay "The Art of Fiction" is here offered as an early statement of principles that he never abandoned. Although the essay speaks of novelists and novels, it concerns fiction in general, including short forms. Problems of length and other technical problems of short fiction are discussed in the prefaces that James wrote much later for the New York Edition. There he often "remounts the stream of time" or "the stream of composition" to recall the source of a particular story, the *donnée* or "germ" from which it evolved, and sometimes the thought processes by which it did so. Most of the passages in the prefaces that bear on the tales in this collection, as well as pertinent passages from James's notebooks and letters, are included in the section entitled "The Author on His Craft."

James continues to receive more critical attention than most other American authors. Some general essays on his background and his work, as well as essays on individual stories, are here reproduced. In selecting them my aim has been to enlarge and sharpen the reader's sense of James's mind and artistry. Choosing a few pages out of the enormous mass available has made painful decisions necessary, and readers dismayed by omissions must draw what comfort they can from the editor's fellowship.

The staffs of the University of Oregon Library, of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections of the Princeton University Library, and of the University of Oregon English Department have been helpful in many ways. Substantial assistance and advice has come from colleagues and students, among them above all Heather Derby, E. G. Moll, Jeffrey Porter, A. K. Weatherhead, and Oliver Willard, and from W. W. Norton's own Barry Wade. To all of them thanks.

C. W.

Preface to the Second Edition

The nearly twenty years that have elapsed since Christof Wegelin's *Tales of Henry James: A Norton Critical Edition* made its debut in 1984 have been eventful ones for James studies. While the canon of American literature has undergone radical change, James has emerged all the more clearly as an indispensable figure, and he continues to receive as much critical attention as any American writer. To be sure, interest in James has evolved with the times, and contemporary debates about his work are more likely to focus on issues of "homosexual panic" or the rise of information technology than on the "international theme." In preparing the second edition of the *Tales of Henry James*, we have tried to offer readers an impression of the richness of James studies, past and present, by selecting texts, background material, and critical excerpts that touch on as many points of interest as possible. This approach has led us to preserve large portions of the first edition intact, but we have also introduced changes to give a new generation of James readers a sense of his uncanny contemporaneity. To this end, we have reluctantly omitted "An International Episode" in order to make room for "In the Cage," a tale that engages James's complex attitudes toward gender, class, and emerging technologies associated with modern communication. The most significant revisions to the first edition appear in the "Criticism" section, which includes ten new selections by writers who have helped to establish the terms of debate about James's tales during the last quarter century. While they are by no means the most recent or the most fashionable examples of James criticism, we hope the selections provided here will expose readers to an exciting variety of critical approaches to his work. The "painful decisions" that produced the first edition of this book have only become more painful with the passage of time and the great outpouring of intelligent commentary on the works of "the master." Readers dismayed by omissions and difficult choices are thus once again invited to draw what comfort they can from the fellowship of the editors.

In addition to the assistance of those institutions and individuals already mentioned in the preface to the first edition, we have received very helpful advice from a variety of scholars, including

Susan Griffin, John Carlos Rowe, Eric Haralson, Michael Anesko, Ross Posnock, and Gary Scharnhorst. Connie Wonham proofread the entire manuscript and thus saved us and Henry James from numerous embarrassing errors. Carol Bemis and Brian Baker of Norton have also provided unstinting guidance and support. We thank them all for their generosity.

C. W., H. W.

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The Texts of
THE TALES



Daisy Miller: A Study[†]

I

At the little town of Vevey, in Switzerland, there is a particularly comfortable hotel. There are, indeed, many hotels; for the entertainment of tourists is the business of the place, which, as many travellers will remember, is seated upon the edge of a remarkably blue lake¹—a lake that it behoves every tourist to visit. The shore of the lake presents an unbroken array of establishments of this order, of every category, from the “grand hotel” of the newest fashion, with a chalk-white front, a hundred balconies, and a dozen flags flying from its roof, to the little Swiss *pension* of an elder day, with its name inscribed in German-looking lettering upon a pink or yellow wall, and an awkward summer-house in the angle of the garden. One of the hotels at Vevey, however, is famous, even classical, being distinguished from many of its upstart neighbors by an air both of luxury and of maturity. In this region, in the month of June, American travellers are extremely numerous; it may be said, indeed, that Vevey assumes at this period some of the characteristics of an American watering-place. There are sights and sounds which evoke a vision, an echo, of Newport and Saratoga.² There is a flitting hither and thither of “stylish” young girls, a rustling of muslin flounces, a rattle of dance-music in the morning hours, a sound of high-pitched voices at all times. You receive an impression of these things at the excellent inn of the “Trois Couronnes,”³ and are transported in fancy to the Ocean House or to Congress Hall. But at the “Trois Couronnes,” it must be added, there are other features that are much at variance with these suggestions: neat German waiters, who look like secretaries of legation; Russian prin-

