

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF KANSAS AS SHOWN IN
THE KANSAS NOVEL

by

Elaine Bowman, A. B., Southwestern College, 1925

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Approved by:

J. H. Nelson

W. S. Johnson

Chairman of the Department

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FOREWORD

In choosing the subject for this thesis I was largely influenced by the fact that my life has been spent on the Kansas prairies at the foot of the historical Pawnee Rock, near the farm to which my grandparents came as pioneers in the early days. The tales of hostile Indians attacking innocent pioneers as they moved along the Sante Fe Trail; the accounts of the hardships of my grandparents in founding a home in a new state and the trials of my parents in extracting a living from Kansas soil - all these have stimulated my interest in both Kansas life and Kansas fiction.

For guidance in the final selection and organization of the material for this paper I am grateful to Miss Rose Morgan; for helpful suggestions during the early preparation of the paper I wish to thank Professor S. L. Whitcomb and Professor J. H. Nelson.

Elaine Bowman

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INTRODUCTION

"Kansas literature should be restricted not only to the literary output of genuine Kansans, but to so much of this output alone as is built upon and inspired by Kansas life,"¹ states Mr. Carruth in the introduction of his book, Kansas in Literature.

With some alteration this statement may be used as an explanation of the term 'Kansas novel' which forms an important part of our subject. Mr. Carruth himself admits that the restriction imposed by the phrase 'genuine Kansan' (which he applies to the person who has either spent all his life in the state or has won the right to the title by many years of residence in and service to the state) would exclude many excellent works usually classed as Kansan. Realizing the danger of such restriction, we shall interpret the phrase 'genuine Kansan' to mean the person who is acquainted with the life of the state as the result of actual residence there.

Another change in the original statement is made necessary by the very nature of our study, Kansas life. Whereas, for Mr. Carruth's purpose, the edition of an anthology of Kansas literature, it is sufficient that the literature be "built upon and inspired by Kansas life", for our study of social life in Kansas, it is essential that the Kansas

1. W. H. Carruth: Kansas in Literature, p. 6.

novel deal with Kansas life.

We shall, then, include under the heading 'Kansas novel' only those novels dealing with Kansas life written by authors who are familiar with the life of the state through actual residence there.

This definition eliminates a large number of books usually classified as Kansas novels. Among these are Dorothy Canfield Fisher's Bent Twig which, though written by a Kansas author, deals with Ohio life; Mrs. Don Carlos's Bottle in the Smoke, the setting of which is in England; Mrs Sarah Mable Brigham's Waverland, which deals with life in Ireland; and Mrs. J. K. Hudson's Esther the Gentile, a story dealing with the Mormons of Salt Lake City.

Having reached a conclusion in regard to the term 'Kansas novel', let us now consider the somewhat vague term 'social life'. In this thesis we shall interpret social life to mean the life of the people in their various relationships and shall consider these relationships under three headings, namely: the state, the community, and the family.

PART ONE - THE STATE

In reading Kansas novels dealing with the early territorial period and with the period following the Civil War, one is impressed by the great variety of races and classes of people that laid the foundation of the state. Kansas is centrally located, and since she was one of the last of the Mississippi Valley States to be settled, her population is perhaps more representative of every part of the country than that of any other western state.

The first people to inhabit the prairies of Kansas were, of course, the Indians, the aborigines of America. They play a conspicuous part in the Kansas novels of the early days, appearing always as nuisances or even as menaces to society, rather than as contributors to its development. The Indians in the Kansas novels are pictured as being of two widely differing types: the Eastern Indians, who were fairly peaceable and who annoyed the settlers chiefly by their petty thievery, and the Plains Indians, who ravaged towns and slaughtered innocent settlers for the savage joy of killing.

The Eastern type of Indian is presented by William K. Marshall in The Entering Wedge. He pictures the Indian as capturing Winefred, the heroine of the story. Happily their chief forces them to release her, and sends the offenders to Fort Leavenworth for punishment. Ruth Cowgill and Mary Humphrey write amusing accounts of these peaceable Indians

coming singly or in small groups to the kitchens of frightened housewives and helping themselves to whatever they can find to eat, pie being the food in which they take especial delight. Mrs. Aplington describes in Pilgrims of the Plains the Indian school at Shawnee Mission. She pictures the Shawnees as being far in advance of other Indian tribes in their civilization. She says:

"The Indians here have their schools and churches and good farms, well fenced, and gardens and orchards and civilized homes. At Shawnee Mission the two school houses are really imposing structures that would be a credit to an Eastern society."²

Margaret Hill McCarter has much to say in praise of the Eastern tribe, the Osages. She gives to the small band of Osage scouts who had been on guard duty in southwestern Kansas, the credit that was due them for breaking up the plan of the Confederates to unite all the Indian tribes of the southwest in an attack on the Kansas settlers. In summing up her account of this incident she says:

"It was a cruel bit of western warfare, yet it held back from Kansas a diabolical outrage, whose suffering and horror only those who know the southwest tribes can picture-- and strangely enough, the power that stayed the evil lay with a handful of Indian scouts."³

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2. Kate Aplington: Pilgrims of the Plains, p. 130.
 3. M. H. McCarter: The Price of the Prairie, p. 111.

Again she states her opinion of the Osages in praising the work among this tribe of the Roman Catholic Missionary, Father Le Claire:

"No record except the Great Book of human deeds will ever be able to show how much we owe to men like Le Claire whose influence has helped to make a loyal, peaceful tribe like the Osages."⁴

Of Pelathe, the Shawnee Indian who rode horseback the two score miles from Kansas City to Lawrence in hope of warning the settlers of the approach of Quantrell's band, Mrs. McCarter has said:

"No less noble than Sheridan and Paul Revere, who rode and won, is the name of Pelathe, who rode and lost. Some day the people of the West will list his name in their scroll of uncrowned heroes, for that he gave his best effort to save what Fate had foredoomed should perish."⁵

William Allen White introduces a band of these friendly Indians in the pages of A Certain Rich Man. At the beginning of the book, the hero, then only four years old, is frightened by the approach of a band of Indians. An old squaw, seeing the boy's fright, comforts him thus:

"Come on, boy, I won't hurt you. I am as scared of you as you of me."⁶

She lifts him to her pony and has him direct the party to town. Here she leaves him at his mother's door and goes

4. M. H. McCarter: The Price of the Prairie, p. 483.
5. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 425.
6. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 3.

on with the rest of the band to trade at the stores and steal at the houses.

The savage Plains Indians are described by Mack Cretcher in a spirited account of an Indian attack on a pioneer settlement near Willow Creek. Something of the character of these Indians is shown by the terror with which they are regarded by the white men. The following is Cretcher's account of the settler's race for safety after they have received news of the coming attack:

"Jim worked furiously, the terror of the Indian raid full upon him. But few articles of urgent need were thrown into the wagon. More racing settlers appeared. The excitement was infectious. The race became a life and death affair to the youth. Hustling his mother into the wagon he was soon headed for Bison City. The excitement grew as he watched the other wagons careening over the prairies and caught sight of the pallid faces of the women and children. In his excitement he could all but see the savages and hear their demoniacal yells."⁷

Kate Aplington recognizes the fact that the Plains Indians were cruel, but she attempts in the following paragraph to show that they were, to some extent at least, justified in their actions toward the whites:

"There wouldn't be no need of havin' trouble with these

7. Mack Cretcher: The Kansan, p. 35.

here Plains Injuns if it wasn't for the renegade rascally whites that has come out here calculatin' to cheat and rob and misuse 'em. They made their treaties and kept 'em better than could be expected till right lately. But they are gittin' riled up, and when an Injun gets ready for to take his revenge, he never stops to look for the special feller that has done him wrong- he settles his account with the first pale-face that he can get his hands on!"⁸

Margaret Hill McCarter goes back to the occupation of Kansas by the Spaniards in attempting to account for the savage cruelty of the Plains Indians. She says in The Price of the Prairie:

"The brutal fiendishness of the Plains Indians is the heritage of Spanish cruelty toward the ancestors of the Apache and Kiowa and Arapahoe and Comanche, and you can see why they differ from our tribes here in eastern Kansas."⁹

She recognizes the influence of unprincipled white settlers upon the Indians in the pioneer days, but to her mind this influence serves mainly to unify the Indians in their already-present desire for revenge on the white men. Evidence of this point of view is found in her comment on the plan of the Confederates during the Civil War to league together all of the Indian tribes of the Southwest against the Kansas settlers. She writes:

8. Kate Aplington: Pilgrims of the Plains, p. 135.
 9. N. H. McCarter: The Price of the Prairie, p. 483.

"It was a well-planned, cold blooded horror, this scheme of the Southern Confederacy to unite the fierce tribes of the Southwest against the unprotected Union frontier. And with the border raiders on the one side and the hostile Indians on the other, small chance of life would have been left to any Union man, woman, or child in all this wide, beautiful Kansas. In the four years of the Civil War no cruelty could have excelled the consequences of this conspiracy.

"Unity of purpose has ever been lacking in the red race. No federation has been possible to it except as that federation is controlled by the European brain. The controlling power in the execution of this dastardly crime lay with desperate but eminently able white men."¹⁰

By far the most complete picture of the Plains Indians is that given by Margaret Hill McCarter in The Price of the Prairie. Whereas the other novelists mentioned in connection with the Indians have used them chiefly for the sake of local color, Mrs. McCarter makes the Indian problem the central theme of her novel. The plot of the story is woven about the struggle between the white man and the Indian for supremacy.

In addition to the characteristics already mentioned, Mrs. McCarter stresses the treachery of the Plains Indian. This is the outstanding characteristic of Jean Pahasca, the half-breed Kiowa Indian who is the villain of her story. Jean appears to be friendly to the settlers, but is at the

10. Ibid., p. 109.

same time in league with the savage Indians who are plotting against them. This same trait is here shown to be characteristic of the tribes of Plains Indians:

"The western tribes, the Cheyennes and Arapahoe, and Kiowa, and Brule, and Sioux and Comanche were forced to quarter themselves on their reservations again and again with rations and clothing and equipment for all their needs. With fair soft promises in return from their chief men, these tribes settled purringly to their allotted places. Through each fall and winter season they were 'good Indians', wards of the nation; their 'untutored minds saw God in clouds, or heard him in the wind'

"Each winter the 'good Indians' were mild and gentle. But with the warmth of spring and the fruitfulness of summer, with the green grasses of the Plains for their ponies, with wild game in the open and the labor of the industrious settler of the unprotected frontier as a stake for the effort, the 'good Indian' came forth from his reservation. Like the rattle-snake from its crevice, he uncoiled in the warm sunshine, grew and flourished on what lay in his pathway, and full of deadly venom he made a trail of terror and of death."¹¹

Such is the trail she describes as left by the once 'good' Black Kettle and his braves;

"Behind them were hot ashes where homes had been, and

11. Ibid., p. 337.

putrid, unburied bodies of murdered women and children, mutilated beyond recognition. On their ponies, bound hand and foot were wretched, terror-stricken women. The smiling Plains lay swathed in the August sunshine; and the richness of the purple twilights, and of the rose-hued day dawns and the pitiless noontime skies of brass only mocked them in their misery."¹²

Cruel, savage, and blood-thirsty are the Plains Indians Mrs. McCarter pictures in The Price of the Prairie.

In general, however, the attitude shown in the Kansas novel toward the Indian is a kindly one. For the most part, he is pictured as a half-civilized, ignorant, harmless creature who prefers begging or stealing to working for a livelihood. Though at times he is shown as a savage beast, even then the authors seem to realize that he has some cause, outside of his own nature, for his revengeful spirit.

The Indians were gradually driven from their happy hunting-ground on the Kansas prairie by the onward moving streams of white men who came to settle in Kansas. These men came from two different sections of the country, from the North and from the South, for the slavery question was then at issue in Kansas. The North firmly opposed, while the South wholly favored the introduction of slavery into Kansas. Since the question was to be settled by the people living in the Kansas Territory, it was to the interest of

12. Ibid., p. 249.

both sections to send as many settlers as possible to Kansas.

In the interests of the North came men and women of many different nationalities, united only in their determination to make of Kansas a free state. From the British Isles came the Scotch and the Irish, both having that hardiness and strength of character which make excellent pioneers. The Scotch are represented in the Kansas novels by the Lammond family in A Wall of Men, Lewis Hardie in Free Soil, and York and Laura Macpherson of The Reclaimers. Representative of the Irish are the red-faced Pat Malone of The Squatter Sovereign and good-natured Thomas O'Meara, known as O'mie, in The Price of the Prairie. The Pennsylvania Dutch are represented by Jacob Schmidt, the jovial host of the Pioneer House in The Squatter Sovereign, and Herman Müller of William Allen White's In the Heart of a Fool. The Scandinavians are exemplified by the strong-handed, strong-hearted Thelma Ekblad of The Reclaimers, and the French by Asher Aydelot of Winning the Wilderness.

Larger than this group of foreign-born emigrants who came to Kansas in the interest of freedom, was the group of American-born settlers who came to Kansas from New England and from the middle western states. This group has a wide representation in the novels of Kansas. From the state of Ohio are John and Amy Alden of The Squatter Sovereign, the Whateleys of The Price of the Prairie, Mr. and Mrs. Wade of Dust, and Prescott Miles and his family in Free Soil. Massachusetts is represented by the Barclays in A Certain

Rich Man, John and Ellen Truman of Free Soil, and the Baronets of The Price of the Prairie. From Pennsylvania come the Darrows, the Quaker family in A Wall of Men, and from Illinois the teacher, Miss Lucy, in A Certain Rich Man.

Since it was a long and difficult process for Southern planters with their slaves and machinery to remove to Kansas, the Southern states sought a simpler method of upholding the slavery cause in Kansas. They organized bands of men to go to Kansas and settle there temporarily until the slavery question should be settled. Few of these people settled permanently in Kansas, but they did play an important part in the early history of the state. They were American-born, but of a lower class than the settlers from the North. They were rough idlers and adventurers, 'poor whites' most of them, of the type Margaret Lynn describes as,

"Roughly-dressed, roughly built, rough-voiced, bullying without real firmness, jeering without wit, profane from lack of works."¹³

Mary Humphrey, too, presents a vivid picture of these Southern emigrants:

"The colony to the East, called Charleston, was made up of families from South Carolina, who were evidently drawn from the class known as 'poor white trash'. They were a scrawny-looking set, and seemed to have little energy and capacity, either for work or enjoyment, unless it might be

called such for men to sit hours in uncomfortable places and ungainly positions, leisurely ruminating a wad of tobacco, or slowly puffing the smoke from a corn-cob pipe-- for sharp-featured, unkempt women, by a fire in the open air to prepare the meal of bacon and corn-dodgers, improving meanwhile each leisure moment to solace themselves with the kindred indulgence of a 'dip', while sandy-haired, half-clad children, whose young limbs had not yet exhausted their slight inherited tendency to active motion, frisked about in the sunshine." ¹⁴

In small numbers from the South came the aristocratic Southern gentlemen, strong in their belief in the institution of slavery and determined to do all in their power to establish slavery in Kansas. This Cavalier class of settlers is exemplified in the Kansas novel by Colonel Penwin and his family of Margaret Hill McCarter's Wall of Men, by Burke in Ruth Cowgill's Over the Border, by Mr. Evans of Miss Lynn's Free Soil, and by Daniel Rogers of Marshall's Entering Wedge.

