

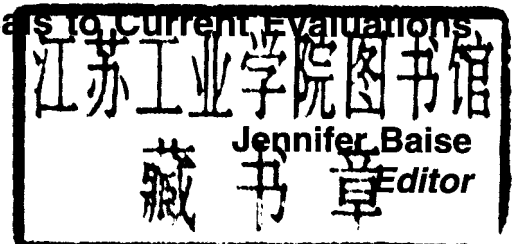
Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

TCLC

97

Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism

**Criticism of the
Works of Novelists, Poets, Playwrights,
Short Story Writers, and Other Creative Writers
Who Lived between 1900 and 1999,
from the First Published Critical
Appraisals to Current Evaluations**



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Preface

Since its inception more than fifteen years ago, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism* (*TCLC*) has been purchased and used by nearly 10,000 school, public, and college or university libraries. *TCLC* has covered more than 500 authors, representing 58 nationalities and over 25,000 titles. No other reference source has surveyed the critical response to twentieth-century authors and literature as thoroughly as *TCLC*. In the words of one reviewer, “there is nothing comparable available.” *TCLC* “is a gold mine of information—dates, pseudonyms, biographical information, and criticism from books and periodicals—which many librarians would have difficulty assembling on their own.”

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TCLC is designed to serve as an introduction to authors who died between 1900 and 1999 and to the most significant interpretations of these author’s works. Volumes published from 1978 through 1999 included authors who died between 1900 and 1960. The great poets, novelists, short story writers, playwrights, and philosophers of the period are frequently studied in high school and college literature courses. In organizing and reprinting the vast amount of critical material written on these authors, *TCLC* helps students develop valuable insight into literary history, promotes a better understanding of the texts, and sparks ideas for papers and assignments. Each entry in *TCLC* presents a comprehensive survey on an author’s career or an individual work of literature and provides the user with a multiplicity of interpretations and assessments. Such variety allows students to pursue their own interests; furthermore, it fosters an awareness that literature is dynamic and responsive to many different opinions.

Every fourth volume of *TCLC* is devoted to literary topics. These topics widen the focus of the series from the individual authors to such broader subjects as literary movements, prominent themes in twentieth-century literature, literary reaction to political and historical events, significant eras in literary history, prominent literary anniversaries, and the literatures of cultures that are often overlooked by English-speaking readers.

TCLC is designed as a companion series to Gale’s *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, (*CLC*) which reprints commentary on authors who died after 1999. Because of the different time periods under consideration, there is no duplication of material between *CLC* and *TCLC*.

Organization of the Book

A *TCLC* entry consists of the following elements:

- The **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and death dates. Also located here are any name variations under which an author wrote, including transliterated forms for authors whose native languages use nonroman alphabets. If the author wrote consistently under a pseudonym, the pseudonym will be listed in the author heading and the author’s actual name given in parentheses on the first line of the biographical and critical information. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Single-work entries are preceded by a heading that consists of the most common form of the title in English translation (if applicable) and the original date of composition.
- A **Portrait of the Author** is included when available.
- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author, work, or topic that is the subject of the entry.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The genre and publication date of each work is given. In the case of foreign authors whose

works have been translated into English, the English-language version of the title follows in brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance, not first publication.

- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. All titles by the author featured in the text are printed in boldface type. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included.
- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism.
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.
- An annotated bibliography of **Further Reading** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. In some cases, significant essays for which the editors could not obtain reprint rights are included here. Boxed material following the further reading list provides references to other biographical and critical sources on the author in series published by Gale.

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An alphabetical **Title Index** accompanies each volume of *TCLC*. Listings of titles by authors covered in the given volume are followed by the author's name and the corresponding page numbers where the titles are discussed. English translations of foreign titles and variations of titles are cross-referenced to the title under which a work was originally published. Titles of novels, dramas, nonfiction books, and poetry, short story, or essay collections are printed in italics, while individual poems, short stories, and essays are printed in roman type within quotation marks.