[†] “Daisy Miller: A Study” first appeared in *Cornhill Magazine*, June–July 1878. Its first appearance in a book was in America in Harper’s Half-Hour Series as volume I of *Daisy Miller: A Study/An International Episode/Four Meetings*, published in November 1878. James was in England at the time and did not supervise this edition. The text reprinted here follows the first English Edition published under the same title by Macmillan and Co. in February 1879.

1. Lake Geneva.

2. Newport, Rhode Island, and Saratoga Springs, New York, were resorts.

3. “Three Crowns.” The Ocean House and Congress Hall were hotels in Newport and Saratoga, respectively.

cesses sitting in the garden; little Polish boys walking about, held by the hand, with their governors; a view of the snowy crest of the Dent du Midi and the picturesque towers of the Castle of Chillon.⁴

I hardly know whether it was the analogies or the differences that were uppermost in the mind of a young American, who, two or three years ago, sat in the garden of the "Trois Couronnes," looking about him, rather idly, at some of the graceful objects I have mentioned. It was a beautiful summer morning, and in whatever fashion the young American looked at things, they must have seemed to him charming. He had come from Geneva the day before, by the little steamer, to see his aunt, who was staying at the hotel—Geneva having been for a long time his place of residence. But his aunt had a headache—his aunt had almost always a headache—and now she was shut up in her room, smelling camphor, so that he was at liberty to wander about. He was some seven-and-twenty years of age; when his friends spoke of him, they usually said that he was at Geneva, "studying." When his enemies spoke of him they said—but, after all, he had no enemies; he was an extremely amiable fellow, and universally liked. What I should say is, simply, that when certain persons spoke of him they affirmed that the reason of his spending so much time at Geneva was that he was extremely devoted to a lady who lived there—a foreign lady—a person older than himself. Very few Americans—indeed I think none—had ever seen this lady, about whom there were some singular stories. But Winterbourne had an old attachment for the little metropolis of Calvinism;⁵ he had been put to school there as a boy, and he had afterwards gone to college there—circumstances which had led to his forming a great many youthful friendships. Many of these he had kept, and they were a source of great satisfaction to him.

After knocking at his aunt's door and learning that she was indisposed, he had taken a walk about the town, and then he had come in to his breakfast. He had now finished his breakfast; but he was drinking a small cup of coffee, which had been served to him on a little table in the garden by one of the waiters who looked like an *attaché*. At last he finished his coffee and lit a cigarette. Presently a small boy came walking along the path—an urchin of nine or ten. The child, who was diminutive for his years, had an aged expression of countenance, a pale complexion, and sharp little features. He was dressed in knickerbockers, with red stockings, which displayed his poor little spindleshanks; he also wore a brilliant red cravat.

4. A medieval castle built on a small rocky island in Lake Geneva, made famous among English speakers by Byron's poem "The Prisoner of Chillon" (1816). The Dent du Midi is a mountain south of Vevey (hence its name: "tooth of the south").

5. Geneva, where the French reformer Jean Calvin (1509–1564), the founder of the theological system of Calvinism, organized a Protestant republic.

He carried in his hand a long alpenstock, the sharp point of which he thrust into everything that he approached—the flower-beds, the garden-benches, the trains of the ladies' dresses. In front of Winterbourne he paused, looking at him with a pair of bright, penetrating little eyes.

"Will you give me a lump of sugar?" he asked, in a sharp, hard little voice—a voice immature, and yet, somehow, not young.