Of another class of Southern emigrants, Mrs. McCormick writes in A Kansas Farm or The Promised Land:

"Shortly after the close of the Civil War large numbers of colored people, then residing in the Southern States, emigrated to Kansas.

"Uncle Sam offered 160 acres of good land to every actual settler without regard to race, color, or previous

14. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 66.

condition of servitude. Many of the previous slaves availed themselves of the Homestead Act and located claims on the great prairie. The most of them succeeded quite well in their new surroundings, and the majority remained, whether they prospered financially or not."¹⁵

Effie Graham in The Passin' on Party and Aunt Liza's Praisin' Gate presents a sympathetic view of the Kansas negroes. The explanation stated in the preface of the former applies equally well to the latter story. Miss Graham writes:

"This is the story of a people, one-time slaves and bondsmen, now free-tongued free holders in a western land; the old new type adopted and adapted."¹⁶

Kansas, the land of hope and promise, received all races, all classes of people. It would seem that Kansas people take a certain degree of pride in the diversity of race and type of people that laid the foundation of the state, for almost every author who deals with life in early Kansas presents at least one panoramic view of this medley of races that made up the population of the state. Mary Jackson presents such a view in her description of the men of John Brown's company. She writes:

"Englishmen who boasted of the blood of the Stuarts wielded the sword and endured the hardships. Hungarians,

15. Fannie McCormick: A Kansas Farm on the Promised Land, p. 36.

16. Effie Graham: The Passin' on Party,

inspired by the example of Kossuth, sought the field on which to die for freedom. Polarders, while they wept for serfdom imposed upon their people, by a power it were futile to resist, lent a helping hand where their services were welcomed and appreciated. Scotchmen, whose ancestors fought with the noble Wallace, and in whose veins coursed the blood of the most renowned clans of the Highlands: and Ireland too, furnished her representatives, in whose breasts the smoldering fires of freedom lay, awaiting the slightest zephyr of liberty to fan them to flame."¹⁷

In Free Soil Margaret Lynn writes:

"The whole territorial procession passed under her eyes—the pioneer by habit, seasoned already in California or Iowa, free-moving, unfreighted, usually without hostages to fortune; the zealot, certain of the definite relation of Kansas to the kingdom of God, poised for warfare, impatient of every consideration but his ultimate goal, an apprenticeship in service to the underground railroad behind him; the homemaker, his eye on the double purpose of making a good state for his home and a good home within the state; young men out to meet the promise of adventure, philosophers coming forth on a pilgrimage to see the ground for working out a theory."¹⁸

Margaret Hill McCarter gives a similar picture in A Wall of Men:

17. Mary Jackson: The Spy of Osawatomie, p. 360.

18. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 62.

"Along this historic old highway in the middle 50's came the westward-facing people with purposes as varied as the varied speech and manner of the men who held them: the frontier border raider; the New England emigrant, Pilgrim of the Plains; the Southern gentleman, loyal to the empire-extending spirit; the refugee negro, sometimes close upon his heels; the half-civilized Indian from Michigan; the staunch-headed Quaker from Indiana; the adventurer, the State-builder, the outlaw, the missionary, the dreamer of a day of better things-- the footprint of each was, from time to time, in the dust of this Trail."¹⁹

Although the population of Kansas in the early days was composed of many different racial elements, the blend of the whole was Anglo-Saxon, and the early political ideas held by the people were, in general, Anglo-Saxon ideas.

Most important of these ideas, and the one which had most influence upon the early life of the state, was the belief that all men should be free and should have equal opportunities. It was this idea that made men give up safe, comfortable homes, pack a few belongings in prairie schooners, and take the long and dangerous journey to Kansas.

William Lighton expresses in Sons of Strength the purpose which prompted Kansas emigrants to make such a sacrifice:

"We were not mere adventurers in search of material rewards for our efforts. We had hoped to work out for our-

selves the chance for walking upright under a free sky, as men and women surely have a right to do, and we wished to open the way for other like-minded ones to come after us. I do not think we were selfish; had we been so, we must have kept out of Kansas."²⁰

It was this same deeply rooted idea of freedom that dominated the people throughout the long struggle to make of Kansas a free state - that gave them strength and courage to press ahead to their goal in spite of discouragement and defeat. Kansans are proud of this struggle and have sought to preserve it for future generations by recording in the novels of the state the events of this conflict. Kansas novelists separate the struggle rather distinctly into its two phases, political and military, and place the emphasis on one or the other or divide it equally as they desire. Mary A. Humphrey deals chiefly with the political side of the struggle, Margaret Hill McCarter and Mary Ellen Jackson with the military, and Margaret Lynn with both.

The political conflict, as pictured in the Kansas novel, follows, to a fairly accurate degree, the sequence of events recorded in histories of the state as follows:

November 29, 1854 -- election of delegate to Congress

March 30, 1855 -- election of territorial legislature

July 2, 1855 -- first meeting of the territorial legislature

October 1, 1855 -- Topeka convention

20. Wm. R. Lighton: Sons of Strength, p. 93.

January 15, 1856 -- election of Free-state officers
 March 4, 1856 -- first session of Topeka Legislature
 November 3, 1857 -- Leecompton Constitution formed
 March 23, 1858 -- Leavenworth Constitution formed
 September 12, 1859 -- Wyandotte Constitution formed

Mary Humphrey gives the only account to be found in Kansas novels of the first election in Kansas. (Most Kansas novelists begin a year later in recording the history of the state.) She writes in The Squatter Sovereign:

"At the November election for a delegate to Congress the men of this colony" (a colony composed of poor white trash) "came up manfully and paid for their 'keep' by voting for Whitfield, the pro-slavery candidate, and aided by seventeen-hundred Missourians, who encamped for the day on Kansas soil, carried the election in his favor. This was the real opening of the Southern programme - the first demonstration that other than fair means were to be used at the polls, in settling the great question relegated by Congress to the Territory."²¹

Mrs. Humphrey describes thus the action taken at the meeting of Free-State settlers in Warsaw (Lawrence) after this illegal election:

"It was unanimously resolved in this meeting, to send Arthur Fairchild to northern Ohio as a regularly accredited agent for the colony, and he was specially instructed to

21. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 67.

use all honorable means to secure a large immigration previous to the 30th of March, 1855, that being the day fixed upon by the first governor of the Territory, who had arrived in October, for the election of the first territorial legislature. The selection of this legislature was a matter of grave importance to the settlers, as the laws and institutions of the future State depended in a great measure on their course of action. There were many indications of a large influx of pro-slavery men, as urgent appeals were being made all through the South for men and money, and organizations secret and otherwise instituted, to aid and induce emigration." ²²

This second election in Kansas has been pictured in the Kansas novel by Margaret Lynn, Margaret Hill McCarter, Mary A. Humphrey, and Ruth Cowgill. Mrs. Humphrey gives the most detailed account of the event. She devotes an entire chapter and a part of another to this one occasion. In her account of the meeting held by free-state men after the election, she gives a review of the events of the election at Lawrence:

"Then he called upon Arthur for a report from Warsaw and the young man arose, stating that affairs had been managed in Warsaw much the same as at Walnut Grove. That the one thousand men who passed on beyond Calhoun on the day before the election, had camped that night over in the ravine

north of the town. That they were well armed and supplied with two pieces of artillery - that they wore a badge of white ribbon, and brought election tickets which had been printed in Missouri - that they insisted upon voting without taking the oath as to residence; that they formed two long lines of guards in front of the polls, through which voters were marched up in single file, and then, as it was impossible for them to return the same way, an opening was made in the roof of the building, and voters passed out through and from the roof to the ground by means of ladders. That the leader, a Colonel Ohmer from Missouri, requested that the old men be allowed to vote first, as they were weary and anxious to get back to camp. And most humiliating of all, that the representative for whom these perambulating voters had cast their ballots, was a semi-simpleton from Missouri, unable to articulate distinctly, whom they had picked up and used for the express purpose of deriding and humiliating the people of that Free State stronghold.

"He stated also, that numerous citizens of Warsaw had been driven off the grounds during the day, but that a number had been allowed to vote late in the afternoon, when most of the Missourians had returned to camp, but their votes numbered only two hundred and fifty-three, while the illegal votes cast amounted to eight hundred and two."²³

Miss Lynn, in her account of the same election, gives

23. Ibid., p. 164.

a better idea of the actions of the Free State men at the time these outrages were committed. She emphasizes here the respect with which the Free State settlers regarded the law, and also introduces their policy of non-resistance:

"The day after the election John Truman tried to recall distinctly all that occurred from the time when he drove his horse urgently across the prairie, until the Missourians broke camp and stridently and jeeringly went back by the way they had come, leaving taunts and menaces in their train. He remembered the moment when the full insult and outrage - insult on the scale of a state - came upon him, and, alone on the prairie, he broke into an anger he had never known before. He recalled speaking aloud out there in his solitude, words stronger than had ever before been on his lips. All his reverence for law, his pride in safe and reasonable government, were suddenly outraged and desecrated beyond his bearing.

"As he looked back two days later on the hours that had intervened, he seemed to be looking into a haze of anger in which all the ugly events of the day were set. He knew he had stood in white silence while the men of Lawrence took calm counsel together and urged upon each other, not only non-resistance, but non-provocation. He recalled the loud-mouthed blasphemous camp, broken up at last into sections to supply voters to other districts; the crowded and desecrated voting-place in the morning and the deposed and ejected judges of election; the boisterous farce of vot-

ing, with all forms cast contemptuously aside; the flourished knives and wantonly discharged guns; the oaths and ribald talk; at last the silent body of Lawrence men going quietly down to vote in the late afternoon, the withdrawing Missourians shouting profane taunts and derision. Deep in John Truman's New England soul was a reverence for the ballot, a reverence conceived first in the aspiration and struggle of other generations and made greater in him because of that. The vote was to him a symbol of deepest significance. He had seen vaguely through the day that the quiet anti-slavery men kept cautious watch on each other to assist the control of all. Some instinct of his own, a fear of his own unaccustomed anger, helped also to keep him apart."²⁴

Although protests against this illegal election were sent to Governor Reeder from many districts, in only six did he set aside the results of the election and order new elections. The new election was ignored by pro-slavery men, who knew that they already had a large majority in the legislature.

The territorial legislature which met in Pawnee, the temporary capital of Kansas, July 2, 1855, was then composed principally of Missourians who had no intentions whatsoever of ever making permanent homes in Kansas. Margaret Lynn gives some space to an account of this first meeting of the legislature, but it is Mrs. Humphrey, again, who

 24. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 20.

gives the most complete picture. Mrs. Humphrey tells that after electing a Speaker of the House and a president of the Council, the body of law-makers turned to the really important part of their meeting, that of expelling the anti-slavery members. She writes:

"There had been but one Free State man elected to the Council, and that body made short work of expelling him, and giving his seat to his pro-slave competitor; and on the morning of the 3rd, the lower House also proceeded to purge itself of opposing elements. This required more time, as there were five contesting members present, with papers, evidence, and affidavits, which necessitated at least a show of examination."²⁵

The next task in order was the appointment of territorial officers, which was carried on in the same unscrupulous manner as the other business. Mrs. Humphrey says:

"Many of these appointees, among who was Zeke Fagin, who received the office of Sheriff of Hamilton county - which included the settlements of Walnut Grove and Warsaw - were residents of Missouri, and were only induced to take up their temporary residence in the Territory by the gift of offices conferring authority or material reward. And this done, they deliberately proceeded to adjourn the Legislature to Shawnee Mission, abandoning the seat of government which had been duly designated by the proper power, for a place near the Missouri border, ostensibly in consequence of in-

 25. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 205.

sufficient shelter, but really for the accomodation of the members who wished to return to their homes at night after having spent the day in adapting the laws of Missouri to the Territory of Kansas.

"This act of adjournment the Governor vetoed, but with many threats of hanging, lynching, and removing his excellency in various ways, they passed it by a two-thirds vote over his veto, and forthwith took up their line of march for home."²⁶

Mrs. Humphrey sends Langtry, one of her Free State characters to the meeting of the legislature at Shawnee Mission. He keeps his friends in Lawrence well informed as to the actions of the legislature. In his first letter he writes:

"They have adopted with a few exceptions, the statutes of their own State, merely directing - by the passage of resolutions to that effect - that, wherever the words State of Missouri were found, the copy should read Territory of Kansas."

Two days later he writes:

"They are progressing with their work; the statutes which they have enacted in relation to slavery, would not, be tolerated by their own State of Missouri. Mark you! they have made it a felony to utter a word against the institution, and the penalty for thus offending, penal servitude from two to five years, the convict to drag a heavy ball and chain affixed to the ankle, and to labor on the public roads,

or in the service of individuals at the fixed price of fifty cents per diem.

"For greater offences against the slave property, they have provided a severer penalty. For instance, to aid in any rebellion of slaves, to assist any slaves to escape from their master, to bring any book or tract calculated to excite rebellion on the part of the slaves, free negroes, or mulattoes, to carry out of the Territory a slave belonging to another, or to assist the same, are all capital offences, to be punished with death."

"Also they have enacted, in order I suppose, that persons accused of violating the statutes in relation to offences against slave property, may obtain justice, Section No. 13 which reads thus:

"No person who is conscientiously opposed to holding slaves in the Territory, shall sit as a juror on the trial of any prosecution in which the right to hold any person in slavery is involved; nor in any cause in which any injury done to, or committed by any slave, is in issue; nor in any criminal proceeding for the violation of any law enacted for the protection of slave property, and for the punishment of crime committed against the right to such property."

"Thus, at one blow, they have demolished that ancient bulwark of freedom which has ever been a stumbling block in the path of tyrants."

Again he writes:

"They are now engaged in drawing up a memorial to Congress, praying for the removal of Governor Reeves, he having added to his former offences against them, by declaring all their proceedings irregular and void, on the ground of their removal from the place designated as the Capitol, and also having replied to the committee appointed to call upon him, who used such mild means of remonstrance as threats of hanging, shooting, and other forms of death:

"Gentlemen, two or three can assassinate me, but a legion can not compel me to do that which my conscience does not approve."

He continues:

"That their enactments passed over the Governor's veto may not lack sanction, they have resorted to a high-handed judicial expedient. Without waiting for cases to arise under their laws by which to ascertain their validity, they have submitted the most abnoxious of them to the consideration of the Supreme court, that body with a wise forethought being convened in this place at the present time."

A week later he gives the verdict of the court:

"As might have been expected, overlooking the fact that there was no case before them, that they were prejudging any case which might arise under the statutes, that the party who might be interested was thus condemned without a hearing and that the whole proceeding was irregular and extra-judicial, the Supreme Judge and one of his associates, the other dissent-

ing, decided in favor of these enactments, and against the Governor's veto, and bolstered up a lengthy and confused legal opinion on the subject, by the following superb piece of irony:

"In reaching this determination, we (the judges) have been influenced to no small degree, by our high appreciation of the constituent elements of your honorable bodies, thoroughly satisfied as we are, that in the great requisites of intelligence, and public virtue, the legislative assembly of Kansas will compare favorably with any other."