In response to numerous suggestions from librarians, Gale also produces an annual paperbound edition of the *TCLC* cumulative title index. This annual cumulation, which alphabetically lists all titles reviewed in the series, is available to all customers. Additional copies of this index are available upon request. Librarians and patrons will welcome this separate index; it saves shelf space, is easy to use, and is recyclable upon receipt of the next edition.

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William H. Slavick, "Going to School to DuBose Heyward," *The Harlem Renaissance Re-examined*, ed. Victor A. Kramer (AMS, 1987), 65- 91; reprinted in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, vol. 59, ed. Jennifer Garipey (Detroit: The Gale Group, 1995), 94-105.

Suggestions are Welcome

Readers who wish to suggest new features, topics, or authors to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions or comments are cordially invited to call, write, or fax the Managing Editor:

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Hall Caine

1853-1931

(Full name Thomas Henry Hall Caine) English novelist, autobiographer, critic, and playwright.

INTRODUCTION

A prolific and commercially successful author in his time, Caine wrote melodramatic and moralistic novels. In his work his main purpose was to champion a strict sense of moral standards that he felt were lacking in early-twentieth-century England. Considered didactic, sensational, and pretentious, his work is virtually ignored today.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Caine was born on May 14, 1853, in Runcorn, Cheshire, England. Several years of his childhood were spent on the Isle of Man, which became the primary setting of his later fiction. At the age of fourteen, he left home to study architecture in Liverpool. In 1878 he delivered a lecture at the Free Library in Liverpool on Dante Gabriel Rossetti, which inspired a friendship with the poet. This relationship resulted in *Recollections of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, a memoir of Rossetti's final years. Caine worked as a journalist for the *Liverpool Mercury*, and the paper later serialized his first novel, *A Shadow of a Crime*, in 1885. After modest success with his first few works of fiction, he quit his job and returned to the Isle of Man to write full-time. In 1887 his novel *The Deemster* became his first bestseller. After several more commercially successful novels and dramatic interpretations of his fiction, he became a well-known cultural figure in early-twentieth-century England. From 1901 to 1908 he was a Liberal member of Parliament. During World War I he worked as a correspondent for the *New York Times* and wrote a series of articles urging America to join the war. For these patriotic efforts, he was knighted. On August 31, 1931, Caine died at Greeba Castle, his home on the Isle of Man.

MAJOR WORKS

Caine's work is characterized by strident moralizing and sensational, often melodramatic, plots. Most of his fiction is set in the Isle of Man, his home for most of his life. In *The Christian* a stubborn young girl embraces religious fervor because of the charming attentions of a compelling clergyman. Set on the Isle of Man in the eighteenth century, *The Deemster* chronicles the fall and redemption of a young killer condemned to live in exile for many years to pay for his crime. Told over three volumes, its



themes are often compared to those of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The plot of his most ambitious novel, *The Eternal City*, spans seven decades. Set in Rome, the novel follows the parallel careers of two men: the political Rossi and the spiritual Roma. *The Eternal City* was the first million-selling novel in England and influenced early film makers such as D. W. Griffith.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Although astoundingly popular with the reading public during his lifetime, in recent years Caine's work has been assessed as melodramatic, didactic, and dull. Critics often bemoan the lack of humor and perspective in his fiction and drama. Stylistically, his work is perceived as inferior for its crude plot devices, superficial characterizations, and heavy-handed approach. Some scholars, such as Max Beer-bohm, blame Caine's self-centered nature and lust for publicity for his lackluster literary efforts. These negative assessments have done much to diminish Caine's reputation and his place amongst early-twentieth-century English authors.

