

influence of her healthy nature on the morbid shrinking sensibilities of her kinsfolk—the old brother and sister—is told with that subtle grasp of the mysterious connection between the spiritual and the physical phases of existence which is so marked a characteristic of Hawthorne, and which gives so tragic a colouring to his most simple tales. Here, for example, is a true and subtle touch:

"Clifford, the reader may perhaps imagine, was too inert to operate morally on his fellow-creatures, however intimate and exclusive their relations with him. But the sympathy or magnetism among human beings is more subtle and universal than we think; it exists, indeed, among different classes of organized life, and vibrates from one to another. A flower, for instance, as Phoebe herself observed, always began to droop sooner in Clifford's hand or Hepzibah's than in her own; and by the same law, converting her whole daily life into a flower fragrance for these two sickly spirits, the blooming girl must inevitably droop and fade much sooner than if worn on a younger and happier breast."

Holgrave, "the photographer," is one of the minor characters, scarcely more than sketched in, and yet a typical New Englander in his way, as well as intimately and somewhat mystically connected with the main thread of the story, which is the re-appearance of family sins and their inevitable Nemesis, in generation after generation, giving the tale a deep moral meaning running like a characteristic warp through the woof of its human life. Holgrave's history, indeed, would scarcely be a possible one out of New England.

"Holgrave, as he told Phoebe somewhat proudly, could not boast of his origin, unless as being exceedingly humble, nor of his education, except that it had been the scantiest possible, and obtained by a few winter months' attendance at a district school. Left early to his own guidance, he had begun to be self-dependent while yet a boy, and it was a condition aptly suited to his natural force of will. Though now but twenty-two years old, lacking some months, which are years in such a life, he had already been, first, a country school master; next, a salesman in a country shop; and, either at the same time or afterwards, the political editor of a country newspaper. He had subsequently gone through New England and the Middle States as a traveller in the employment of a Connecticut manufacturer of eau de cologne and other essences. In an episodic way he had studied and practised dentistry, and with very flattering success, especially in some of the manufacturing towns along the inland streams. As a supernumerary official of some kind or other aboard a packet ship, he had visited Europe, and found means before his return, to see Italy and part of France and Germany. At a later period he had spent some months in a community of socialists. Still more recently, he had been a public lecturer on mesmerism, for which science, as he assured Phoebe (and, indeed, satisfactorily proved, by putting Chanticleer, who happened to be scratching near by, to sleep) he had very remarkable endowments."

But our author has reserved his strength, as usual, to paint in his deepest colouring the awful moral results of sin. The "villain" of the story stands in the sharpest moral contrast to the comparative innocence of the other characters—howbeit he is outwardly so little like a villain! The eminently respectable and respected Judge Pyncheon, with his spotless record and faultless attire, his benevolent smile and serene self-complacency, his ample proportions and moral and political weight in the community—we find it almost as great a shock to accept him as a villain as any of his admiring neighbours would have done. He is a real character, too, and, as such, a standing protest against a current idea that a man of long standing in the community is sure to be rated at his true value. This may be often verified in the case of simple or transparent characters. It is nearly as often falsified in the case of crafty and scheming ones, or of those whom unfortunate circumstances, added to unfortunate surface characteristics, have concealed their real value from general recognition. Hawthorne speaks more truly when he says: "It is very singular how the fact of a man's death often seems to give people a truer idea of his character, whether for good or evil, than they have ever possessed while he was living among them. Death is so genuine a fact that it excludes falsehood or betrays its emptiness; it is a touchstone that proves the gold and dishonours the baser metal." Could the departed—whoever he may be—return in a week after his decease, he would invariably find himself on a higher or a lower plane than he had formerly occupied in the scale of public appreciation."

And when the final tragedy relieves the tension of the situation and cuts off the career of the pompous judge, in the midst of his ambitious schemes and cruel, crafty, and unrepented villainy, the keen, remorseless irony with which the author pursues him through the unacted scenes of the day that never sets for him, almost touches us with pity for him who had none for others. The relentless laying bare of the situation seems almost too terrible. This was to have been such a busy day! Ah, he will not give himself the trouble either to bend his head, or elevate his hand, so as to bring his faithful chronometer within range of vision! Time, all at once, appears to have become a matter of no moment with Judge Pyncheon!

"Pray, pray, Judge Pyncheon, look at your watch now. What, not a glance! It is within ten minutes of the dinner hour! It surely cannot have slipped your memory that the dinner of to-day is to be the most important, in its consequences, of all the dinners you ever ate!