Later in the same letter, he writes:

"They have located our future capitol at Lecompton, the most inconvenient and inaccessible place they could have selected, but the settlers in that vicinity are mostly pro-slavery, and it is affirmed that the 'members' have received from the town company liberal grants of town lots as the price of their votes, a good speculation on the part of the latter, as a large sum of money will be expended in public buildings."

The Free State settlers could not accept the outrages committed against them by the pro-slavery legislature; so on September 5, 1855 they met at Big Springs to discuss the situation and devise a plan of action. This was the beginning of the anti-slavery party. Mrs. Humphrey writes of this convention:

"The Convention at White Springs" (Big Springs) "was a great success in numbers, in enthusiasm, and in its effect upon the future movements of the Free State party, then and there regularly organized."²⁸

She goes on to recount that this body first repudiated the actions of the legislature, then proceeded to nominate a delegate to congress; that ex-Governor Reeder was nominated for this position and plans made for an election; that the convention formulated a platform for the anti-slavery party. Mrs. Humphrey includes in The Squatter Sovereign the following account of this last action:

"When order was again restored, a platform was proposed and was finally adopted, after much discussion and warm debate, it being found almost impossible to harmonize into a homogeneous body the widely differing elements with but one point in common - a desire to make Kansas a Free State.

"The first resolution invited men of all parties to join in the movement.

"The second denounced non-resident voters, no matter where from.

"The third declared the policy to be that which should make Kansas a Free State.

"The fourth expressed a determination to make reasonable provision for slaves then present in the Territory.

"The fifth, over which there was much discussion, and

which bid fair at even this early day to divide the party, declared that no negro bond or free, should be permitted to come into the territory.

This was the notorious black law feature, and, in conjunction with the sixth which repudiated the charge of abolitionism as affixed to the Free State party, was objected to by Langtry and others, whose sympathies were wide enough to take in all humanity, without regard to color or previous condition."²⁹

Having united their forces at the Big Springs Convention, the Free State men then took it upon themselves to establish a state government. Margaret Lynn summarizes their subsequent actions as follows:

"In the middle of September a Free State delegate convention had met in Topeka, to take steps to form a state government. And immediately following that, an election was held for members of a constitutional convention, this time without interference from Missouri voters. They had one assembly in Kansas - why elect another? And in late October the new convention - a Free State convention - met in Topeka and adopted a constitution in which slavery had no place. Thenceforth the Topeka Constitution was to be the central point of all anti-slavery effort."³⁰

Mrs. Humphrey gives some information regarding the form-

29. Ibid., p. 251.

30. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 67.

ation of the Topeka Constitution. She says:

"Each man who had, or could obtain, a copy of the statutes of his native State brought it with him to the Convention, and when anything differing from that standard was offered, rose to explain that such a feature was not found in the Constitution of 'Indiany' or 'Pennsylvania', and by dint of this repeated friction many objectionable features were removed, and a very fair Constitution produced."³¹

Miss Lynn reports thus, the final destiny of the Topeka Constitution:

"The constitution framed by the Free State constitutional convention in Topeka in October had been sent to Congress with application for admission of Kansas as a state. The House accepted it and passed a bill admitting the territory, but the Senate rejected it, as everyone had expected. It was only one step in the fight and no one was greatly disappointed."³²

Although Congress refused to admit Kansas to the Union on the basis of the Topeka Constitution, the Free State men went ahead with the election of officers as they had planned to do and on March 4th, 1856, gathered for the first session of the Free State legislature. Margaret Lynn gives the most complete account of this meeting. She says of this action of the Free State men:

31. Mary A Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 277.

32. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 99

"There was a challenge in the act more general, more thorough than in anything yet undertaken. This was saying practically what the Free State men had already proclaimed, that the pro-slavery administration was a bogus one - 'bogus' laws, 'bogus' legislature - elected at a 'bogus' election - that was always the phrase of the anti-slavery men.

"What would be the outcome of this session no one could yet tell. Threats had been borne west from the Missouri line, telling what would be the result of going through this form of state-making. Companies of militia were forming and parading on the border. In Washington President Pierce had in January issued a message to Congress supporting the pro-slavery legislature and declaring it legal, no matter what the election that had brought it into being. About the middle of February the President again opened his lips to emphasize his earlier words and to say that the Federal Government warranted none of the Free State organization and put the troops at Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth at the disposal of Governor Shannon. Indeed from the perspective of Washington the situation in the territory might have presented a curious spectacle; a state with two legislatures, each denying the authority of the other, two temporary capitals, a governor and equipment of state officers elected by the people and a territorial governor appointed by the President, and a constitution framed by one constitutional convention and another constitution expeditiously borrowed outright from a neighboring state by the opposing convention.

'Two Popes would be nothing to it,' said Robert Stivers."

Several chapters later in her book, Miss Lynn continues:

"But the Free State Legislature convened. The 'bogus' legislature, chosen under the bogus election of the year before, had been recognized by the national government, while the Free State assembly, which had met in Topeka in March and was adjourned until July fourth, was forbidden to convene. For weeks before, Free State men had had their eyes on the day and the appointment. Would it assemble? Territorial officers, waiting always for overt act, asked the same. Would it assemble? Would it dare to give the challenge?

"It did dare. Two companies of Free State militia assisted the daring and a large mass convention which met in Topeka the day before, sponsored it. From their little prison, with no prospect of release before them, Doctor Robinson and the other political prisoners yet sent a letter urging the Free State body to act firmly and boldly. The little wooden town swarmed with men, alert, watchful, cautious. Hardie, Fraser, Stivers were among them. The territorial officers were armed with enough proclamations to disperse a dozen meetings - the President's, the Governor's, the Acting-Governor's, and from Colonel Sumner himself one which might be called the enacting clause, sealed as it was with the visible presence of soldiers.

"But at its appointed time the legislature met. It was not really surprised, though a little self-conscious to find Colonel Sumner meeting with it. Outside the building his five companies of soldiers were stationed, their regular blue uniformed ranks lined off clearly among the surrounding crowd. The presiding officer looked at Colonel Sumner's commanding figure, looked at the men before him, looked again, and pronounced the session open and directed the acting clerk to call the roll. The first man did not respond, the second, the third. The room was full of silent men. A bare half-dozen responded to their names. The acting Speaker rapped sharply. 'The seargent-at-arms will summon the absent members,' he said. The sergeant-at-arms rose. Men exchanged glances, a little sheepish, a little cautious. Colonel Sumners stood commandingly and the play stopped.

"'Gentlemen,' he said, 'this is the most disagreeable duty of my whole life. My orders are to disperse this legislature, and I am here to tell you that it must not meet and to see it dispersed. God knows I have no partisan feelings in the matter, and I will have none so long as I hold my present position in Kansas. I have just returned from the border where I have been driving out bands of Missourians, and now I am ordered here to disperse you. This body cannot be permitted to meet.'

"He withdrew with dignity. Men quietly moved from their places in sign of acquiescence. 'At least,' said one

man, 'we've been disbanded by a gentleman and like gentlemen.' The same lack of animosity in the crowd outside was shown in its three hearty cheers for Colonel Sumner as he rode away. But they were followed by three groans for Franklin Pierce, as hearty and unanimous."³⁴

The remainder of the political side of the free-soil struggle is treated rather briefly by all Kansas authors who have touched upon it at all. Mrs. Humphrey summarizes it thus in three short paragraphs:

"The Topeka Constitution for which so much had been endured was rejected by Congress, and a united effort made to fasten upon the Territory, without ratification by a popular vote, a Constitution formed by the pro-slavery faction at Leecompton, which attempt proved to be the rock upon which split the great Democratic party, North and South, Senator Douglas himself repudiating such an interpretation of the Squatter Sovereignty Bill.

"This Constitution was overthrown, however, in a peculiar manner, worthy of narration. When the time came for the election of officers under it, the Free State party nominated a ticket, and turned out in such force at the polls as to elect their men by a large majority, and then these newly-elected officers, from governor down, united in a memorial to Congress, protesting against the admission of the State under that fraudulent instrument, perhaps the only

case on record of Americans petitioning themselves out of office.

"Then the Free State party, gaining possession of the Territorial Legislature in 1858, abrogated by a single act the multitudinous and barbarous laws passed by the bogus Legislature in 1855, and till then, in nominal force, though any attempt to actually enforce them had long since ceased, and amid great rejoicing, the bulky volume of bogus statutes was committed to the devouring flames of a public bonfire."³⁵

The military side of the free-soil struggle is based upon the following sequence of events as recorded in the histories of Kansas:

December 10, 1855 -- Wakarusa War

March 21, 1856 -- Sacking of Lawrence

May 24, 1856 -- Pottawatomie Massacre

August 29, 1856 -- Battle of Osawatomie

April 15, 1863 -- Lincoln's Call for Men

August 21, 1863 -- Quantrell's Raid

The Wakarusa War is treated very fully by Mary Jackson, Margaret Hill McCarter, and Margaret Lynn. Both Mrs. McCarter and Miss Lynn lead up to the Wakarusa War by telling of the murder of a Free State man, Charles W. Dow, by a pro-slavery man, Franklin Coleman: of the capture of Branson, a friend of the murdered man, by Sheriff Jones and his men; and of the rescue of Branson by a band of Free State men.

35. Mary Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 344.

Taking up the War in her chapter War on the Wakarusa, Mrs. McCarter says:

"The Sheriff had been true to the threat made by the rescuers of Branson. He promised them that they should suffer in full for their act of opposing an officer of the law. Like the autumn prairie fires of the short grass plains, the howl of Sheriff Jones sought along the land, gathering volume as it rolled eastward, the cry that Kansas was supreme, that officers of the law were powerless to act, that no Pro-Slavery man's life was safe, that nothing short of a force of hundreds of armed men could restore civil peace. And loudest of all did Jones bellow forth the edict that Lawrence must not be left with one stone upon another.

"It was not however to the law-abiding men of the Kansas Territory to whom he appealed for aid in suppressing the rebels within her borders, but to the Missouri militia, with whatever of volunteer service that the rabble always furnishes in the hey-day of licensed lawlessness.

"Fifteen hundred strong, gathered on the banks of the Wakarusa, and their camp-fires signalled hatred, destruction, loot, and murder to that defenceless land through which the Wakarusa wanders on its way to meet the Kaw. They wanted to fight, this valiant host, else they would not have volunteered; they wanted to kill, else they would not fight; they wanted to plunder and destroy, else fighting and killing were a waste of energy. This invading band was increased by the Pro-Slavery men of the Territory, but they were a mere hand-

ful without the alien force brought in to win the struggle to a cause alien to Kansas. All these centered on the Wakarusa banks facing Lawrence." ³⁶

The following from Free Soil carries on the story:

"Lawrence grimly set about organization. A few men, like James Lane and Charles Robinson, knew something of military practice, from fighting in California or Texas or Mexico. The others readily put themselves under their direction and fell into ranks. Barricades were thrown up and a semblance of fortifications, men drilled night and day, hands that had never dreamed of killing learned to hold arms for deadly purposes, sentinels watched and listened from the hilltop at night, women took account of their stores and tried to feed a score where they had fed one before. The completeness of the beleaguering seemed to raise the scale of it. But nothing of the picturesque went with this siege. There was no impressiveness about the crude mob that squatted itself out there at Franklin or along the Wakarusa. Miscellaneous, motley in dress, loud and angry of voice, rough and uncontrolled in bearing, they would have been undesirable exponents of any cause.

"In daytime some rode about the country reconnoitering or 'vittling up' for provisioning the camp. Others spread themselves along the roads into Lawrence, intercepting supplies or taking prisoners, yet a sort of caution lay upon

them. It was almost a wonder that with this body of men let loose, convinced of its justification for lawlessness, there were not daily murders. A sort of prudence or - to be fair - in some instances an innate regard for law, withheld them from the worst outrages. The crowd held men who were decent citizens at their home and who were here not for the opportunity for individual outrage or riot, but to advance a cause to which interest or belief attached them."³⁷

Both Miss Lynn and Mrs. McCarter include in their accounts of the Wakarusa War the incident of Mrs. S. N. Wood and Mrs. G. W. Brown of Lawrence going past the pro-slavery guards which surrounded the town, in order to get a supply of ammunition which was being held by a Free State man at his house on the Santa Fe Road.

Both also recount the murder of a Free State man, Thomas W. Barber, by pro-slavery men. This was the only casualty of the entire siege. After a great many insults and threats from the pro-slavery men and a great deal of suspense and worry on the part of the Free State men, the Wakarusa War came to a sudden close. Miss Lynn explains it thus:

"And then after all this, it ended suddenly and undramatically. After these days of threatening and loud truculence, there was abruptly quiet, and emptiness over on the Wakarusa. The war was over.

"The Governor had come to Lawrence and inquired and gone

37. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 74.

back to Franklin and inquired further. He looked on the quality of the men he had been tricked into sanctioning and called them shortly hyenas. Moreover, captains of the 'militia' also disavowed Sheriff Jones and his works, the more so since he did not have the courage to follow them up to any result.

"'Sheriff!' said one in the hearing of the Governor.

'He's no more sheriff than any other rascal is. They have to have somebody to do their dirty work for them. But he ain't smart enough to turn his own trick. They'd better get somebody else if they can find one both ornery and smart.'

"Some of the mob grew tired of inaction and apparent lack of plan and quietly returned to Missouri. And finally the natural elements seemed to declare themselves on the side of Kansas and the delightful camping weather of the last month turned to a blizzard. It was no season for either camping or foraging. There was a sudden hurried movement back to Missouri.

"So without satisfaction of any sort of victory on one side or any retort for insult offered on the other, a treaty was signed. The Governor signed in one part and Charles Robinson and James Lane the other. The Governor came to a peace banquet under the same roof where Barber had lain - and all men put on the semblance of gratification and many of them, eager to return to their homes and their unprotected families or unfinished houses, really felt it."³⁸

38. Ibid., p. 88.

The sacking of Lawrence on May 21, 1856 has been of especial interest to Kansas novelists. Mary Jackson gives it brief mention in The Spy of Osawatomie, Mary Humphrey gives a vivid picture of the event in The Squatter Sovereign, Margaret Hill McCarter devotes an entire chapter to it in A Wall of Men, Margaret Lynn gives it considerable space in The Land of Promise and treats it in detail in Free Soil.

The account given in Free Soil corresponds most nearly with historical records; even the words of the leaders of the attack being given exactly as history has recorded them. In this account Miss Lynn again emphasizes the respect the Free State men held for the law. She explains first that the "guerilla bands, already such a terror to the country, were to be used as the posse for Major Donaldson, the United States Marshal. He and Lecompton were not content with the arrests they had already made, with driving Reeder out of the country, and with holding Robinson in Missouri, nor were they content that arrest was no longer resisted in Lawrence.

"It was obvious that they wanted more. An appeal to Governor Shannon as to the status of these marauding bands had brought back the official reply that there was no force about Lawrence 'except the legally constituted posse of the United States Marshal and the Sheriff of Douglas County,' and that the Governor 'would in no way interfere with either of these officers in the discharge of their duties.' At the same time a proclamation was issued by Major Donaldson stating that the execution of his writs had been resisted in

Lawrence by a large body of armed men and that now 'the law-abiding citizens of the territory are commanded to be and appear in Lecompton as soon as practicable and in numbers sufficient for the execution of the law.'