PRINCIPAL WORKS

Recollections of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (memoirs) 1882
Cobwebs of Criticism (criticism) 1883
The Shadow of a Crime (novel) 1885
She's All the World to Me (novel) 1885
The Deemster (novel) 1887
Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (criticism) 1887
A Son of Hagar (novel) 1887
The Bondman: A New Saga (novel) 1889
Yan, The Icelander; or, Home Sweet Home (drama) 1900
The Scapegoat (novel) 1891
The Bondman (drama) 1892
Capt'n Davey's Honeymoon, The Last Confession, The Blind Mother (short stories) 1892
The Manxman (novel) 1894
The Christian (novel) 1897
The Eternal City (novel) 1901
The Prodigal Son (novel) 1904
Drink: A Love Story on a Great Question (novel) 1906
The Fatal Error (drama) 1908
My Story (autobiography) 1909
The White Prophet (novel) 1909
The Woman Thou Gavest Me (novel) 1913
The Iron Hand (drama) 1916
The Prime Minister (drama) 1916
The Master of Man (novel) 1921
The Woman of Knockaloe: A Parable (novel) 1923

CRITICISM

The Nation (essay date 1909)

SOURCE: A review of *My Story*, by Hall Caine, Vol. 88, No. 2280, 1909, pp. 256-57.

[In the following review, the critic offers a favorable assessment of Caine's autobiography.]

It is a curious commentary on the literary life that the one chapter of Hall Caine's memoirs [*My Story*] to rouse wide discussion in England was the account of his income at the beginning of his career. One would never guess, from this discussion of pounds and pence, that the heart of the book was an intimate story of Rossetti's life in that muffled house at No. 16 Cheyne Walk and of his two incursions into the country for health. These memoirs, in fact, are merely the outcome, as Mr. Caine states in his introduction, of a desire to enlarge the little volume of recollections of Rossetti published immediately after the poet's death. Mr. Caine was a young clerk in Liverpool when he first attracted Rossetti's attention by a printed lecture in support of the morals of Rossetti's verse—just then a tender point with the author. A brisk correspondence ensued, chiefly on literary topics, half of which we shall no doubt have in print some day. For Rossetti's letters are

preserved and make a bulk of writing greater than all his published works. Then the younger man went to live with the elder and was at his side through all the trying months until Rossetti's death.

There is little that is new in the picture of Rossetti as we now get it. He was ailing in body, suffering from his chloral habit, convinced of a general conspiracy against him, a melancholy recluse, yet still showing on occasions those flashes of intellectual power that so imposed on all his contemporaries. Nothing is more remarkable to one who reads largely in the letters and memoirs of the middle Victorian period now appearing so rapidly, than the dominance of Rossetti over all who came in contact with him, and the extent of his influence. It is as another testimony to this force that Mr. Caine's work will owe its chief interest. On some points he is a valuable witness. He denies the rumor that the melancholy death of the poet's wife was the result of bitterness over Rossetti's wild courses, but he says nothing to dispel the belief that this fragile creature simply withered away in the atmosphere of overloaded thought and emotion for which she was totally unfit. It was this, we believe, rather than neglect or knowledge of Rossetti's vain love for another woman, that killed her. When Mr. Caine raises Rossetti "into the place of one of the great tragic figures of literature, one of the great lovers whose lives, as well as their works, speak to the depth of their love or the immensity of their remorse"—we are inclined to think the writer is putting some of his novelist's art to use, and our opinion is confirmed by such overstrung words as these:

Thus, too, the solitude of his [Rossetti's] last years, with its sleepless nights and its delusions born of indulgence in the drug, was not the result of morbid brooding over the insults of adverse critics, but of a deep-seated, if wholly unnecessary, sense as of a curse resting on him and on his work, whereof the malignity of criticism was only one of many manifestations.

The course of Rossetti's life was too nearly that of the typical ultra-romantic to need explanation by such an hypothesis of lasting love and remorse. One error of statement needs correction. Rossetti did not become acquainted with Burne-Jones and William Morris when he went to Oxford to paint the walls of the Union. He had been living in the closest intimacy with them in London before they undertook together that wild knight-errantry of art.