The gentlemen, need you be told it? have assembled, not without purpose, from every quarter of the State. They meet to decide upon their candidate. And what worthier candidate—more wise and learned, more noted for philanthropy, truer to safe principles, tried oftener by public trusts, more spotless in private character, with a larger stake in the common welfare, and deeper grounded by hereditary descent in the faith and practice of the Puritans? What man can be presented for the suffrage of the people, so eminently combining all these claims to the chief rulership as Judge Pyncheon here before us?"

"Make haste, then! Do your part! The meed for which men have toiled and fought and climbed and crept is ready for your grasp! Be present at this dinner, drink a glass or two of that noble wine! Make your pledges in as low a whisper as you will, and you rise up from table virtually Governor of the glorious old State! Governor Pyncheon, of Massachusetts! . . . Up, therefore, Judge Pyncheon, up! You have lost a day. But to-morrow will be here anon. Will you rise betimes and make the most of it? To-morrow! to-morrow! to-morrow! We that are alive may rise betimes to-morrow. As for him that has died to-day, his morrow will be the resurrection morn."

And so the curtain falls on the tragedy of a misused and perverted life. The passage is one of the strongest in modern fiction, with its picture of the silent, helpless figure, stopped short in the midst of plans and activities, solitary and helpless in the old house that is the embodiment of ancestral pride and sin, while the daylight fades into night and the darkness brightens into moonlight that steals about the still figure, while spectral visions come and go, and the persistent, solemn ticking of the watch is silent at last, and the moonlight fades into dawn, and the early sunshine streams in, and a fly creeps unchecked over the set, motionless face—and we bid a final adieu to Judge Pyncheon. Surely no preacher ever more vividly analyzed the *cui bono* of a crafty, self-seeking life! Yet all Hawthorne's strength and popularity has not availed to stop the evolution of Judge Pyncheon, as we all, unhappily, know. But the Judge rarely recognizes himself, and if so, it is scarcely wonderful that he so long imposes on others.

All the accessories of this artistic work are finished with the loving care of the true life-painter. The old house, the garden, the garden talks, the philosophic "Uncle Venner," and the rapacious little devourer of gingerbread elephants and "Jim Crows," are portrayed with a graceful and quaintly humorous touch that is Hawthorne's own. Even the aged and aristocratic Chanticleer, with his two wives and the "venerable chicken," have their portraits sketched with a felicity that redeems trivial things from triviality and makes us desire to share with our friends the pleasure they bestow—a true test of genius.

Let me advise all who can to read *The House of the Seven Gables*. It is better worth reading than even the most "puffed" and vaunted novel of the day. To exchange it for some of our most "popular" modern novels is like exchanging a rare old vintage of exquisite bouquet for the coarsely exciting and injurious compounds of our modern bar-room. Comparing it with them, we can appreciate the maxim, "Never read a book that is not twenty-five years old!" FIDELIS.

SUNDAY IN KRÄHWINKEL.

THE day begins later than usual in Krähwinkel on Sunday. The village rests from its six days of labour, and defers breakfast till the late hour of eight. The first signs of life are the children on their way to early Sunday school, wearing their stiff, uncomfortable Sunday coats and frocks, hair rigidly brushed, and faces washed till they shine. Sunday school begins at nine in the church, and the bell rings for it to open. By and by you can hear the children singing, and at the end of an hour the country people begin to arrive. The owner of the factory across the way hitches up his phaeton, and drives off with his stylishly-dressed wife and daughters to a distant church. There are other church-goers on the road. Tidy "democrats" roll past, laden with healthy, plainly-dressed rustic humanity, or it is the stout farmer and his wife that fill the well-used buggy.

The women who have come from the country congregate round the church steps, while the men walk slowly about the yard with their hands behind their backs and talk about the crops. The church itself is in no wise remarkable; it stands back from the road, in a little plot of ground of its own. It is built of rough-cast, with three tall windows on each side and a porch and tower in front. The bell tower is odd, and gives character to the otherwise commonplace building; it is short, and shaped like a Welshwoman's hat, or the one we commonly associate with witches, and set on a square, white wooden tower. The edges of the hat are curled up, as we see in pictures of Norwegian country churches, and in the open work between the hat and the main tower is hung the bell which plays such an important part in the life of Krähwinkel.

But the children are coming out, and the church bell announces to the quiet Sabbath that service is about to begin. Let us go inside. It is very old-fashioned; the tall windows have no blinds; some of them are open, and the sweet brier and elder bushes push in at the lifted sash. The place has that odour of sanctity that is not exactly stuffiness but goes with old Bibles and cushionless pews. These are painted drab, which has cracked all over with

age, and have little doors closed on the outside by a brass button.