"The Marshal's proclamation was not sent to Lawrence, the place apparently most concerned, but to Missouri and Leavenworth - for purposes too obvious. When it finally did reach Lawrence, a letter signed by a committee of citizens was sent to the Marshal, inquiring into the reason for this and protesting that no resistance to the law had been made. To this the official had sent a jeering and intentionally offensive reply. His letter did not sound like the utterance of a federal officer but rather the wordy retort of a spleenful personal enemy of the place. An appeal had finally been made by Lawrence to Colonel Sumner, in charge of the Federal troops at Leavenworth, to come to their protection. But the colonel had been obliged to reply that he did not have the right to move his troops without authority higher than his own. He could not supercede territorial authority."³⁹

In spite of such conditions, the Free State men at Lawrence continued their policy of non-resistance, reasoning, as Miss Lynn has expressed it through the mouth of one of her characters, that:

"Kansas is not the only place where men are working for the cause of abolition and we must not interfere with

the credit of the whole cause. We have to sacrifice our rights to keep up the appearance of right."⁴⁰

After a long period of suspense on the part of the citizens of Lawrence, came the attack which Miss Lynn recounts as follows:

"Up on the hillside, near the now empty Robinson house, Major Donaldson formally accepted the report of deputy Fain. Then, turning to his huge and motly 'posse', he officially dismissed them.

"But that was not to be all.

"He added, 'Sheriff Jones has some writs to execute and you are at liberty to organize as his posse.'

"This was the trick! Thus the loyalty of the town had been turned against itself. Had this mob come in as Jones' followers, Lawrence would have met it armed. But skulking in under the authority of the government, it found law-abiding citizens, not fighting men.

"Sheriff Jones rode before them, greeted with yells of applause. No leader, it would seem, had ever more devoted or joyous followers. They were his, freely and fully. The last hope of Lawrence was gone.

"He had, he assured them, writs to execute and a score to settle and his own assassination to avenge. He picked twenty men and led them off into the town. The remaining hundreds were marched in some sort of order down to the low-

er hillside. They were ill-trained to orderly moving and a soldier would have thought it a ramshackle square into which they were formed.

"Then Atchison, once acting Vice-president and still senator, but absenting himself from Congress at this time for better-loved duties, came forward with words for the occasion, words which history has preserved.

"'Boys, this is the happiest day of my life! We have entered this damned town and taught the abolitionists a lesson they will remember till the day they die. And now boys, we will go in again with our highly honorable Jones and test the strength of that damned Free State Hotel and teach the Emigrant Aid Society that Kansas will be ours. Boys, ladies should, and I hope will, be respected by every gentleman.' None laughed. 'But when a woman takes upon herself the garb of a soldier by carrying a Sharps rifle, then she is no longer worthy of respect. Trample her under foot as you would a snake.

"'Now, boys, I know you will do your duty to yourselves and to your southern friends. If one man or woman dare to stand before you, blow them to hell with a chunk of cold
41
lead!'"

The ruffians aimed the cannon, belonging to the Free State men, at the hotel but succeeded only in splintering the corners. Miss Lynn then continues:

"Set it on fire!" cried Jones fiercely, and no laughter followed. His men sprang to the entrances of the building. Some wrecked furniture and smashed it to kindling to start their fires. Others plundered through the rooms seeking for portable plunder. The childish and savage came together in them. Some destroyed for the mere pleasure of the crackle and the smash; others stole absurdly whatever they found moveable, for the elementary pleasure of illegal acquisition. Lawrence found no cause for laughter as flames broke from half a dozen windows.

"The whole crowd watched the scene in silence for a few minutes, Lawrence men and women with choking throats and dumb lips. Then the border ruffians with yells of delight at their accomplishment, turned to the town. 'The place is yours,' said Jones and Atchison - and theirs they made it.

"No man could ever afterward tell fully what his feelings were as he impotently saw these men entering his house for wanton, insulting destruction; no woman to her latest day could easily speak of the moment when they laid brutal and vulgar hands on the hardly-possessioned things out of which she had made her new scantily-furnished home. Nothing in her life of ownership and home-making could have prepared her for this sacrilege. Women defended and defied even more than their men could - the men falsely and bewilderingly tied by a foresight looking to future state interests, and by the form of loyalty to which they had committed themselves. Open battle would have been one thing; this gross assault upon the homely familiar things of life was quite another, bitterer in its

pettiness and insult than any warfare could be. The South-
erners romped fiercely through the houses, ransacking and
choosing or discarding like ignorant children, gluttonous or
destructive for their own entertainment. They tossed fur-
nishings into the street and tore or smashed or fired with
heavy mirth or clumsy malevolence. Hardly controlled men or
grieved and angry women came after them to rescue when they
could or put out fires or bring their possessions back to
decent privacy.

"In the midst of all this the hotel continued to burn."⁴²

The Pottawatomie Massacre, the work of John Brown and
his sons on May 24, 1856, is mentioned only briefly by Mary
Humphrey, Margaret Hill McCarter, and Margaret Lynn. Mrs.
McCarter summarizes the event as follows:

"Two days later when the Sabbath came, the Territory,
and later the Nation was startled with the unparalleled story
of a Free State uprising. Bill Sherman, Allen Wilkenson, and
the three Doyles - father and two sons - had been taken from
their homes in the dead of night and silently sent to their
doom,

'With all their crimes broad blown as flush as May.'

"Those who took the sword had perished by the sword.

The Pottawatomie Massacre, the first blow for the real free-
dom of Kansas, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, dropped
into the hitherto one-sided record of the struggle for su-

premacY in the Kansas Territory and became an event fixed for all time in the annals of the West. Its horrors were rehearsed and its atrocity bitterly denounced by the South and the misunderstanding North.

"But to the men who accomplished it, the perspective of Time has been magnanimous."⁴³

The Battle of Osawatomie of August 29, 1856, has been treated in great detail in a long and somewhat scattered account by Mary E. Jackson,⁴⁴ but the single paragraph given by Miss Lynn in Free Soil presents a much more vivid picture of the event. Miss Lynn writes:

"Atchison's militia many hundred strong, had moved across the border as soon as Woodson came to the Governor's chair, and gone south toward the Marais des Cygnes. Three or four hundred of them had marched one early morning upon the little Free State town of Osawatomie. At one side of it Old John Brown's fifty men drew the attack to themselves as long as possible. But they were outnumbered eight to one, and could only lead the Missourians aside for a moment and then escape across the Marais des Cygnes - those who lived to go - and from their hiding see the whole place reduced to ashes and the settlers, women and children among them, driven out to scatter homeless. But old John Brown, fighting in his linen duster and, from the middle of the stream with his gar-

43. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 348.
44. Mary E. Jackson: The Spy of Osawatomie, p. 333.

ment floating out on the water still defying the swearing ruffians, won a new title for himself that day. Osawatomie Brown was even more terrifying than Old John Brown, whose name alone had sometimes sent groups of marauders flying." ⁴⁵

With the arrival of Governor Geary in the territory the tide of affairs began to turn definitely in favor of the Free State party. Upon his first visit to Lawrence he addressed the people thus, as reported by Miss Lynn:

"It is my intention as governor of this territory," he said at the last, "to put an end to all illegal and unwarranted fighting. It is my duty to govern the territory without partizanship and as peaceably as possible. I have already ordered the disbanding of the so-called militia within the territory. I shall this morning send out to them a further announcement of that order. Lawrence may consider itself safe. I have brought the Federal troops this morning for your reassurance, but they will not be needed. The authority of the Governor is the highest authority in this place."⁴⁶

Then when Atchison and his men did come to attack Lawrence, Governor Geary made good his promise and sent Colonel Cooke with his troops to the rescue. Again the Governor reassured the people, according to Miss Lynn:

"You are under the protection of Federal authority,"

45. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 311.

46. Ibid: p. 349.

said Governor Geary, sitting on his horse before the leaders, 'as every citizen of this country is.'

Then, "With his own guard he moved out toward the pro-slavery host, now halted and uncertain. Its leaders rode forth to meet him. Atchison and Reid and Titus and even Jones, scowling and discontented as ever before. The Governor waited for official information from them. 'This is the Kansas militia,' said Reid, 'called into service by the Governor of the territory to destroy the town of Lawrence which has been in rebellion.'

"Governor Geary looked firmly back at the group. 'I am now Governor of this territory,' he said, 'and in command of any force called out in Kansas. When I call militia, it will be made up of Kansas men and not of outsiders. You may send your militia, or lead them, back to their homes.'

"His square figure and bearing spoke authority, his hard eye looked them down firmly. Colonel Cooke sat on horseback beside him and in the background were the troops of the Federal government. The volunteer commanders turned about to collect their army, and Sheriff Jones followed reluctantly in their train. 'He won't be any kind of governor long,' he snarled."⁴⁷

Governor Geary did not long hold his position as governor of Kansas. In standing up for what he thought was right, he lost the support of the pro-slavery party and after his

life had been threatened many times, he resigned from his position and slipped away from Kansas. However, he had been of permanent assistance to the territory, for, though there were still occasional struggles between the two factions, the tide of affairs was changed by his administration.

Although the struggle for freedom in Kansas ended victoriously in 1860, the people of Kansas were soon called to take part in a struggle for freedom in a wider sense. On April 15, 1861, came Lincoln's call for men to fight for the freedom of the nation; and Kansas, already awake to the seriousness of the cause, responded nobly. Margaret Hill McCarter pictures the response of Kansas men to this call:

"When the April of '61 came with its spring-time beauty, to the Kansas prairies, the Civil War had come and Kansas, so much the immediate cause, was still in the path of the tornado. Up from her prairies and valleys, again the loyal-hearted men came hurrying, to build now a wall of defence for the Nation and to keep from stain and dishonor the flag of their country."⁴⁸

In The Price of the Prairie Mrs. McCarter expresses the purpose of the Kansas men in going to war:

"My father had gone out to battle, not alone to set free an enslaved race, but to make whole and strong a nation whose roots are in the homes it defends."⁴⁹

48. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 400.

49. Ibid., p. 307.

Willian Allen White in A Certain Rich Man devotes a chapter to the Civil War struggle. Included in this chapter is a vivid description of the battle near Springfield, Missouri, on August 4, 1861. A part of this account may be given here to show what further sacrifices the Kansas men were called upon to make for the cause of freedom:

"All the long afternoon the camp of the enemy continued to belch out men. The battery mowed them down, and once the Kansans were ordered to charge the hill, and the boys were left alone. It was there that the two were separated. John saw men sink in awful silence, and the blood ooze from their heads. He saw men cramp in agony and choke with blood, and he saw Martin Culpepper, perhaps with the large white plumes still dancing in his eyes, dash out of the line and pick up a Union banner that Sigel's men had lost, and that the enemy was flaunting just before the artillery mowed the gray line down. He heard the hoarse men cheer Martin, and as the tall swart figure came running back waving the flag, the boy prayed to his father's God to save the man.

"When the battle lulled, the boy found himself parted from 'C' Company, and fled back through the woods to the rear. There he came upon a smell that was familiar. He had known it in the slaughter-house at home. It was the smell of fresh blood, and with it came the sickening drone of flies. In an instant he stood under a tree where men were working smeared with blood. He stumbled over a little pile of dismembered legs and hands, a man with a bloody knife was bending over

a human form stretched on a bloody and, it seemed to the boy, a greasy table. Another was helping the big man. They were cutting the bullet out of Watts McCurdie, who was lying white and unconscious and with flies crawling over him, half naked and blood-smeared, on the table. The boy screamed, and the man turned his head and snarled through his clenched teeth that held the knife, 'Get out of here - no - go get me a bucket of water from the creek.' Someone handed the boy a bucket, and he ran where he was told to go, with the awful sight burned on his brain, with the sickening smell in his nose, and with the drone of flies in his ears. When he came back the firing had begun again. The surgeon was saying, 'Well that's all that's waiting - now I'm going for a minute. He grabbed a gun standing by the table and ran toward the front; he did not take off his blood-splotted apron, and the boy fled from the place in terror. In a few minutes the firing ceased; but the boy ran on, hunting a hiding-place. He saw a troop of Alabamians plunge over a log in a charge, and roll in an awful, writhing, screaming pile of dying men and horses, and the heap he saw the terror-stricken face of a youth, who was shrieking for help; John carried that fear-distorted face in his memory for years until long afterward it appeared in Sycamore Ridge."⁵⁰

Of the women's part in the War Mr. White says:

"The women and children cared for the farms and stores as best they could and lived, heaven only knows how, and opened every newspaper with horror and dread, and glanced down

the long list of names of the dead, the missing and the wounded, fearful of what they might see."⁵¹

On the frontier the Civil War took a different aspect from that which it took elsewhere. Mrs. McCarter describes it thus:

"On the Western frontier the War was least dignified, least effective, and most vengeful - a continuing of the old border struggle of ambush and assassination. Kansas, lying between the South and the North, with the rebellious Confederacy on the east and the menace of hostile Indians on the West, became a storm center for terrific forces outside the swing of military justice and recognized laws of warfare. The struggle here was a vendetta strife where quarter was neither asked or given. But the fighting strength of Kansas was under enlistment in the Armies of the North. The men who against bullet, sword, and firebrand, had stood solidly for the freedom of Kansas were offering their lives now for the larger freedom, whose symbol is the Stars and Stripes. And while John Brown's body lay mouldering in the tomb, in these men - loyal to his life purpose - his soul went marching on."⁵²

The most terrible outrage of this vendetta warfare on the border, and of the entire struggle for freedom in Kansas for that matter, was Quantrill's raid on Lawrence, August 21, 1863. This outrage, though treated with spirit

51. Ibid., p. 48.

52. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 307.

in Mary E. Jackson's Spy of Osawatomie and in William K. Marshall's Entering Wedge has been most vividly pictured in Margaret Hill McCarter's Wall of Men. The reason back of this terrible attack is explained by Mrs. McCarter as follows:

"Why must Kansas be laid waste? The real cause, amid a volume of excuses offered, lay in the hatred of the Pro-Slavery spirit toward the staunch invincible young city of Lawrence, and in the depraved, ferocious spirit of William Clarke Quantrill. For five years, before he was outlawed in 1862, he had scourged the State. Here he had led a life of crime, and when he was driven from its confines, he carried with him a bitterness only such a nature as his could compass. Across the border he found his place by natural selection with the Pro-Slavery ruffians, and he combined their cause with his own. He hated Kansas as a murderer hates the spot where his deed of infamy is laid, and he was lured back to it by the same mental law. He knew Kansas ought to destroy him. Hence he would strike first. The time to act was now; the place was Lawrence." ⁵³

So well chosen was the time and so well managed the plan that not one word of the proposed attack reached Lawrence until the peaceful settlers were awakened from their beds by the noise of the invasion. The attack is pictured as follows, by Mrs McCarter:

"While the boys' camp was being destroyed, Quantrill and his lieutenant rode headlong up Massachusetts Avenue, firing one to the left and the other to the right, until they reached the Kaw River. Cutting the cable of the ferry, they severed the possibility of aid coming in from the north side, and the town was wholly at their mercy.