For the rest, Mr. Caine gives some fairly entertaining chapters on Ruskin, Wilkie Collins, Robert Buchanan, and others, and an altogether undue number of letters from these great men in praise of his own works of fiction. Perhaps the most striking minor portrait is that of Henry Irving playing a rôle in life as on the stage.

William Morton Payne (essay date 1913)

A review of *The Woman Thou Gavest Me* in *The Dial*, Vol. LV, No. 657, November 1, 1913, pp. 358-61.

[In the excerpt below, Payne derides Caine's novels as "slimy emotionalism, spiced as it is with bits of description as salacious as he dares to make them."]

Mr. Hall Caine requires nearly six hundred pages in which to tell the story of Mary O'Neill, the heroine of *The Woman Thou Gavest Me*. One hundred would have sufficed for all the story he has to tell, but the greater number permits him to slobber over his theme in the unrestrained and nauseating fashion that somehow seems to secure him a large following of readers. He draws his support from that subterranean or submerged public that is an eternal mystery to the critical intelligence, the public that is swayed by crude emotionalism, and upon which it seems possible to inflict any form of literary atrocity without incurring its resentment. Here is a book that will probably prove a "best seller," along with the lucubrations of Miss Corelli, Mr. Wright, and Mr. Chambers, and yet a book so offensive to anyone having the rudiments of good literary taste that its popular acceptance presents a problem in psychology that would have baffled even the comprehensive sympathies of William James. In its essence, the story seems to be a plea for the sanctity of illicit love, a brief for adultery, and an argument against the salutary laws by which church and state protect the marriage relation. Free-and-easy divorce is the ideal preached by so many of our moralists in fiction that marriage is fast losing, in the popular mind, not only its sacramental character, but even its validity as the essential basis of any civilized social order. It is the easiest thing in the world to construct such a situation as is presented in Mr. Caine's novel. Take an innocent girl, keep her ignorant of the seamy side of life, give her a training which brings her to womanhood with a flabby will and no sense of personal responsibility, and tie her by the marriage bond to a libertine and a profligate. Then let life become to her a hell upon earth, and pile up the agony with all the devices of sensational rhetoric. Then let the man whom she should have married appear upon the scene, and pile up more agony as she struggles against temptation. Finally, let her succumb, desert her husband, and have illegitimate issue by her lover. This is the approved formula, and when properly worked, makes a powerful appeal to the sympathies. Of course, the husband's brutality must be unmitigated, the seducer's virtues abundant and gloriously manifest, and the wife's saintly endurance carried to the point of heart-break. Thus the novelist "puts it over," ignoring only the vital facts that men and women are not as beasts of the field, that sacrifice is sometimes the appointed agency of the soul's salvation, and that the social obligation is paramount to the most imperious demands of the hot individual will. Mr. Caine has the whole evil argument at his tongue's end, urging all the old sophisticated pleas for making the worse appear the better reason, and failing only of his desired effect because of his capacity for slobbering, because of the almost incredible rawness of his style, and because of his inability to make of even his leading characters anything more lifelike than wooden dummies upon which to hang his discussion. His own public will not be disturbed by such things as these, but will wallow

delightedly in the trough of his slimy emotionalism, spiced as it is with bits of description as salacious as he dares to make them.

P. Morton Shand (essay date 1926)

SOURCE: "Sir Hall Caine and the Greatest Public," in *The London Mercury*, Vol. XIV, No. 80, June, 1926, pp. 156-69.

[In the following essay, Shand discusses the defining characteristics of Caine's fiction.]