Winterbourne glanced at the small table near him, on which his coffee-service rested, and saw that several morsels of sugar remained. "Yes, you may take one," he answered; "but I don't think sugar is good for little boys."

This little boy stepped forward and carefully selected three of the coveted fragments, two of which he buried in the pocket of his knickerbockers, depositing the other as promptly in another place. He poked his alpenstock, lance-fashion, into Winterbourne's bench, and tried to crack the lump of sugar with his teeth.

"Oh, blazes; it's har-r-d!" he exclaimed, pronouncing the adjective in a peculiar manner.

Winterbourne had immediately perceived that he might have the honour of claiming him as a fellow-countryman. "Take care you don't hurt your teeth," he said, paternally.

"I haven't got any teeth to hurt. They have all come out. I have only got seven teeth. My mother counted them last night, and one came out right afterwards. She said she'd slap me if any more came out. I can't help it. It's this old Europe. It's the climate that makes them come out. In America they didn't come out. It's these hotels."

Winterbourne was much amused. "If you eat three lumps of sugar, your mother will certainly slap you," he said.

"She's got to give me some candy, then," rejoined his young interlocutor. "I can't get any candy here—any American candy. American candy's the best candy."

"And are American little boys the best little boys?" asked Winterbourne.

"I don't know. I'm an American boy," said the child.

"I see you are one of the best!" laughed Winterbourne.

"Are you an American man?" pursued this vivacious infant. And then, on Winterbourne's affirmative reply—"American men are the best," he declared.

His companion thanked him for the compliment; and the child, who had now got astride of his alpenstock, stood looking about him, while he attacked a second lump of sugar. Winterbourne wondered if he himself had been like this in his infancy, for he had been brought to Europe at about this age.

"Here comes my sister!" cried the child, in a moment. "She's an American girl."

The young girl glanced over the front of her dress, and smoothed out a knot or two of ribbon. Then she rested her eyes upon the prospect again. "Well, I guess you had better leave it somewhere," she said, after a moment.

"Are you going to Italy?" Winterbourne inquired, in a tone of great respect.

The young lady glanced at him again.

"Yes, sir," she replied. And she said nothing more.

"Are you—a—going over the Simplon?" Winterbourne pursued, a little embarrassed.

"I don't know," she said. "I suppose it's some mountain. Randolph, what mountain are we going over?"

"Going where?" the child demanded.

"To Italy," Winterbourne explained.

"I don't know," said Randolph. "I don't want to go to Italy. I want to go to America."

"Oh, Italy is a beautiful place!" rejoined the young man.

"Can you get candy there?" Randolph loudly inquired.

"I hope not," said his sister. "I guess you have had enough candy, and mother thinks so too."

"I haven't had any for ever so long—for a hundred weeks!" cried the boy, still jumping about.

The young lady inspected her flounces and smoothed her ribbons again; and Winterbourne presently risked an observation upon the beauty of the view. He was ceasing to be embarrassed, for he had begun to perceive that she was not in the least embarrassed herself. There had not been the slightest alteration in her charming complexion; she was evidently neither offended nor fluttered. If she looked another way when he spoke to her, and seemed not particularly to hear him, this was simply her habit, her manner. Yet, as he talked a little more, and pointed out some of the objects of interest in the view, with which she appeared quite unacquainted, she gradually gave him more of the benefit of her glance; and then he saw that this glance was perfectly direct and unshrinking. It was not, however, what would have been called an immodest glance, for the young girl's eyes were singularly honest and fresh. They were wonderfully pretty eyes; and, indeed, Winterbourne had not seen for a long time anything prettier than his fair countrywoman's various features—her complexion, her nose, her ears, her teeth. He had a great relish for feminine beauty; he was addicted to observing and analysing it; and as regards this young lady's face he made several observations. It was not at all insipid, but it was not exactly expressive; and though it was eminently delicate Winterbourne mentally accused it—very forgivingly—of a want of finish. He thought it very possible that Master Randolph's sister was a co-

quette; he was sure she had a spirit of her own; but in her bright, sweet, superficial little visage there was no mockery, no irony. Before long it became obvious that she was much disposed towards conversation. She told him that they were going to Rome for the winter—she and her mother and Randolph. She asked him if he was a “real American”; she wouldn’t have taken him for one; he seemed more like a German—this was said after a little hesitation, especially when he spoke. Winterbourne, laughing, answered that he had met Germans who spoke like Americans; but that he had not, so far as he remembered, met an American who spoke like a German. Then he asked her if she would not be more comfortable in sitting upon the bench which he had just quitted. She answered that she liked standing up and walking about; but she presently sat down. She told him she was from New York State—“if you know where that is.” Winterbourne learned more about her by catching hold of her small, slippery brother and making him stand a few minutes by his side.

