

delineation of sin and its retribution. It is full of the moral presence of the hardest yet truest race that ever lived, and a plea for the reign of truth, which for simple eloquence has never been surpassed in fiction. It and "The Marble Faun" portray fully the effect of sin on character. The one deals with past sin and present retribution, the other with present sin and future punishment.

In "The Marble Faun" the soul consents with the animal nature to sin. Conscience, the reflector of moral holiness, shrinks instinctively from the approach of the sin-stained soul. Not until guided by Reason, or better training, does Conscience again guide the soul to truth.

"The Scarlet Letter" declares each sin to have its retribution. The old physician, the very incarnation of evil, follows the minister and reads the awful secret of his sin-stained soul. "Retribution is mine," cries the broken law every time Dimmesdale tries to hide with his hand his heart black with the blackest crime. Deserved but unwise punishment works disregard of law. For Hester in the lone forest incites Dimmesdale to further crime—unwedded elopement. Strict Puritanism scorned the sinner only to drive her, when at length her life seemed so pure, to incite her fellow-sinner to a crime as black as hell is deep. With his consent all that power of will which had made him the revered of his flock hangs in the balance and no sin is too vile to fill his thoughts and almost shape itself in action.

But the legitimate result of the work of conscience is Dimmesdale standing on the scaffold of infamy with his victim, to share her shame at noontide of election day—his judgment day. Retribution, sorrow have done their work. Let us hope that repentance and forgive-

ness have brought acceptance with God.

Such is Hawthorne's attitude toward moral evil. Is it healthy? Were there no brighter side the picture would be too morbid. He seemed to be influenced by much the same feeling which led Dr. Thomas Arnold to say that intense horror of evil is in some respects more to be desired than the active love for the good.

But Hawthorne portrays evil in such a way as awakens the desire to have it removed.

What is his attitude toward moral truth? On the relation of conscience and moral truth he has advanced less far. Almost an entire system of the doctrine of sin could be formulated from Hawthorne's writings. But his system of salvation from sin would be very meagre. Some rays, however, lighten the picture. Hawthorne believed emphatically in the truth and the authority of the inspired Word. In "Earth's Holocaust," while the intensest fire burns every vestige of human knowledge and genius, including commentaries and marginal notes of the Scriptures, the inspired volume comes forth from the furnace seventy times heated with renewed splendour and brilliancy. Not a syllable that flashed from the pen of inspiration could be destroyed by the intensest fire. Its truth and authority abide while man is a little lower than God. In the same sketch intense conviction and mighty earnestness back his conception of the necessity and the reality of regeneration. For if that heart be not changed, out of it will reissue all the old evils; while if it be purified, with its growth in purity these will vanish as a shadowy mist. Much as Hawthorne adores the intellect, it is to him a feeble instrument, utterly unable to work any radical reform. "The heart—the heart,