

## FOREWORD

vii

of "McTeague" afterward received from the more mature mind of its creator. The story of "Vandover and the Brute" did not work out as its author originally conceived it. The dominant idea of the novel possessed its writer to the exclusion of the less important details of the plot. The meeting of young Haight and Flossie in "The Imperial" was obviously intended to become a much more important episode. So it is with the character of Turner Ravis, which is allowed to drop out of the action of the story with a complete disregard of the care that was taken with its introduction and development. The pages of the original manuscript of "Vandover and the Brute" are eloquent of the struggle its author underwent to bring it to its logical and artistic conclusion.

The influence of Emil Zola is evident throughout the story. The great Frenchman was the inspiration that led Frank Norris to attempt the rôle of novelist. No one can question how well he succeeded. His own generation has acclaimed him one of America's greatest writers. "Vandover and the Brute" bears the evidence, I believe, of the most significant phase in his development as a writer. It is for that reason that it is published. Some may question the wisdom of this; yet there are passages in the novel that are as fine, if not finer, than anything he afterward wrote. In justice to the author, the reader should bear in mind that, just as much as "McTeague" was changed and improved before it was published, so "Vandover and the Brute" would have been altered and rewritten were its author here to bring to its revision his riper judgment.

In an essay entitled "The True Reward of the Novel-