"It was waking now, but the meaning of the uproar had scarcely dawned on the startled citizens when the shout, 'On to the hotel,' filled the air. Before the Eldridge House the pack gathered. It was a splendid hostelry, built of brick, four stories high, well equipped and strong as a fort. The only thing in Lawrence that Quantrill's men feared that day was the Eldridge House. Any show of resistance here would have checked the tide of the attack, for the outlaw and the guerilla is by occupation a coward, and his trade is plied only by cowardly methods. Men in honorable warfare win by force, and strategy, and courageous daring. The border raider must always watch for the ambush and the bullet by which alone he himself can win, and he falls before the fearless foe.

"But the Eldridge House had no means, nor controlling mind, to meet such a fierce and sudden enemy. It offered no resistance and amid looting and riot it was given to flames.

"Before it Quantrill, his beardless, sun-browned face aglow with the sense of his power, his eyes yellow-green with viper poison, rising in his stirrups and waving his hand, dismissed his bands with the supreme order:

"Kill! kill! burn! burn! and you will make no mistake.

"And they burst upon the town dazed and defenceless with their smoking guns and swinging firebrands."⁵⁴

Later in her account, she writes:

"Fiercer yet, rolled the blood-red wave of murder, along the ways of doom, and higher leaped the flames of burning and destruction, and wilder did the looting pack - mad with stolen whiskey - break forth for plunder. If History, as written on our fair Continent, needs ever furnish to an artist's brush its most atrocious dream of cruelty, its most inhuman carnage of a savage lust for gore - its truest prototype of Hell - let it turn to the story of that August day and picture Lawrence as she lay before the dew had left the sheltered grasses. In the stories of peril and power there is no fellow to it.

"And all the while, about the city of death, Quantrill, the chieftain of the accursed horde, passed from spot to spot, directing all, increasing all, gloating in all the worse than beastly business. In all the dress of the guerilla, and with the exultation of a demon on his face, he came to the top of Mount Oread. Looking out over the valley whose exquisite beauty challenges the West for a companion to it, and down upon the roaring hell of agony and demolition his hands were controlling, his heavy eyelids drooping over his yellow-green eyes, he made a picture the like of which Mount Oread will

54. Ibid., p. 431.

see not any more."

Mrs. McCarter closes her account with the following:

"The beastly crew rushed off as they had come; and slaughter and burning made the milestones of their way, as with a running battle they fought off all pursuers and gained again the wooded coverts of a friendly State. And Lawrence roused up amid her ruins and put out her fires. The fierce August sun beat down on wounded and dying. Pillage had taken sacred keepsake and valuable treasure. Fire had laid waste home and office and store. And of the uncoffined dead for that brief space of guerilla seizure, Lawrence mourned for a hundred fifty men and boys, while of widows there were eighty, and of children two hundred fifty left to dreary homes. Dead forms lay in the desolate places, and the mourn-⁵⁶ers went about in the streets."

Although Kansas has always believed strongly in freedom, strongly enough to endure years of sacrifice to attain it, she has also believed from the outset that the freedom of the individual should end when it interferes with the freedom of society. This idea is responsible for the prohibition amendment in Kansas. Although Kansas was one of the first states to enact such legislation, she did not take such action suddenly, but only after years of agitation against the liquor traffic. Mr. Connelly in Kansas and Kansans says the follow-

55. Ibid., p. 446.

56. W. H. McCarter: A. Wall of Men, p. 448.

ing of the legislation against prohibition in Kansas:

"Prohibition in Kansas was no sudden uprising of the people against the liquor traffic; no movement of a few fanatics; long haired men and short haired women; nor should it be attributed to a puritanical desire to legislate morals into a state. Rather it was a crystallization of the slowly developed sentiment of a majority of the people in Kansas into an expression on the dramshop laws under which the liquor traffic was operated."

57

While Kansas novels contain only very brief allusions to the liquor problem, these are sufficient to reflect to some extent the interest of Kansas people in the temperance movement. By means of the following incident, Miss Lynn reminds the readers of Free Soil that a memorial on prohibition was presented to the Topeka Legislature on March 11, 1856, by fifty-six women of Topeka:

"After that seriously expectant ride in the early morning," (to the Topeka Legislature) "the men felt lighthearted and even John joined in the humor. Mose Litener, an obscure hanger-on of the Free State men - 'useful to do the cussin' for decenter men,' said Stivers, edged up and asked them to drink. Fraser and Truman, not drinking men, quietly refused and Stivers merely grinned quizzically at Litener.

"Litener," he said, 'fifty-six ladies of Topeka have sent a petition to the legislature asking it to forbid the

sale of intoxicating drinks in this state of Kansas. Slavery and whisky are going to walk out hand in hand. If you are going to get drunk, do it before it is too late." ⁵⁸

William Allen White records briefly in A Certain Rich Man the organization of temperance societies in Kansas. He says:

"Times were so prosperous that people lost interest in the crime of '73, and General Ward had to stay in his law-office, but he joined the teetotalers and helped to organize the Good Templars and the state temperance society." ⁵⁹

In The Story of a Country Town E. W. Howe takes a satirical attitude toward the organization of such societies. He writes:

"Together they established a lodge of Good Templars in Fairview, although the people were all sober and temperate, and once a week they met to call upon the fallen brother to shun the cup, and to redeem the country from debauchery and vice." ⁶⁰

In the same book Mr. Howe devotes almost an entire chapter to a lecture on temperance. He sets forth a number of ideas which, though rather unusual, have in them a great deal of truth. He says first of all:

"From long experience with it, I have come to believe

58. Margaret Lynn: Free Soil, p. 128.

59. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 201.

60. E. W. Howe: The Story of a Country Town, p. 54

that the question of intemperance has never been treated with the intelligence which has distinguished this country in most other particulars. We pet drunkards too much, and a halo of sentimentalism surrounds them, instead of the disgust and contempt they deserve. If a man is a noted liar, or a noted vagrant, society allows him to find his proper level, and reform himself (since no one else can do it for him), but if he drinks too much, great numbers of men and woman who are perhaps temperate in nothing except that they do not drink, attempt to reform him with kindness, although that method prevails in nothing else. As a reason why he should not dissipate, he is told what distinguished positions he could occupy but for the habit, and while this is well intended the facts generally are that the fellow is entirely worthless whether drunk or sober." ⁶¹

Mr. Howe writes further:

"The same mistaken people also talk too much about the allurements and pleasures of drink; of the gilded palaces where drink is sold, and of the pleasing effects, causing young men and boys who would otherwise never have thought of it to be seized with an uncontrollable desire to try the experiment for themselves, although there is nothing more certain than that all of this is untrue." ⁶²

And again he says:

61. Ibid., p. 177.

62. Ibid., p. 178.

"The first step in a career of dissipation is not the first glass, as is sometimes asserted, but a cultivation of saloon society. There is nothing to do in a place where drink is sold, no other amusement or excuse for being there, than to drink, gamble and gossip, and when a man learns to relish the undesirable company common to such places, the liquor habit follows as a matter of course, but not before."⁶³

Mr. Howe advises regulation, rather than prohibition of the liquor traffic, and explains his reasons thus:

"Most drunkards are such notorious liars that little can be told from their confessions, but if accurate statistics could be collected, it would no doubt turn out that most men have the habit formed because they are particularly warned against it. To say to a man that he shall not drink creates in him a strong desire to drink to excess, and prohibitory laws generally increase rather than decrease the consumption of liquor because of this strange peculiarity. We regulate other evils, and admit they cannot be blotted out, but with strange inconsistency we insist that liquor of every kind must be driven from the face of the earth, that to regulate such a horrible evil is a compromise with the Devil, and that efforts for its extermination only are worthy of temperate men and women."⁶⁴

It is Mr. Howe's belief that prohibitory laws place the

63. Ibid., p. 179.

64. Ibid., p. 180.

blame for intemperance upon the wrong person. He explains this idea by saying:

"When a man disgraces himself in any other way, we insist that he must be humiliated, as sending him to jail for petty larceny, or to public work for vagrancy; but when he becomes a disgusting, beastly drunkard, we tell him in confidence that he is not to blame, and that his enemy the saloon-keepers are responsible. The man who sells the pistol or the poison is not to blame for the suicide, nor is the man who sells whiskey to blame for the drunkard."⁶⁵

Mack Cretcher records in The Kansan the passage of the prohibitory laws in Kansas and the troubles that naturally followed such action:

"The state legislature had settled the liquor question by the passing of the prohibitory law, settled it at least so far as legislation was possible. Rural communities promptly complied with the provisions of the law but in the larger towns there was much evasion. In Bison City the licensed saloon merely gave way to the fined 'joints' where, behind swinging doors from the cigar stand blind in front, the white-aproned bar-tenders still dispensed their refreshments with immunity."⁶⁶

Besides these books which only refer briefly to the liquor question, there are several purpose-novels that deal

65. Ibid., p. 180.

66. Mack Cretcher: The Kansan, p. 237.

specifically with the liquor problem. One of these, Lois Morton's Investment, written by Mrs. Eva Murphy, is the story of a woman, Lois Morton, who refuses Paul Stanton, the man she loves, and marries Sam Smith, an habitual drunkard, for the purpose of reforming him. After a life of sorrow, she succeeds in her purpose. Sam dies soon afterward and she marries Paul, her old lover. The author's aim in writing this book was merely to incite public opinion against the liquor evil.

Another novel, The Narrow Gate, by the Reverend Charles M. Sheldon, is broader in its scope. In it the author follows the Prohibition Movement in Kansas and aims to further the temperance cause throughout the country. He pictures thus, one part that the women of the state played in exterminating the saloons:

"It was Tuesday of the following week that Colby witnessed a sight new to it then, but duplicated afterwards in hundreds of towns all over the state.

"About twenty women, nearly all of them mothers and most of them from the older group of church women, met at the Methodist church for an afternoon prayer-meeting and then, under the leadership of Mrs. Vernon and Mrs. Edwards, they went out together and walked down the sidewalk to the Wayside Inn, singing as they went:

'Stand up, stand up for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross-'

"Down in front of the saloon they all stopped and

kneeled down. Douglas and Quits standing in the door of the Beacon office looking up the street, together with every merchant whose store was on the street, saw the proprietor of the saloon come to the door and stand there looking at the women. They saw Mrs. Vernon rise and begin to talk to him. He went back into the building and shut the door. After another hymn the little company moved down to Jake Lawson's." ⁶⁷

Mr. Sheldon gives the following record of the agitation that occurred between the passage of the prohibitory bill by the legislature, and the vote of the people on the amendment:

"The passage of the bill to submit the question of a constitutional amendment to the people roused the entire state to the struggle that now lay before it. The next two years witnessed a gathering of forces that could be characterized as nothing short of cyclonic. Men took sides who had never stood for anything politically before. The churches and school-houses were practically on one side of the question, together with the Christian homes and the rural districts. Whiskey and selfish political ambitions lined up in the struggle with every weapon that could be forged out of money, misrepresentations and appeals to so-called personal liberty, and the battle grew in feeling and force as the final election day grew near." ⁶⁸

67. C. W. Sheldon: The Narrow Gate, p. 166.

68. Ibid., p. 197.

Then, a little later, he writes:

"When the polls closed on that eventful day in the history of the state, no one could prophesy the results, Esther, Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, and a group of friends came down to the Beacon office to hear the returns. The ladies made some coffee on the office stove and served lunch to the men. Before midnight the press room was crowded with anxious, excited inquirers. Between one and two the returns began to warrant Douglas in turning to George and saying, 'Better be dusting off those roosters, George. I think we shall need them.' Before dawn the result was no longer in doubt and the press was turning off an extra edition to go out over the country that day proclaiming the news that the state through its people had declared for constitutional amendment forbidding the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and classing such acts as criminal offences on the statute books."⁶⁹

The belief in freedom is also evidenced in the Populist Movement in Kansas in 1890. This was an organized attempt on the part of the farmers of Kansas to 'overthrow monopolistic oppression of all kinds.'⁷⁰ The Movement was based on The Farmer's Alliance, an organization composed of farmers and devoted to the interests of farmers.

"The impelling and controlling sentiment that led to

69. Ibid., p. 198.

70. Wm. H. Connelly: Kansas and Kansans, Vol. 1.

the organization of the Alliance, was the belief that in the conduct of government, and the making of laws, the farming and indeed the laboring classes, generally had been neglected and discriminated against. That capital was allowed undue weight, that corporations were allowed full sweep for unjust, avaricious and oppressive disposition, and escaped their just burden of taxation; that the loaner of money had all the advantages in his transaction with the borrower; the mortgagee of the mortgagor; and that a Government originally designed on the basis of freedom and equality of all men, had become perverted, and was conducted on the principle that "to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath."⁷¹

Of the popularity of the Alliance Movement Mrs. Fannie McCormick writes in A Kansas Farmer The Promised Land:

"The organization known as the Farmer's Alliance spread almost with the rapidity of a prairie fire spreading before a strong wind over the great prairie. Organizers could scarcely meet the demands for their work. They hastened from one school district to another, and everywhere found men waiting and anxious to have their names placed on the muster-roll of the Alliance, which they believed would emancipate the farmers from the financial slavery into which they had fallen. Men of every nation, tribe, and people, some of whom could not speak a word of English, joined and gave the order the benefit

71. Nobel L. Prentis: A History of Kansas, p. 200.

of their silent remonstrance against oppression.

"Busy farmers and their burdened wives worked harder, and hurried more than ever to get the home and farm work done, that they might have time to attend to the work of the Alliance. They thought they saw a silver lining in the dark cloud of mortgage, indebtedness, usury, and sheriff's sales. A ray of sunshine fell upon them in the desperate struggle to save their homes, and they proved themselves heroes in an unequal contest. A new spirit and energy seemed to take possession of the farmers of the whole State. They had something to hope for, something to work for; and no sacrifice was too great, no work too laborious, to advance the cause." 72

E. W. Howe in his Story of a Country Town satirizes the organization of these societies. His Mr. Biggs, who spends his time organizing Alliances, says:

"In my time I have harangued a meeting of well-to-do farmers over the wrongs they are suffering at the hands of miserable tradesmen, - they call them middle-men, - who did not know one day whether they would be able to open their doors the next, and received earnest applause, after which I got ten dollars for a charter for an Alliance (which cost me at the rate of two dollars a thousand) without difficulty. It would not be a greater confidence game were I to borrow ten dollars of them to pay express charges on the body of a dead brother, giving as security a bogus bond, for the

time a farmer spends attending Alliance meetings should be spent at home in reading an honest work entitled 'Thieves Exposed,' or 'The Numerous Devices Men Invent to Live Without Work,' but they rather enjoy my lectures on the beauties of combination for protection, and the cheapness of Alliance charters, for I never fail to relate how honest, how industrious, how intelligent, and how oppressed, they are. If they want to pay big prices for such comforts, it is their misfortune; I must live, and if you say that I am a fraud, I reply that all men are frauds. ⁷³"

A littler later Mr. Biggs continues:

"My position on the reform question is briefly this (and I may add that it is the position of every man): I am against monopolies until I am a monopolist myself. I am at present engaged in the reform business that I may become a monopolist. If I should suddenly become rich, what would I do? This: Refer to Alliances as dangerous, and such demagogues as myself as suspicious loafers." ⁷⁴

Willian Allen White evidently has one of the forerunners of the Populist Movement in mind when in A Certain Rich Man he says:

"But the general had little time to devote to John, for he was a state organizer of a movement that had for its object the abolition of middlemen in trade, and he was travel-

73. E. W. Howe: The Story of a Country Town, p. 240.

74. Ibid., p. 240.

ling most of the time. The dust gathered on his law-books, and his Sunday suit grew frayed at the edges and shiny at the elbows, but his heart was in the cause, and his blue eyes burned with joy when he talked, and he was happy." ⁷⁵

The Farmers' Alliance began to form itself into the People's or Populist Party during the election campaign of 1889. Mrs. Fannie McCormick, the president of the National Women's Alliance, traces in her book, A Kansas Farm, the progress of the organization as far as its climax in 1892. She pictures the lively crusade of 1890, in which the leaders, both men and women set about to educate the people to a knowledge of the existing evils in government, and to win their support to the Populist platform. She tells of the parades, mass meetings, picnics, pamphlets, and songs which were used to spread the gospel of Populism. She recounts the victory of the Populists in electing a majority of members of the state legislature in 1890, and the organization of the national Populist Party with a view to electing a Populist President in 1892. Writing in 1892, when the hopes of the Populists were highest, Mrs. McCormick closes her book with a prophesy of happiness, peace, and prosperity for the farmers of Kansas and of other states, as the results of the organization of the Populist Party.

