

the little woman who made the big war." Prejudice raised to passion may achieve the wonderful. To-day when even the ashes of the fire are cold, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* keeps the flame in its heart. It is one of the few purpose-novels that survives its *raison-d'être*; the purpose was great enough, and the writer and her purpose were one. No single writer has recorded the annihilation of the old South with power comparable to Mrs. Stowe's indictment of its central institution. But a group of writers of short stories set about telling how their homes were made unto them desolate even while the shadow of that desolation lay heavy on the land. Mr. Thomas Nelson Page's tales form in sequence a tragic historical epic. The hero is young, the pink of courtesy, courage incarnate, and honour's self. Born to lordship, his life-path apparently strewn with roses, almost before he comes to his own his kingdom totters; the roses are all thorns; he falls in battle, his cold fingers twined about his country's flag. In this romantic and ever charming figure, Mr. Page perpetuates the South that had so long lived at its ease, yet rose at the trumpet's call and died fighting. Mr. Joel Chandler Harris felt more deeply the less picturesque aspects of war, and while narrating the sorrows of humble Georgia folk, small planters, poor whites, permitted comedy to smile and wink in most tragic circumstances. Dialect is almost always an excrescence and a tedious imposition on good faith, nevertheless, the Southerners excited laughter and wrung tears by their use of negro speech. The glory of the master was often told by the lips of the slave. A tradition of power was handed down by those upon whose labour it was founded, and for whose sake it was destroyed. The affect on American fiction of such a skilful use of dialect was pernicious. It became the fashion, the rage, and the more corrupt the jargon in which a tale was told the more hopeful was its chance of being hailed as a masterpiece. Most of the masterpieces have been long forgotten, but a bad habit was fixed and few American writers to-day escape the use of ungrammatical forms, and corrupt