It is often one of the most baffling tasks for criticism to discover wherein lies the wider appeal of a book, and especially of those modern novels which, though they sell in hundreds of thousands, are usually considered rank outlaws from the province of fine literature. The problem, if not altogether new, is as recent as the coming of age of that vast body of potential readers enfranchised by the passing of the Education Acts. There have been many "popular" writers of English fiction in the past, from Richardson to Lord Lytton and Mrs. Aphra Behn to Mrs. Henry Wood, but the first English novelist to win a public on what may, perhaps, be called the grand scale was Dickens. Dickens did not merely break fallow ground in writing about "the lower orders"; he wrote, quite definitely, as much for, as concerning, them. Indeed, the criticism levelled against him in his day was that, in contrast to Thackeray, he was unable to draw the portrait of a gentleman. With Dickens, then, that deliberate appeal to the wider and ever-growing reading public may be said to have begun: an appeal which necessarily entailed certain important modifications of accepted literary conventions, together with the sacrifice of the more austere and purely intellectual standards of culture. It is easy to dismiss enquiry into the extended popularity of an author, or a book, with contemptuous sarcasm, for the taste of half-educated minds. This is not criticism, and leaves the problem itself untouched. Some merit there must be, whether "literary" or not; otherwise people would not buy these books in prodigious quantities. The 1921 figures show that of *The Eternal City* (published 1901) a million copies of the English edition alone had been sold; *The Christian* (1897)—655,000; *The Prodigal Son* (1904)—500,000; *The Woman Thou Gavest Me* (1913)—475,000; *The Bondman* (1890)—470,000; *The Manxman* (1894)—400,000; and of *The Deemster* (1887) fifty-two editions. The translations range through every language from modern Greek to Japanese.

Popular authors reflect accurately the culture, morals and ideals, together with the prevalent level of literacy, of the great mass of the population in their age, and thus offer more information for the social historian than works of finer craftsmanship, which enjoy a more restricted appreciation and less immediate influence. Were we a Latin people, it is possible that the bulk of the wage-earners of

the Industrial Era would have turned to a harsh and bitter realism in which life was painted for them brutally as they knew it, or to ruthless satires on those who exclusively enjoy the earth and the fullness thereof. In this country, reading made the masses desire romantic virtues, romantic vices, and a romantic setting in fiction and the drama. The English, a people stoutly realistic of outlook in the past, have become increasingly romantic in mentality since the dawn of the Factory Age and the growth of the great manufacturing towns. Romanticism begat emotionalism, which in turn begat sentimentality. Wesley and the Evangelical Movement were the first symptoms of what was to prove a rapid and sweeping change in the national temperament. After the hysteria of the Mafeking celebrations in 1900 it became impossible for us to be considered any longer the reserved, undemonstrative race which foreign observers had hitherto declared us to be. The inevitable reaction from the drudgery and monotony of existence in the mean surroundings of the workers in factories and offices, bred, especially among women, a desire to "escape from life," its grim realities, drab duties and cheerless responsibilities, by the opiate of a fiction largely remote from human nature or daily life, as these knew them, though with a factitious resemblance to both. The more sanguine spirits, especially among the youths, turned to books of adventure and mystery, and particularly to detective stories. Thus do the heroines and heroes of popular fiction, sublimations in idealism of the girl at her typewriter or bench of spindles, the boy at his desk or shop-counter, become endowed with glamour. They never waver in a sublime faith in Prince Charming, or relax from the pursuit of the Golden Girl, till the "happily ever afterwards" of a full choral service crowns their ultimate romances at the cathedral steps. These are spared all preoccupations with earning their own living, clocking-in, rent, fuel, food, wear and tear of boot-leather; or if, perchance, some concession to actuality is made in this direction it is in a manner wholly unconvincing but sovereignly genteel:

For the writer whose grip is strong, whose romance is really romantic, whose pathos is pathetic, whose power is powerful, there is an ever-increasing clamour . . . whether he is a journalist, novelist, or dramatist, whether he raises his curtain on tragedy or farce, in high life or low life, on the land or on the sea, an immense audience is always waiting to welcome him. . . . The theory of fiction, as I understand it, is not to offer mock history or a substitute for fact, but to present a thought in the form of a story, with as much realism as the requirements of idealism will permit.

