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Brontë, Charlotte ("Currer Bell"). [1821-1855.]

English novelist of middle period of 19th century. One of the most striking personalities in English fiction; her novels are wholly an expression of that personality. Her actual experience was very limited, and of a kind that distorted an impetuous and fiery spirit. She poured her soul out in her books with painful bitterness and tremendous passion. She broke up the literary convention which represented women as tame, passionless beings, and showed them conscious of an independent existence, hopelessly battling against circumstances. The modern reader is most surprised by the submissive attitude towards men assumed to be the correct one, by the almost ridiculous qualities ascribed to men, and believed by the author to be natural and admirable, and by the readiness of her real thinking, feeling women to fall madly in love with these imaginary and generally detestable gods. Nevertheless, her purely subjective novels have all the excitement of those dependent on thrilling plot and incident. In delineating the manners of people of whom she had no actual knowledge (her heroes included), her inexperience is evident; her style is direct and keen, but too poignant for modern taste. Her books are simply the cry of a soul for something that life refused, and will probably be read as long as humanity is capable of the sensation of passionate pity. 823.81.

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SHIRLEY. Phila., Lippincott, 50c.; Warne, paper, 25c.

The fidelity of description of places and people in Yorkshire revealed the identity of "Currer Bell" with Charlotte Brontë. The introduction of machinery with its effects for good and evil suggested much of this story. The portraits of the clergy are among the most striking results of the author's penetrating observation.

VILLETTE. Phila., Lippincott, 50c.

The story is founded on Miss Brontë's experience as