

HUGO'S FICTION

A word in conclusion must be said of Hugo the writer of fiction. Two early books, "Han d'Islande" (1823) and "Bug Jargal" (1818, rewritten 1825), revealed a vigorous descriptive talent and a pronounced affinity for abnormal and violent themes. "Notre-Dame de Paris" (1831) exhibits these same characteristics in their complete development. Revolting and grotesque as portions of this book certainly are, few novels of the century impress one more profoundly with a sense of power, however misdirected. A long interval elapsed before Hugo made another essay in fiction. His great humanitarian novel "Les misérables" was completed at Guernsey in 1862. "Les travailleurs de la mer" appeared in 1866, "L'homme qui rit" in 1869, and his revolutionary story "Quatre-vingt-treize" was published in 1874.