Many of the pews are square. Round the wall is a row of wooden pegs for hats. As each man enters he prays for a minute standing up, with his hat before his face, then hangs it up, and sits down. The congregation is divided, the men sitting at the preacher's left, and the women at his right. As a reason for this the Frau Pastor tells me, "There would be little devotion if the boys sat with the girls." The larger part of the congregation consists of women. In the front pew is the confirmation class; they meet at the Herr Pastor's house every week for instruction, and will be formally received into the church next Easter. They are mostly girls of about fourteen, and make a pretty piece of colour which is pleasant for the eye to rest on. The men and women look coarse and plain; you notice hard faces, and cunning faces, but you will look long before you see a weak or a silly one. Some old women, wrinkled and hollow-eyed, follow the Old World custom, and bring little bunches of flowers, a wisp of mignonette, if nothing else, which they hold in their hands to smell at, or lay on the ledge before them. The withered cheeks beside the fresh, sweet flowers. The majority of them are plainly dressed in black, with black poke-bonnets; it is the factory girls who flaunt in new hats and bright colours. All sit quiet, and soberly wait for the service to begin.

We have time to notice one or two odd things. In front of the pews stands an ordinary table, draped by a black cloth which falls to the floor. On it lies a large Bible, and on each side stands a tall lamp. Behind this, and perched high on the wall, is a little round cup of a pulpit, just big enough to hold one man. It is painted white, with lines of gilding. Above the pulpit is the sounding-board, shaped like an extinguisher, also white. In front of the pulpit hangs a picture of Luther, and behind the preacher a print of the crucifixion. The approach is by a narrow flight of steps against the wall. At the foot of the stair and across the aisle is a sort of room, or stall, made of lattice-work, and about ten feet high. This is where the Herr Pastor stays at the proper times; on the outside hangs a small blackboard with the numbers of the hymns for the day chalked upon it.

As soon as the bell stops ringing, the choir, which is in a gallery at the eastern end of the church, after an organ prelude, begins to sing the first hymn and the people join in without rising from their seats. And what singing it is! strong, heartfelt, forceful. The words are so strong; they are the old Reformation hymns, such as the Swedish army, kneeling as one man, sang in the grey morning of Lützen. Then the melodies have the stately, solemn movement of a procession of huge waves: the tune is good but there is opportunity for the sound to gather strength and way in its forward progress like a charge of cavalry. It is hymn-singing to remember, to dream of: but it is never heard outside a German church. At the close of the hymn the pastor stalks solemnly out of the lattice work to the black altar, turns to the congregation and with an imperious wave of the hand, motions them to rise. He is a tall, dark man with a heavy, black moustache which would look better on a cuirassier than a clergyman. He has the upright carriage that betrays the Prussian drill. In fact he was a lieutenant in a volunteer regiment in '70, led his men against the "Rothosen" more than once and slept in the trenches before Paris. You almost expect to hear the rattle of sword and clink of spurs under his black Geneva gown. In a fine, sonorous voice he reads the Gospel, Epistle, and prayers for the day, announces the next hymn and retires to the lattice-box. Again the congregation seem to pour out their very souls in a strong, rich melody and the first part of the service is over. Now comes the sermon. Book in hand the pastor slowly ascends to the little pulpit, shuts himself in, lays the Bible on the ledge before him, and, "My beloved," he invariably begins, "in the Evangel for the day we read these words."

He uses no manuscript in the pulpit, but all week and especially all Saturday, he has done little but write and con his sermon. Its literary character is good, and from first to last there is nothing slipshod or ragged in language, thought, or delivery. His manner is intensely earnest, without loss of self-poise and dignity; and he is listened to with rapt attention. His sermons are always tinged with the sad views of life which a disappointed man takes. Such phrases, "Kummer und Sorge, Trübsal und Noth," recur again and again, and he never wearies of such pithy proverbs as "Ehstand, Wehstand," "Glück und Glas, Wie bald bricht das!" Nothing here can bring lasting happiness; there is nothing bright but heaven. He often breaks into a short prayer in the middle of his discourse, and ends it with a climax of appeal. He announces the next hymn from the pulpit and slowly descends to his lattice-box. While it is being sung two of the hard featured "Vorsteher," or deacons in the front bench take the long sticks which lean against the lattice work stall, with the rusty velvet bag at the end and go about to gather the offerings of the congregation. The honourable pastor comes forward again to the altar. The flock rises and he reads the prayers for the sick, and for all sorts and conditions of men: then all join in the only responsive part of the service, the "Vater Unser." At the first words the church bell rings one, two, three, three times. Then comes the triple Levitical blessing and there peals forth the solemn, sweet doxology: "Unser Ausgang, signe Gott." As the last long-drawn notes die away, the people begin slowly to leave the church. The service is over. As soon as the pastor gets his dinner he will walk over to