“Tell me your name, my boy,” he said.

“Randolph C. Miller,” said the boy, sharply. “And I’ll tell you her name”; and he levelled his alpenstock at his sister.

“You had better wait till you are asked!” said this young lady, calmly.

“I should like very much to know your name,” said Winterbourne.

“Her name is Daisy Miller!” cried the child. “But that isn’t her real name; that isn’t her name on her cards.”

“It’s a pity you haven’t got one of my cards!” said Miss Miller.

“Her real name is Annie P. Miller,” the boy went on.

“Ask him *his* name,” said his sister, indicating Winterbourne.

But on this point Randolph seemed perfectly indifferent; he continued to supply information with regard to his own family. “My father’s name is Ezra B. Miller,” he announced. “My father ain’t in Europe; my father’s in a better place than Europe.”

Winterbourne imagined for a moment that this was the manner in which the child had been taught to intimate that Mr. Miller had been removed to the sphere of celestial rewards. But Randolph immediately added, “My father’s in Schenectady. He’s got a big business. My father’s rich, you bet.”

“Well!” ejaculated Miss Miller, lowering her parasol and looking at the embroidered border. Winterbourne presently released the child, who departed, dragging his alpenstock along the path. “He doesn’t like Europe,” said the young girl. “He wants to go back.”

“To Schenectady, you mean?”

“Yes; he wants to go right home. He hasn’t got any boys here. There is one boy here, but he always goes round with a teacher; they won’t let him play.”

"And your brother hasn't any teacher?" Winterbourne inquired.

"Mother thought of getting him one, to travel round with us. There was a lady told her of a very good teacher; an American lady—perhaps you know her—Mrs. Sanders. I think she came from Boston. She told her of this teacher, and we thought of getting him to travel round with us. But Randolph said he didn't want a teacher travelling round with us. He said he wouldn't have lessons when he was in the cars.⁶ And we *are* in the cars about half the time. There was an English lady we met in the cars—I think her name was Miss Featherstone; perhaps you know her. She wanted to know why I didn't give Randolph lessons—give him "instruction," she called it. I guess he could give me more instruction than I could give him. He's very smart."

"Yes," said Winterbourne; "he seems very smart."

"Mother's going to get a teacher for him as soon as we get to Italy. Can you get good teachers in Italy?"

"Very good, I should think," said Winterbourne.

"Or else she's going to find some school. He ought to learn some more. He's only nine. He's going to college." And in this way Miss Miller continued to converse upon the affairs of her family, and upon other topics. She sat there with her extremely pretty hands, ornamented with very brilliant rings, folded in her lap, and with her pretty eyes now resting upon those of Winterbourne, now wandering over the garden, the people who passed by, and the beautiful view. She talked to Winterbourne as if she had known him a long time. He found it very pleasant. It was many years since he had heard a young girl talk so much. It might have been said of this unknown young lady, who had come and sat down beside him upon a bench, that she chattered. She was very quiet, she sat in a charming tranquil attitude; but her lips and her eyes were constantly moving. She had a soft, slender, agreeable voice, and her tone was decidedly sociable. She gave Winterbourne a history of her movements and intentions, and those of her mother and brother, in Europe, and enumerated, in particular, the various hotels at which they had stopped. "That English lady in the cars," she said—"Miss Featherstone—asked me if we didn't all live in hotels in America. I told her I had never been in so many hotels in my life as since I came to Europe. I have never seen so many—it's nothing but hotels." But Miss Miller did not make this remark with a querulous accent; she appeared to be in the best humour with everything. She declared that the hotels were very good, when once you got used to their ways, and that Europe was perfectly sweet. She was not disappointed—not a bit. Perhaps it was because she had heard so

6. Railroad cars.