What, then, is the nature of this idealism, which must be the first consideration in successful popular fiction? The answer, it would seem, is simply that roseate glamour which shall make any given story just romantically improbable enough to convince the reader that it could not have taken place in his own life or environment, and yet render it just realistic enough for him or her to feel that it might, perhaps, after all, were one granted "a second time on earth," have happened to his or her idealised self as well as to another. A simple instance of this sovereign compound is afforded by the short official interview in

Whitehall between the young Deemster Victor Stowell and the Home Secretary in *The Master of Man*. Asked whether he is married he answers that he is not, but hopes soon to be so:

"Daughter of the Governor, isn't she?"

"Yes, but that is not her chief characteristic, Sir."

"What is it?"

"That she is the loveliest and noblest woman in the world."

A young girl, unaware of his identity, meets her father again after many years:

Her eyes were full—she knew not why. Nature was saying something to her at last—she knew not what.

Is it a young woman first realising that she is in love?

The glorious choir of love-birds in her bosom were singing so loud that she could say no more.

or the description of an old woman:

Her hair was white that had once been dark, and her face, which had been full of the loveliness of love and the beauty of happiness, was scored deep with lines of suffering.

Is it the contemplation of death?

It was bitter to comfort himself with the thought that he was dead—dead in disgrace and in a foreign country, with no mother's tears falling on his face and no child weeping by his side, that tragic consolation of the dying.

Or its grandeur?

—Death . . . waited for him somewhere. Somewhere and at some time—some day in the year, some place on earth. Perhaps his eyes knew the date in the calendar, perhaps his feet knew the spot on the land, yet he knew neither. Somewhere and at some time—God knew where—God knew when—He kept his own secrets.

"If a beginner were to ask me what school I consider best for a novelist" [Sir Hall Caine says in an autobiographical work, *My Story*], "I should answer without hesitation, the school of journalism . . . But journalism to be the best school for the novelist, must be the journalism of the police court, the divorce court, the hospital and the jail, where human nature is real and stark, if vulgar and low—not the journalism of society where humanity is trying its poor best to wear a mask."

Yet in an actual court scene, it is thus that the Newnham girl heroine ("the loveliest and noblest of women") is made to denounce the nameless lover of an infanticide girl-mother, whom she knows to be not only her own betrothed, but also the judge sitting on the case: "Shame

on him! Let no good man own him for a friend! Let no good woman take him for a husband!"

Doubtless similar incidents do happen in court from time to time, but it is clear that in this case "the requirements of idealism" have had more to do with the choice of scene and words, than any sterner regard for the humdrum realities of life. There is a letter of Victor Stowell's describing his doings on a visit to London, addressed to the same lady:

When I was last in London I spent my days and nights in the hotels, restaurants, theatres and music-halls that are the lovely and beloved world of women. It is the world of women still, but quite another realm of it. Two nights ago I strolled westwards along Oxford Street, and thought (with a lump in my throat) about De Quincey and his Ann. . . . I tipped the porter to let me walk through Brick Court, and stood a long half-hour before a house in the silent little square, thinking of the day when the women of the town sat on the stairs while poor Noll (Oliver Goldsmith) lay dead in his room above. And then, coming out into Fleet Street (midnight now) where the big printing-presses were throbbing behind dark buildings, I tried to think I saw the great old Johnson, God bless him, picking up the prostitute from the pavement, carrying her home on his back and laying her on his bed.

This can almost be paraphrased from a passage in *My Story*, where Sir Hall Caine describes his own night wanderings, observing the human jettison of the streets, in the London of his early journalistic days. Here, again, the style, straightforward enough narrative at the outset, soars at one flight into a period of glowing oratory:

It was not a bad apprenticeship for a novelist to live among associates and scenes like these; but I think I can say with truth that what I prize most as the result of the experiences of those days, is the tenderness it left for the poor and the oppressed, especially the oppressed among girls and women, whose sufferings utter a cry which even yet threatens to drown for me all the other sounds of life.