Had Mrs. McCormick written her book a few years later, she would have had a different story to tell. The Populists

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75. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 112.

failed to elect a Populist President in 1892, largely because of the opposition of the South. They did, however, elect the entire State ticket, twenty-five senators and fifty-eight members of the House. The Populists claimed that they had elected a majority in the House, but that there had been a fraud in counting the ballots. There was a bitter struggle between the Republicans and the Populists over the contested seats, which almost resulted in open warfare. The Republicans won and were able to prevent any great reform legislation during the Populist Administration. Following this administration, the Populists fused with the Democrats, and the Populist Party declined.

William Allen White in speaking of the optimism of Kansans, of their enormous faith in the future, mentions the rise and fall of the various movements and organizations, - all of them leading to Populism, - to which the people looked for aid. He says:

"In the old days - the old days when Amos Adams was young - he printed the Harvey Tribune on a hand press. Mary spread the ink upon the types; he pulled the great lever that impressed each sheet; and as they worked they sang about the coming of a new day. As a soldier - a commissioned officer he had fought in the great Civil War for the truth that should make men free. And he was sure in those elder days that a new day was just dawning. And Mary was sure too; so the readers of the Tribune were assured that the dawn was at hand. The editor knew that there were men who laughed at him

for his hopes. But he and Mary, his wife, only laughed at men who were so blind that they could not see the dawn. So for many years they kept on rallying to whatever faith or banner or cause seemed surest in its promise of the sunrise. Green-backers, Grangers, Knights of Labor, Prohibitionists - these two crusaders followed all of the banners. And still came no sunrise. Farmers' Alliance, Populism, Free Silver - Amos marched with each Cavalcade. And was hopeful in its defeat."⁷⁶

The idea of freedom, of equal rights for all, is responsible also for woman suffrage in Kansas. It was only natural and fair that the rights of women should early be recognized in Kansas. Kansas women had exchanged the comforts and luxuries of homes they loved, for the trials and inconveniences of dugouts or log cabins on the prairies, - all in order to help in establishing freedom in Kansas. And they did help. While the men were fighting the invaders, the women provided rations, moulded bullets, cared for the sick, and protected their homes from border ruffians by use of fire arms and kettles of boiling water. Mention has already been made of the two Lawrence women who risked their lives to go after ammunition when the supply had failed and the safety of the town depended upon securing more. Surely Kansas women deserved some voice in the government of the state for which they had sacrificed so much.

76. Wm. A. White: In the Heart of a Fool, p. 5.

Moreover, Kansas women had always been interested in the government of the state. Having come to Kansas with a definite purpose, that of making Kansas free, they were from the beginning interested in all conventions and meetings which were in any way concerned with this purpose. Mrs. Humphrey recognizes this interest in her account of the political meeting held in Lawrence upon the occasion of the first visit of Governor Reeder to Lawrence in 1854. Mrs. Humphrey says:

"Quite a number of the ladies were present, it being characteristic of them from the first, to take a lively interest in affairs of state and seats were furnished them, and in every way their presence made welcome."⁷⁷

Broad-minded Kansas have always acknowledged the right of women to the use of the ballot. The Leavenworth Constitution, formed in 1858, provided for universal suffrage. This Constitution, however, was not accepted, and the Wyandotte Constitution, under which Kansas entered the Union in 1861, provided for only 'white male suffrage'. It did however, contain two very important provisions which have as their purpose the safeguarding of the rights of women. These are, Section Six, which reads thus:

"The Legislature shall provide for the protection of the rights of women, in acquiring and possessing property, real, personal, and mixed, separate, and apart from her

77. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 123.

husband; and shall also provide for their equal rights in the possession of their children."

And Section Nine, which is as follows:

"A homestead to the extent of one hundred and sixty acres of farming land, or of one acre within the limits of an incorporated town or city, occupied as a residence by the family of the owner, together with all the improvements on the same shall be exempted from forced sale under any process of law and shall not be alienated without the joint consent of husband and wife when that relation exists; but no property shall be exempt from sale for taxes, or the payment of obligations contracted for the purchase of said premises or for the erection of improvements thereon. Provided: the provisions of this section shall not apply to any process of law obtained by virtue of a lieu given by the consent of both husband and wife."

78

In 1887, a definite step was taken toward woman suffrage in Kansas, when the legislature passed a bill conferring on the women of Kansas the right to vote at school, bond, and municipal elections.

In 1894, a constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote was submitted to the people in election. This amendment was voted down, owing to the fact that the negroes vigorously opposed it. Not until 1912 was the amendment providing for woman suffrage finally adopted in Kansas.

Kansas novels make very little mention of the woman
 suffrage movement. ⁷⁹ Aunt Liza's 'Praisin' Gate', the action
 of which is motivated by the passage of the suffrage amend-
 ment, is practically the only novel dealing with woman suf-
 frage. The meagreness of such mention in this case may be
 attributed to the fact that Kansas was one of the foremost
 states in recognizing and defending the rights of women.

79. Effie Graham: Aunt Liza's 'Praisin' Gate'.

PART TWO - THE COMMUNITY

In their community life as well as in their state life the founders of Kansas society sought to secure for each individual the greatest possible degree of liberty in the pursuit of happiness. They established a city governing body, but they safeguarded individual rights by means of a city constitution and public meetings; they organized public schools, but they permitted the parents to send their children to private schools or to keep them out of school after the elementary grades were completed; they established churches, but they permitted the people to belong to any church or to attend none, just as they desired. They aimed to give the greatest amount of freedom possible without interfering with the welfare of society.

The novels of Kansas give very little insight into the local government of the early days. Mary Humphrey shows that the early settlements were first governed by town companies or squatters' associations, organized expressly for the purpose of regulating claim rights. Both Mrs. Humphrey and Miss Lynn introduce into their stories the public meetings which played so important a part in the Kansas community during the struggle for free soil. It is notable that both writers include the women in their pictures of these meetings. Miss Lynn pictures as follows the meeting which the settlers of Lawrence held after the shooting of Sheriff Jones;

"'Something is going on at the hall this time,' replied Stivers. 'There's a public meeting.' He turned to walk along-

side Truman's horse, but with a sharper eye to right and left than John's. There was as much of an air of excitement on the street as in the days of the Wakarusa War, but a seriousness much greater, John thought as he watched the faces of the talking groups. He entered the hall with Stivers.

"'There is one thing about this place,' said Stivers with his usual easy flow of words. 'We are sometimes short of food or ammunition but never of speeches. Whatever is to be the fate of Kansas, it will be inaugurated in oratory. But John did not take up his theme.

"And there was no mere exercise of speech-making this morning. Stern men spoke of this 'isolated act'. Bewildered men wondered briefly at the atrocity. Mose Litener came into the room with his heavy slumping walk and listened a moment. Then he rose. He seemed to have been drinking a little.

'What are you folks making this darned fuss about?' he demanded roughly. 'You know you're glad it's done and if he dies too you'll be a sight gladder. Maybe you think you're too particular to do it yourselves but what are you going back on the poor cuss that did it for? You know you're glad of it. That's the way to treat 'em.'

"A gap of indignant silence followed his voice. Might it be that the murderer sat among them now, secure of their sympathy in spite of their words?

"John Truman rose in the front of the room and faced around to Litener. He seemed to tower above even his usual height, his face was white under the prairie tan and his blue

eyes seemed themselves like weapons, condemning and threatening. He controlled his voice, but it seemed to be striking sharp blows in the tensely still room.

"A man who says that, can't be a man who knows what an insult he is offering, not only to us but to our cause. He is calling us individually murderers and liars, sneaking murderers in the dark! The Free State cause is not to be fought by crime and skulking outrage. The man that fired that shot may have been for us but he was not one of us. We are here to fight for the rights of men. It would be a strange thing if we fought by crime and outrage. As Free State men we repudiate this deed, from its weak conception to its black execution!"

"Stern faces looked acquiescence to his words. The men and women went as quietly as possible about their usual business. But no man came forward to say he had fired the shot, nor was it to be known until long after border warfare had ended."⁸⁰

In the novels dealing with a later period, the time after the early problems had all been satisfactorily settled, there is little mention made of city government. This very lack of reference is indicative of the later attitude of the people toward their local government. With the crisis past and the responsibility of government shifted in large measure to the state and county, the people have become more or less

indifferent to city government. Dutifully they visit the polls every two years and vote for their fellow townsmen, then as long as nothing out of the ordinary happens, and it rarely does, they go about their daily tasks with little thought of the local government they have established.

County government assumes a place of greater importance in the later Kansas novel than does city government. Mack Cretcher's Kansan is largely concerned with affairs of county government, since Bison City, the setting of the story is a county seat.

G. W. Ogden in West of Dodge indicates that the county has always held a place of importance in the local government of Kansas. He writes thus:

"The people of Kansas were a contentious lot; their history begins in controversies, their commonwealth was founded on a quarrel. Out of that ancient habit they always have been a great people for having court houses ready for settlement, or prolongation, of their difficulties, as it may transpire after they bring them within the doors. The first thing they did was vote bonds for a court house whenever a few of them got together on the prairie and organized a county. It is altogether likely there are more court houses to the man, and better ones, in Kansas than any other state in the Union."⁸¹

The county seat rivalry once so common in Kansas is

81. G. W. Ogden: West of Dodge, p. 3.

recorded by Williams Allen White in A Certain Rich Man. He describes as follows the war between Minneola and Sycamore Ridge for the county seat:

"Sycamore Ridge had the county seat; but Minneola having a majority of the votes in the county was trying to get the county-seat, and the situation grew so serious for Sycamore Ridge that General Hendricks felt it necessary to defeat Philemon Ward for the state senate so that Sycamore Ridge could get a law passed that would prevent Minneola's majority from changing the county-seat. This was done by a law which Hendricks secured, giving the right to build a court-house by direct levy, without a vote of the people, - a court-house so large that it would settle the county-seat matter out of hand.

"The general, however, took no chances even with his commissioners. For he had his son elected as one, and with the knowledge that John was investing in real estate in the Ridge and had an eye for the main chance, the general picked John for the other commissioner

"Dolan was made Sheriff, and Bemis county attorney, and with those two officers and a majority of the county commissioners, the Ridge had the forces of administration with her. And so one night Minneola came with her wrinkled front of war; viz., forty fighting men under Gabriel Carnine and an ox team, prepared to take the county records by force and haul them home by main strength."

82

Although a few schools were established in Kansas directly after the arrival of the first settlers, the crop failures and constant warfare of the first few years made it impossible to accomplish much in the way of education. Settlers who lived in communities where there were no schools either taught their children at home or sent them to the home of a better educated neighbor for instruction. Margaret Lynn's Free Soil pictures the children being taught in the home by their cousin Phoebe. In The Price of the Prairie Phil Baronet's Aunt Candace teaches the children of the community in the Baronet living-room, and in Over the Border Sarah, the Quaker heroine, teaches the children in her kitchen. The following lines from Over the Border show how eager were the parents to seize any opportunity to educate their children:

"Some of the children Sarah had never seen before, and when they gave their names they were unfamiliar. She asked them where they lived and they told her six miles to the northward. The information that their father had brought them in a wagon borrowed from a neighbor they volunteered." ⁸³

The first school houses, which usually served as churches as well, were vastly different from the modern structures of today. Built of sod were most of them like the little Grass River school house of Winning the Wilderness. A few, a little later in time, and made possible by the voting of school bonds,

83. Ruth Cowgill: Over the Border.

were frame buildings like the 'forlorn-looking little school house with uncurtained windows that blinked wearily at the blank prairie stretching away for miles' ⁸⁴ of the Willow Creek District in The Kansan.

The subjects taught were the three R's, and it is doubtful if they were taught efficiently, for the teachers were hired for their ability to preserve order, rather than for their educational preparation. The members of the school board who hire Elizabeth Farnshaw as teacher of the Chamberlain School district in The Wind Before the Dawn express the attitude of the majority of county school boards in the 1860's and 70's:

"The Farnshaw girl's here waitin' fur th' school."

"Glad of that," replied the newcomer. "I don't know her very well but they say she can handle youngsters. She's had some extra schoolin' too. Don't know as that makes any difference in a summer term, but it's never in th' way."

