

worse because it mixes up this low sensualism with religious sentiments and purports to be a semi-religious novel.

It may be objected that it is historical and in a great measure true to facts, but this is no justification seeing that the portrayal and idealization of the sensualism of that time can only contaminate the mind of the young reader.—Surely we get enough of this in history. Why should all this corruption be carried forward two thousand years and flaunted before our eyes when no good purpose is to be served by so doing?

Still two other classifications may be made on the basis of plot. The first, including those novels which have a very simple plot, just enough to bring the characters into relation with one another. And the second, embracing those which abound in incident and strong situations. In the first of the last mentioned classes the whole interest depends upon the development of character, and the thought and purpose of the author stands in the foreground. Hawthorn's "House of Seven Gables" and his "Scarlet Letter" are good examples of this class. The characters of Arthur Dimmesdale and that of Hester in the latter work, are both boldly drawn; the relations between them are shown; their emotions of repentance and remorse are exhibited to the reader and there is nothing to distract the mind from the authors moral aim. In some of George Elliott's novels the plots are also very simple and the crises are always crises of character. Such novels possess the characteristics of true art, in that there is an absence of conventionalism and the relations are natural. The plots grow out of characters and every event in the story is a legitimate result of the intellectual and ethical qualities attributed to the chief actors.

Very like this is the second class, referred to above, which has no thread of a plot, running through the events binding them together, but still abounds in strong situations. Of this class the works of Count Tolstoi afford a good example. His striking episodes lead to nothing—what we suppose to be a crisis is no crisis at all. No pains are taken to fit together the few fragments of a plot he does have. Like a true artist, however, he selects his material and relates nothing that is dull or meaningless. Into which of the last mentioned forms the author may cast his thoughts the reader need care little, since both have lent themselves to the skill of these great masters to embody the truest art, and since neither of these forms tend to obscure the exhibition of character which is the *summum bonum* of this class of literature.

A few other characteristics of a good novel may be mentioned which do not depend so much on the form of the plot. Every novel should have a purpose. This purpose should not be so evident as to disfigure the art, best it should be present, nevertheless and that purpose should be to embody some noble ideal and thus to elevate character. The heroine should not be a mere creature of circumstance upon whom prosperity and adversity are thrust at the will of