And, indeed, sincere, even noble, though the rather mawkishly expressed sentiment is, it is true that this cry does, in a melodramatic and moralised form, only too often drown for him those other voices, probability, proportion and even coherence itself. "Holy women with angels hovering over you, who dares to think of devils tempting your innocence and love?" is but a commonplace of this imperious call.

John Storm, the curate hero of *The Christian*, expresses his life's mission in these ringing words:

"Then," he said, lifting a suffering and twitching face, "to make an attack on the one mighty stronghold of the devil, whereof woman is the direct and immediate victim; to tell Society over again it is an organised hypocrisy for the pursuit and demoralisation of women, and the Church that bachelorhood is not celibacy, and polygamy is against the laws of God; to look and search

for the beaten and broken who lie scattered and astray in our bewildered cities, and to protect and shelter them whatever they are, however low they have fallen, because they are my sisters and I love them."

Nor is the claque spared:

"God bless ye, laddie! That's spoken like a man," said the old woman. . . . "We are all human, even if we are all gentlemen,"

is his worldly vicar's view of the same problem, while the Prime Minister's private secretary thinks that "for this polygamy of our 'lavender-glove-tribe' the nation itself will be overtaken by the judgment of God one of these days."

Sir Hall Caine, then, satisfies the initial requirement of popular fiction in that he is paramourly romantic, often to the verge of verbal hysteria. His romanticism has two main currents, which are embodied as often as not in the same thought or utterance:—the chivalric-feministic mission and the evangelical-religious vision:

"And so," said Philip bitterly, "to save the man above from social suicide, the girl beneath must choose moral death. Is it that?"

But his feminism clothes no political aim and is directed against no remediable evil. For the basic passions to which the flesh is heir, marriage is still the great harbour of refuge. The plea is not for the equality of the sexes, which he rejects as physiologically impossible, but for the compassionate protection of women by men—the last sort of sympathy or support the suffragist movement desired:

When a good woman falls from honour, is it merely that she is a victim of momentary intoxication, of stress of passion, of the fever of instinct? No. It is mainly that she is the slave of the sweetest, tenderest, most spiritual and pathetic of human fallacies—the fallacy that by giving herself to the man she loves she attaches him to herself for ever. This is the real betrayer of nearly all good women that are betrayed. It lies at the root of tens of thousands of the cases that make up the merciless story of man's sin and woman's weakness. Alas! it is only the woman who clings the closer. The impulse of the man is to draw apart. He must conquer it or she is lost. Such is the cruel difference and inequality of man and woman as nature made them—the old trick, the old tragedy.

Sometimes there is a democratic aspect of his romanticism:

There is neither above nor below where there is real liking. If you like anyone and she is necessary to your life, that is the sign of your natural equality. It is God's sign and all the rest is only man's book-keeping.

Rossetti wrote to Sir Hall Caine, before they ever met, "I think I see your field to lie chiefly in the noble achievements of fervid and impassioned prose." No advice could have proved more dangerous, without a cautionary refer-

ence to the axiom that in all art there must be restraint, for it would seem that Sir Hall Caine has kept this ideal, in its literal application, ever before him. Indeed, with the almost solitary exception of *The Woman of Knockaloe* (1923), a work said not to have been intended originally for publication, though it is his finest achievement since *The Manxman*, he hardly ever allows himself to write anything but the briefest passages in ordinary narrative form. Even here the simple, direct and very moving story is marred by its end. The lovers—the German man and the English woman—for whom there is no place left in the world, have made their death compact and stand on the edge of the cliff ready to throw themselves over. But before “these two children of the universal Father, cast out of the company of men, separated in life and about to be united in death,” do so, they “go through the burial service which they had appointed for themselves. . . .

Jesu, lover of my soul,
Lass mir an dein Brust liegen. . . .”

Du sublime au ridicule il n'est qu'un seul pas!