And again:

"Now look here, young lady, if you be as prompt in lickin' them youngsters in season an' out o' season as you be in lookin' up schools - I guess you'll do." ⁸⁵

It seems remarkable today, that these school boards were able to find teachers willing to undertake the difficult problem and hardships of the early country school. Often

84. Mack Cretcher: The Kansan, p. 86.

85. Dell Mungler: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 112.

the teacher had to face conditions such as these described by J. A. Martin in The Jayhawker:

"I'm afraid you'll find this a rough locality, Miss Bayard," he observed. Our teacher since Christmas was a fellow of the backwoods stripe and the children only learned to toe the mark; the first half of the term we had a consumptive, student-like fellow and the boys literally wore him out.⁸⁶"

For filling a position of this type, the teacher received a salary of only twenty-five dollars a month, Miss Munger informs the readers of The Wind before the Dawn. Moreover, the second term was much shorter in the early days than it is now, the winter term lasting six months, the summer term two or three. Worst of all, the teacher had none of the comforts of home life while holding such a position. As a rule she was expected to 'board around' at the homes of her pupils. E. W. Howe mentions this custom in The Story of a Country Town. He says of Agnes Deming, the teacher of Fairview School:

"Although she was originally expected to divide her time equally with every family sending children to the school or to "board around" she was oftener at our house than anywhere else; and once when she apologized in a burst of tears for being there so much, my mother kissed her tenderly, and it was arranged immediately, to the great satisfaction of all,

that in the future she should be recognized member of our family."⁸⁷

The facts remain, however, that in spite of the hardships of country school teaching in the early days, teachers were to be found; and though the instruction they offered was often of an inferior quality, the children were glad to go to school and profitted greatly by attendance there. The attitude of the children of Fairview toward school is expressed by E. W. Howe thus:

"The boys and girls who attended from the houses dotted about on the prairie did not differ from other children except they were a long time in the first pages of their books and seemed glad to come. I have heard that in some places measures are found necessary to compel attendance on the schools, but in Fairview the children regarded the teacher as their kindest and most patient friend, and the school as a pleasant place of retreat, where grumbling and complaints were never heard."⁸⁸

The influence of the school upon the lives of the country children is suggested by the following from The Wind before the Dawn:

"To be better than her own - that was the measure of Lizzie Farnshaw's demand. If the shoes, the clothing the manners, the ideas were better than her own they were worthy

87. E. W. Howe: The Story of a Country Town, p. 45.

88. Ibid., p. 38.

of honest consideration. The teacher's tongue was sharp and her criticisms ruthless, but they had elements of truth in them, and even when they were directed against the child herself, they were a splendid spur. The young girl copied her manners, her gait, and her vocabulary. She watched her own conversation to see that she did not say 'have went' and 'those kind'; she became observant of the state of her finger-nails; if she had to lace her shoes with twine string, she blackened the string with soot from the under side of the stove lids, and polished her shoes from the same source.⁸⁹"

The larger Kansas towns were more progressive in educational matters than were the small towns and country districts. Their one-room schools rapidly grew larger as the enrollment increased. In the early sixties Sycamore Ridge of A Certain Rich Man boasted of school facilities as follows:

"That fall the children of Sycamore Ridge assembled for the first time in their new seven-room stone schoolhouse, and the two boys were in the high school. The board hired General Philemon Ward to teach the twenty high school pupils, and it was then that he began to wear the white neckties which he never afterwards abandoned."⁹⁰

At this time only the larger towns of Kansas offered instruction above the elementary grades, so the people of the

89. Dell Munger: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 41.

90. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 53.

rural districts regarded a high school education as a great luxury. When reprimanded for sending his daughter to high school three months late because she was needed for the corn husking, Mr. Farnshaw of The Wind before the Dawn expresses his mind as follows:

"'She's doin' mighty well t' get t' come at all. I'm th' only man in our part of the country that's givin' his children any show at th' high school at all, I can tell you. I knew I wouldn't get no thanks for it in th' beginnin'." ⁹¹
That's th' way with things nowadays."

With the financial boom of 1887 the conditions in education began to improve rapidly. Newer and larger schools were built and better teachers were secured. In speaking of the boom, John Martin says in The Jayhawker:

"Even the cause of education moved up a peg. The little stiff-backed seats in the sod temple of learning were being knocked loose and carted to town, while Bayard fitted her shapely young shoulders to the responsibility of conducting a public school with two assistants." ⁹²

The people of the Kansas community were not satisfied with the establishment of grade schools and high schools; they were anxious that their children have the benefit of a higher education. They gave their money and support to the building of a state university and an agricultural college,

91. Dell Munger: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 57.

92. J. W. Martin: The Jayhawker, p. 216.

and to the founding of denominational colleges. True to their ideal of democracy, they believed that a college education should not be withheld on account of sex, race, or lack of funds from any person who sincerely desired it.

The interest of the Kansas community in higher education has been well recorded by Kansas novelists. Practically all of the younger generation pictured in the novels of Kansas are sent to college - to eastern colleges during the first years of settlement, and to Kansas colleges as soon as they are established. Phil Baronet of The Price of the Prairie goes East to Harvard; Thaine Aydelot of Winning the Wilderness, Thelma Ekblad of The Reclaimers, and John Barclay, Jeanette Barclay, and Robert Hendricks of A Certain Rich Man to the University of Kansas; Neal Ward and his four sisters, also of A Certain Rich Man, to Ward University (College of Emporia); Lucy and Tarley Penwin, and Mark and Joe Darrow of A Wall of Men to Baker University; Kenyon Adams of In the Heart of a Fool to Boston to study music; Elinor Wream, Victor Burleigh, and Dennie Saxon of A Master's Degree to Sunrise College (Southwestern College).

The first Kansas colleges, established as they were when the country was new and times were hard, had a difficult struggle for existence. This struggle is suggested by William Allen White in his description of the University of Kansas in the days of its infancy. He says:

"It was a poor starved-to-death school that the boys found at Lawrence in those days; with half a dozen instructors -

most of whom were still in their twenties, with books lent by instructors, and with appliances devised by necessity." ⁹³

The Sunrise College of Mrs. McCarter's Master's Degree also has to fight for a place on Kansas soil. Mrs. McCarter pictures the struggle thus:

"For the next three years Dean Fenneben and his college flourished on the borders of a little frontier town, if that can be called flourishing which uses up time, and money, and energy, Christian patience, and dogged persistence. Then an August prairie fire sweeping up from the southwest, leaped the narrow fire-guard about the one building and burned up everything there, except Dean Fenneben. Six years, and nothing to show for his work on the outside. Inside, the six years' stay in Kansas had seen the making over of a scholarly dreamer into a hard-headed, far-seeing, masterful man, who took the West as he found it, but did not leave it so. Not he! All the power of higher learning he held supreme. But by days of hard work in the college halls, and nights of meditation out in the silent sanctuary spaces of the prairies round about him, he had been learning how to compute the needs of men as the angel with the golden reed computed the walls and gates of the New Jerusalem - according to the measure of a man." ⁹⁴

Democracy is shown to be the outstanding characteristic

93. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 69.
94. M. H. McCarter: A Master's Degree, p. 14.

of Kansas college life. Young people from all types of homes and of widely differing financial status mingle together on a plane of equality in the halls of the Kansas college.

Victor Burleigh, the crude farmer boy; Elinor Wream, the cultured Eastern girl; Dennie Saxon, the school janitress and daughter of the town drunkard; and Vincent Burgess, Professor of Greek from Harvard, meet on a common level in Sunrise College of A Master's Degree.

Kansans seem to respect the more, rather than disdain, the young person who has the courage and persistence to 'work his way' through school. John Barclay in A Certain Rich Man gained the admiration of the town by the unusual degree of industry he displayed while earning his way through the University of Kansas. He did chores for his board, carried papers every night and morning, and did jobs of hauling and excavating with his team of horses. So it is with Thelma Ekblad, the Norwegian farmer girl of The Reclaimers. She is respected and admired by everyone in the community of New Eden for her pluck in working her way through the University of Kansas by doing heavy farm work.

The characteristics and ideals of the Kansas college form the theme of Margaret Hill McCarter's Master's Degree, a story woven about Southwestern College. Here Mrs. McCarter contrasts the whole-hearted sincerity and democracy of the Kansas college with the superficiality and narrow-minded class consciousness of the Eastern school, in an attempt to show that Western schools must be different from Eastern

schools if they are to meet the problems of Western people. After spending several years in Sunrise College of A Master's Degree the Dean says to a new teacher who has just arrived from the East;

"You will find a great field here in which to work out your success, but I must give you a word of warning. I tried to reproduce the Eastern University here. I learned better. If Kansas is to be your training-ground, may I say that the man who opens his front door for the first time on the green prairies of the West has no less to learn than the man who first pitches his tent beside the blue Atlantic."⁹⁵

According to Mrs. McCarter, Kansas educators had to learn that the students who attended the early Kansas colleges were lacking in the cultural heritage of the East - they were crude and unpolished, they had been reared in humble pioneer homes and schooled in sod school houses-, they needed more than a scholarly knowledge of books, they needed to be taught to live wholly and completely, to live in the democratic society of Kansas, not in the aristocratic circles of Eastern states. That the early educators learned this lesson and applied it in the building of Kansas schools is shown by the following from Mrs. McCarter's Wall of Men:

"Beyond Palmyra, a school for higher learning - the Baker University, of a prosperous later history - took root in unfriendly soil. Lucy and Tarley Penwin and Mark and Joe

Darrow were among its earliest students. For Mark and Lucy these days of schooling were a God-send, tying their young minds back to the culture the harsh frontier had withheld. Lucy, 'sweet and lazy', as Aunt Crystal had declared, needed the spur to her natural gift of intelligence; and for Mark, it curbed the lure of the raiding spirit, growing on both sides of the border. The West owes much to the silent, certain influences of her early schools, making men, instead of highwaymen, of her vigorous boys."⁹⁶

The people of the Kansas community have always been interested in religion. One of the first things the settlers did upon arriving in Kansas was to establish churches. In these early churches there was little interest in creed and doctrine, - the country was too new, the people too absorbed in the struggle for freedom and the struggle for daily bread. Settlers of all denominations met and worshipped together, because it was natural for them to worship and because they found strength in unity. Margaret Hill McCarter pictures such a church service in A Wall of Men:

"A preacher, welcome visitor to the early frontier, a Methodist preacher, it chanced was spending the day in Palmyra. He had come to town on Saturday with a wagon train going westward on the Trail, bound for Santa Fe. The train had moved on to travel on the Sabbath as well as any other day, but the preacher had staid behind. Word had swept the Vinland Valley

like a prairie fire that Saturday afternoon that a sermon could be heard in Palmyra on Sunday. Hence these prairie Pilgrims making for one common shrine in the loneliness of this autumn day. It mattered not that this preacher called himself a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Quaker, and Episcopalian, with those who claimed no specific church affiliations, all came thither, hungering not more in truth for the gospel message than they were drawn by a homesick longing for the Sabbath of a civilized land."⁹⁷

A similar congregation is the one which attends the church service held on the first Christmas day after the founding of Lawrence. Mary A. Humphrey pictures it thus:

"The motley congregation too, made up from all the settlements around, both Free and Slave State, and comprising representatives of nearly every State in the Union, was provocative rather of curious study of the creature than worship of the Creator."⁹⁸

The same disregard for denomination is shown in E. W. Howe's picture of the religious life of the town of Fairview. The town had been settled around the church. While on his way to Kansas, the Reverend Mr. Westlock, founder of the church, had attracted a crowd of followers by preaching from his wagon in the evenings. He had finally halted in Kansas and in the corner of his field built a church which

97. Ibid., p. 79.

98. Mary Humphrey: A Squatter Sovereign, p. 84.

he called Fairview. The town which grew up about the church came also to be named Fairview.

The Reverend Mr. Westlock's religion was not a pleasant one, for Mr. Howe says the following of it:

"Religion was a misery to be endured on earth, that a reward might be enjoyed after death. A man must spend the ages of his future either in a very pleasant place, with comfortable surroundings and pleasant associates, or in a very unpleasant place, with uncomfortable surroundings and all the mean people turned into devils and imps for companions. It was the inevitable law; every man of moderate sense should be able to appreciate the situation at a glance, and do that which would insure his personal safety. If there was a doubt - the thought was too absurd for his contemplation, but admitting a doubt - his future would be equal to that of the worldly man, for one cannot rot more easily than another, or be more comfortable as dust; but if there was no doubt - and all the authorities agree that there was none - then the difference would be in his favor."

In spite of the idea of religion held by the Reverend Mr. Westlock of Fairview Church, and in spite of denominational differences, the people of Fairview joined the church and attended it regularly. Mr. Howe expresses it thus:

"There were two or three kinds of Baptists among the people of Fairview when the new house was completed, and a few Presbyterians, but they all became Methodists without re-

volt or question when my father announced in his first preaching that Fairview would be of that denomination.

"He did not solicit them to join him, though he probably intimated in a way which admitted of no discussion that the few heretics yet remaining out in the world had better save themselves before it was too late. It did not seem to occur to him that men and women who had grown up in a certain faith renounced it with difficulty; it was enough that they were wrong, and that he was forgiving enough to throw open the doors of the accepted church. If they were humiliated, he was glad of it, for that was necessary to atone for transgression, - if they had arguments to excuse it, he did not care to hear them, as he had taken God into partnership and built Fairview, and people who worshipped there would be expected to throw aside all doctrinal nonsense."¹⁰⁰

Later when the country became more settled and when life in Kansas became less of a struggle for existence, people began to occupy their time with questions of church creed and doctrine. They disagreed upon questions of minor importance, separated, and built more churches, preferring to have a number of small churches struggling for existence in a community of a few hundred people, to having one strong church in which the members are compelled to compromise upon some such details as order of service or method of baptism.

Charles Sheldon pictures the small town of Colby in The

Narrow Gate as having fourteen churches for the accomodation of its small population. In all but one of these the people are too busy with church creed to look after the welfare of the town.

In his description of the village of Twin Mounds, E. W. Howe deals satirically with the citizens' regard for church doctrine. He writes;

"In Twin Mounds the citizens spent their idle time in religious discussions, and although I lived there a great many years, I do not remember that any of the questions in dispute were ever settled. They never discussed politics with any animation, and read but little, except in the Bible to find points to dispute; but of religion they never tired, and many of them could quote the sacred word by the page. No two of them ever exactly agreed in their ideas, for men who thought alike on baptism violently quarrelled when the resurrection was mentioned, and two of them who engaged a hell-redemptionist one night would in all probability fail to agree themselves the next, on the atonement. The merchants neglected their customers when they had them, to discuss points in the Bible which I used to think were not of the slightest consequence, and in many instances the men who argued the most were those who chased deer with hounds on Sunday, and ran horse races, for they did not seem to discuss the subject so much on account of its importance as because of its fitness as a topic to quarrel about.

"There was always a number of famous discussions going

on, as between the lawyer and the storekeeper, or the blacksmith and the druggist, or the doctor and the carpenter, and whenever I saw a crowd gathering hurriedly in the evening I knew that two of the disputants had got together again to renew their old difficulty, which they kept up until a late hour in the presence of half the town." ¹⁰¹

In spite of the fact that the Kansas community has many creeds and many churches, it has only one view of moral life. This view is pictured in one way or another by the novels of the state. A number of Kansas novelists, the most important of whom are Mary Humphrey, Margaret Lynn, and Margaret Hill McCarter, present this view in practise by picturing all their major characters as upright, truth loving men and women who fear God and obey his commandments. These characters walk according to the moral laws held by the Kansas community, without faltering or losing their way, and they look with disapproving eyes upon the unfortunate people who break these laws.

Another group of novelists, E. W. Howe, Dell Munger, Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius, and William Allen White, use an entirely different method of presentation. Each of these writers places in a prominent position in his or her story a man who orders his life in definite opposition to the accepted view of moral life. By picturing the misery that this man brings upon himself and upon the members of his family

and community, and the attitude with which other people regard him, the author is able to emphasize strongly the accepted laws of conduct which this man has dared to oppose.

In Howe's Story of a Country Town this part is taken by the Reverend Mr. Westlock. Although he has always been known as a man of strong religious convictions, he is not strong enough to withstand the temptation to leave his wife and son and to flee the country with a widow by whom he has been attracted. Years later, after he has seen the folly of his rash act and has wasted away his strength in remorse, he returns home to beg his wife's forgiveness. He finds that he has come too late, for she has died only a day or so before. Unable to bear the contempt of his neighbors, he slips away to spend the rest of his broken life in lonely misery.