Sir Hall Caine, who, appropriately enough, was chosen to write the scenario of the British National War-Film, may be said to have invented scenario-writing while the cinematograph was still nothing but a scientific toy. To read one of his novels is to experience the same sort of sensations as when watching a “thrilling and gripping screen-play of the heart,” “full of emotional and dramatic interest,” unwind its five reels. The short, moralising passages, which link one scene of action or declamation with another, afford a parallel, almost a paraphrase, shorn of its outstanding Americanisms, of the common jargon of “captions”:

And as for the Bishop, when did the Almighty ask for such poor help as the lie of a blood-stained criminal to save the honour of a man of God?

Love might be the light of life, but . . . millions of hearts in all ages were like old battlefields, with dead things, which nobody knew of, lying about in the dark places. And yet the world went on!

It is true that all the victories of war are as nothing against the golden head of one darling child, but then nobody sees that now. Nobody in the world has ever seen it—nobody but He . . . “Suffer the little children to come unto Me.” . . . But only think! That was said two thousand years ago, and yet . . . and yet. . . .

Oh, you good women, who are happy in the love that guards you, shields you, shelters you, wraps you round and keeps you pure and true, tread lightly over the prostrate soul of your sister in her hour of trial and fierce temptation.

. . . Jenny, a typical Cockney girl of the humblest class, untidy and unclean, but as bright as a London street sparrow, and with a big soft heart in her little vulgar breast.

A young woman, in the costume of a nurse, with heaving breast, quivering nostrils and flaming eyes, rushed through the gate with outstretched arms to stop them.

This, then, is the most conspicuous characteristic of his power as a writer, the force of almost garish visualisation, of making a scene live and its actors move and speak, if not exactly in the light of day, at all events in the glare of the limes. The reason, the intelligence, may reject both the characters themselves and the nature of the scene they enact, but the author's powers of presentation and animation are so tense, that, even while admitting the justice of its own mental reservations, the mind involuntarily visualises both, much as one may watch a living actor faithfully, even convincingly, personify upon the stage a part that one knows is grotesquely untrue to real life and utterly false to human nature. Two successive chapters of *The Deemster* are entitled “Alone, alone—all, all alone!” and “Alone on a wide, wide sea.” The same book closes with the Lord's Prayer; *The Christian* with the Marriage Service.

It has always seemed to me that your turn of mind and power of creation are specifically dramatic and that you will write, if once you take to that form, a very grand and moving play.

This was Blackmore's opinion. There is a zenith to everything, a degree that cannot be surpassed. Sir Hall Caine has adapted several of his novels for the stage. In this form they are neither more nor less dramatic—the adjective can hardly be admitted here without a qualifying prefix—than they were in their original form, because more “drama” simply could not be squeezed out of their plots, or the “dramatic possibilities” of the characters concerned further exploited.

With Sir Hall Caine, the Isle of Man is half the man and half the style also. It is his own home, his own country, loved with a glowing patriotism. It has been his closest study. His book, *The Little Manx Nation*, is a standard work of reference on the island and all that pertains to it. All that is best in his work has been written about the Isle of Man, or directly inspired by it. There is something inherently romantic about a small island, or a small people.

The island, then, gave him just the setting he needed for his vivid, over-emotionalised, but otherwise commonplace, prose: the inherent romance of a picturesque and rather remote local colour and a racy, half-Irish, half-Welsh dialect of colloquial English with which to reproduce it. It is true that the scenery of the island, its inhabitants, their speech and customs, are sentimentalised on the syrupy Kaleyad model, but in the process of recording it the familiar Manx idiom usually proves too strong for the man as for the writer and prevails over both, informing, even ennobling, the style with its own quaint simplicity. There is a trenchant humour and aptness of phrase in this Anglo-Manx dialect: a humour and deftness of simile usually lacking in his other work. The stigma of illegitimacy sits the lighter in this predominantly Calvinistic island for the survival of such phrases as a “rue-bargain,” “bye-child” or a “merry-begot.” The two Deemsters, or insular judges, taking the oath of office before the House of Keys, swear to administer justice “as betwixt party and party as indifferently as the herring backbone doth lie in the midst of