In Dell Munger's Wind before the Dawn Josiah Farnshaw, a stubborn domineering tyrant of a man, opposes the accepted view of moral life. Hated by his family and shunned by his neighbors, he finally dies a tragic death as the result of his own stubbornness.

In Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius's Dust Martin Wade opposes the accepted view of moral life. His greatest sin is his denial of God. He lives a bleak and cheerless life, loving no one, not even himself, and spurning the love of his own family, and finally dies, holding to the very last his belief that 'there is no God'. The futility of such belief is emphasized in the last lines of the book:

"'Martin's life,' thought Rose, 'it was like a handful

of dust thrown into God's face and blown back again by the
wind to the ground.'"
102

In In the Heart of a Fool William Allen White pictures a man, Tom Van Doren, who like Martin Wade denies the existence of God. Judge Van Doren expresses his views on the subject of religion as follows:

"'So you believe the Lord runs things here in Harvey, do you, Cap?' asked the Judge, who was playing with a bit of wire.

"'Well - I suppose if you come right down to it,' answered the Captain, 'a man's got to have the consolation of religion in some shape or other or he's going to get mighty discouraged - what say?'

"'Why,' scoffed the Judge, 'it's a myth - there's nothing to it. Look at my wife - I mean Margaret - she changes religion as often as she changes dogs. Since we've been married she's had three religions and what good does it do her?'

"The Captain, sighting down the edge of the metal, shook his head and the Judge went on: 'What good does any religion do? I've broken the ten commandments, every one of them - and I get on. No one bothers me, because I keep inside the general statutes. I've beat God at his own game. I tell you, Cap, you can do what you please just so you obey the state and federal laws and pay your debts. This God-myth amuses me.'"
103

102. Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius: Dust, p. 251.

103. Wm. A. White: In the Heart of a Fool, p. 339.

By way of conclusion Mr. White states on the last page of his book the purpose he hopes to have accomplished in his story:

"But most of all, if the story has not shown how sad a thing it is to sit in the seat of the scornful, and to deny the reality of God's purpose and pride, then indeed this narrative has failed. For in all this world one finds no other place so dreary and so desolate as it is in the heart of a fool."¹⁰⁴

In A Certain Rich Man Mr. White pictures a man who worships gold and denies God. After he has spent fifty-four years in sacrificing everything to his God of money, his mother summarizes thus the deeds that have occupied those years and pleads with him to change his faith:

"'You've killed your friend and your friend's father before him - I know that, John. You've wrecked the life of the sister of your first sweetheart, and put fear and disgrace in her father's face forever - forever, John Barclay, as long as he lives. I know that too; I haven't been wrapped in pink cotton all these years, boy. I've lived my own life since you left my wing, and made my own way too, as far as that goes. And now you are trying to quench the fires of remorse in your soul because your wife died the victim of your selfish, ruthless, practical scheme of things. More than that, my son - more than that, your child is suffering all the agony that a woman can suffer, because of your devilish system of traffic in blood for money. You know what I mean,

 104. Ibid., p. 614.

John. That boy told the truth, as you admit, and he could either run or lie, and for being a man you have broken up a God-sent love merely to satisfy your own vanity. Oh John - John,' she cried passionately, 'my poor, blind, foolish boy - haven't you found the ashes in the can of your faith yet - aren't you ready to quit?'"¹⁰⁵

Not then, but several days later, John Barclay does quit. In picturing the change that comes over this man before he reaches his decision, Mr. White seizes the opportunity of contrasting John Barclay's evil life with the generally accepted view of moral life. The scene is very effectively presented thus:

"Something aroused him; he started up suddenly, and lying half on his elbow and half on his side he stared about him, and was conscious of a great light in the room; it was as though there was a fire near by, and he was alarmed, but he could not move. As he looked into space, terrified by the paralysis that held him, he saw across the face of the organ, 'Righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people.'

"Quick as a flash his mind went back to the time that same motto stared meaninglessly at him from above the pulpit in the chapel at West Point, to which he had been appointed official visitor at Commencement many years before. But that night as he gazed at the text its meaning came

rushing through his brain. It came so quickly that he could not will it back nor reason it in. Righteousness, he knew was not piety - not wearing your Sunday clothes to church and praying and singing psalms; it was living honestly and kindly and charitably and dealing decently with every one in every transaction; and sin - that, he knew - was the cheating, the deceiving, and the malicious greed that had built up his company and scores of others like it all over the land. That, he knew - that bribery and corruption and vicarious stealing which he had learned to know as business - that was a reproach to any people, and as it came to him that he was a miserable offender and that the other life, the decent life, was the right life, he was filled with a joy that he could not express, and let the light fall about him unheeded, and lay for a time in a transport of happiness. He had found the secret."¹⁰⁶

Charles M. Sheldon, the outstanding writer of religious novels of the state, pictures again and again in his numerous books the effect of a religious life upon a community that has strayed from righteousness. The fact that his books, sermon stories as he calls them, have been so well received by his own community, Topeka, and by other communities of Kansas gives abundant evidence of the interest of Kansas people in religion and morality.

All the while the Kansas community was occupied with establishing its government and with building its schools and

churches, it was engaged in the serious business of making a living in a new country. At first, practically every - one in the Kansas community farmed, for farming was a necessary part of proving a Kansas homestead, and the majority of the people who came to Kansas came with the idea of securing land. Even the merchants, teachers, preachers, and doctors were often farmers as well. Reverend John Westlock of The Story of a Country Town farms a Kansas homestead and preaches in Fairview church on Sunday; Mr. Erring, the doctor of the Fairview community is also a farmer; Jonathan Butler of Mack Cretcher's Kansan takes a homestead, because it 'was an anchor to windward and homesteading showed a proper example of thrift and foresight so essential to a growing community,' ¹⁰⁷ but he also has a real estate office in Bison City, which takes much of his time.

As the country became more settled and the land outside of the community was homesteaded, more business and professional men established themselves within the community for the purpose of serving the farmers on the surrounding farms. E. W. Howe's picture of Twin Mounds in the Sixties gives an idea of the occupations followed by the people of the Kansas community in the early days:

"There was the usual number of merchants, professional men, mechanics, etc., who got along well enough, but I never knew how at least one half of the inhabitants lived. Some

of them owned teams and farmed in the immediate vicinity; others 'hauled', and others did whatever offered, but they were all poor, and were constantly changing from one house to another." ¹⁰⁸

The Kansas community of a later day, as pictured in the novels of Kansas, differs little from Twin Mounds, except that it is more prosperous. The occupations of the people remain practically the same.

The only exceptions to this statement are to be found in the novels of William Allen White. Both A Certain Rich Man and In the Heart of a Fool deal with city life and picture the industries and industrial problems found in large cities. The communities pictured in these novels cannot be regarded as typical Kansas communities, but they offer a means of showing the attitude of Kansas people toward capitalistic handling of industry. In this attitude the characteristic Kansas love of freedom is again evident. According to William Allen White, as expressed in these novels, Kansas people believe that no business is good, however prosperous it may be, which is built upon dishonesty or which makes slaves of the people engaged in it. Mr. White writes of Grant Adams, who devotes his life to the cause of the laboring classes in In the Heart of a Fool:

"Grant Adams believed that he had a mission, to bring labor into its own. The coming of the Democracy of Labor

was a real democracy to him - no mere shibboleth. And as he rode through the rows of wooden tenements, where he knew men and women were being crushed by the great industrial machine, he thought of the tents in the fields; of the women and children and of the old and the sick going out there to labor through the day to piece out the family wage and secure economic independence with wholesome, self-respecting work. It seemed to him that when he could bring the conditions that were starting in Harvey, to every great industrial center, one great job in the world would be done forever." ¹⁰⁹

The typical Kansas community has always been the rural community. In this community the people of both town and country mingle in their social affairs. Especially was this true during the first years of settlement, when people seldom came together except when brought together for some definite purpose, usually the consideration of some question of state wide significance which was of equal interest to all. Then, having come together, they combined business with pleasure, making of what might have been a dry political meeting a festive social occasion.

One of the earliest such social gatherings recorded in the novels of Kansas is that held by the people of Lawrence on the occasion of Governor Reeder's first visit to Lawrence in 1854. Mrs. Humphrey describes this event in The Squatter Sovereign, picturing first the political meeting held in the

afternoon, then, the reception which followed in the evening. Her picture of the crowd which assembled in the Free State Hall for the reception gives evidence of the democracy of early Kansas social life. She writes:

"It was a striking scene. Such a mingling of races and classes on the democratic plane of equality has seldom, if ever been witnessed. The learned and the unlearned, the gentle and the loud-voiced, the courtly and the boorish, exchanged familiar greetings, and moved and mingled among each other in social unrestraint. And their costumes were as varied as their manners and their places of nativity. From the dress suit, kid gloves, and polished boots, the styles descended with an easy gradation to flannel shirts, and stogas with pants tucked in, the wearers of which moved in the mazy figures of the dance, or discussed politics with equal 'sang foid'." ¹¹⁰

Since the beginning of the state, the fourth of July has been occasion for community celebration in Kansas. Both Mary Humphrey and Ruth Cowgill devote considerable space to description of the celebration held at Lawrence on the first Fourth after the settlement of the Kansas territory. Miss Cowgill writes:

"The Lawrence people invited all the other people to come there to celebrate. And they came for miles around. It was a great crowd that gathered in the little city.

People drove in with their ugly, creaking wagons made into chariots and their oxen or mules into canopied steeds by the profuse decorations of the wild flowers which grew in such magnificence on the prairies. It was indeed a great day, a gala day, on the Kansas frontier.

"There were great doings that day. A flag was presented to the two military companies who were drawn up in great array to receive it

"After this little ceremony of military pomp, the crowd, headed by the proudly floating flag, all marched down to a beautiful natural grove where they found seats and listened to speeches."¹¹¹

One of the most interesting community gatherings recorded in the novels of Kansas is the Peace Banquet held in the Free State Hotel in Lawrence at the close of the Wakarusa War. The affair was unusual in that the people who were present were at heart dissatisfied with the peace they were celebrating. Both A. Wall of Men and Free Soil contain vivid pictures of this event. Miss Lynn's description is the more compact of the two. It is as follows:

"Then with the sudden contradiction of mood and purpose to be found in a newly organized place, Lawrence rejoiced the next night in a community festival in which it celebrated the departure of the enemy, and in which it at the same time invited the enemy to share. Some 'captains' from the scatter-

ing camp were present to partake of a peaceful hospitality and to take the hand of tentative friendship. Even Sheriff Jones himself was there 'disguised as a guest', as Hardie said, clumsily going through social forms with those whom he had just been persecuting.

"Word had been sent to women all about to prepare food and come in, and they came in surprising numbers and spirits. Harvey came out for Ellen and Phoebe, and they got out pretty gowns from a seldom used supply and appeared looking 'partified enough to turn the affair into a ball', Harvey said. They were not the only women who had the same impulse and the rooms showed a promiscuous 'best', with even glistening silks and velvet bandings and with wide flowing skirts and sleeves. Ellen's eyes filled at first and she looked blindly at the scene when she came into the crowd in the big dining-room of the Free State Hotel, yesterday a barrack, today a reception hall. Husbands and wives were meeting after days of separation with the utmost danger to each, men were relaxing from the strain of days of watching and of intensest feeling, the whole community was for the moment waving good-bye to danger and to anxiety. Ellen knew as well as any woman there that the measure of that rejoicing lay in the depth of fear that had gone before. She was not the only woman of them who had slept beside children with her hand on her pistol."¹¹²

With the growth of the temperance movement, temperance

picnics became common. In The Narrow Gate Charles Sheldon pictures a temperance picnic that actually occurred. He writes:

"Sage's grove was a sight to be remembered. Long before ten o'clock there were hundreds of teams on the ground and the seats in front of the speaker's stand were filling up rapidly. There were hundreds of boys and girls and the young women for the most part dressed in white with touches of ribbon on hat and waist gave agreeable and lively color to the cool green of the grove. Hay racks brought in large loads of Sunday-school classes, laughing and singing. The farmers unhitched their horses, tied them in the trees and stood about in rapidly increasing groups, waiting for the program of the morning to begin. The women busied themselves finding convenient places for the spreading of the lunch and large baskets and bundles were taken out of the wagons and deposited near the patches of table cloth that checked the ground.

"On the sides close to the seats half a dozen peddlars, with Mr. Sage's permission, had pitched booths for the sale of lemonade, peanuts, ice cream, candy, and pop corn."¹¹³

In the early days weddings were usually community occasions. In A Certain Rich Man the entire country side was invited to John Barclay's wedding; and, inspite of the financial panic that was staring everyone in the face at that time, a feast of turkey, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, four kinds of

113. Charles Sheldon: The Narrow Gate, p. 112.

pie, cake, and pudding was served to the multitude after the ceremony.

Funerals too, were, and still are in some communities, looked upon as social occasions and attendance upon them as a social obligation. In speaking of New Eden, Mrs. McCarter says in The Reclaimers:

"New Eden was still in that stage when a funeral was a public event. And the belief was still maintained that the dead out in the cemetery must be conscious of every attention or lack of it shown to their memory by visits and flowers, and the price of tomb stones. In a word, to the New Eden living, the New Eden dead were not really in the Great Hereafter but here demanding consideration in the social economy of the community."¹¹⁴

J. A. Martin, in The Jayhawker, gives a view of such a public event.:

"At the appointed time the neighbors gathered, the women crowding into the room, the men congregating out-of-doors, where bareheaded, they might mumble of the crops, of the weather, of Hi Bassett gone to spend long prison months awaiting trial for murder."¹¹⁵

As Kansas became more settled and more prosperous, people began to seek entertainment, instead of waiting for some special purpose to bring them together. Community dances be-

114. M. H. McCarter: The Reclaimers, p. 231.

115. J. A. Martin: The Jayhawker, p. 202.

came highly popular. John Barclay of A Certain Rich Man added a considerable sum to his bank account by playing his concertina for dances at Deer Creek and Minneola. John A. Martin in The Jayhawker describes one of these dances. No written invitations were used to call the guests together, for "In Sand Valley, where a wagon load of young people with a fiddle were wont to drop in on a settler at bed-time and start a dance, a day's notice by word of mouth was sufficient. Upon this occasion "the dance was to be held in the dining-room of the Valley House, the domicile of Boomer Small; and in order that all the space might be utilized by the dancers, the chairs were taken out and strewn along the porch which extended the entire front of the hotel. Shortly after sundown they began to arrive, in wagons and on horseback, buggies at that time and in that locality being a luxury possessed by few." At this party the girls flocked to themselves on the porch of the hotel, 'after the approved fashion of the county.'

As time went on and the second generation of Kansas settlers returned from college with newer and more extravagant ideas of entertainment, the social affairs became more elaborate and more formal. One of the most pretentious parties pictured in the novels of Kansas is that given by Jeanette Barclay in A Certain Rich Man. Mr. White describes

116. J. A. Martin: The Jayhawker, p. 58.

117. Ibid., p. 62.

it thus:

"It was a memorable New Year's party that Jeanette Barclay gave at the dawn of this century. The Barclay private car had brought a dozen girls down from the state university for the Christmas holidays, and then had made a recruiting trip as far east as Cleveland and had brought back a score more of girls in their teens and early twenties - for an invitation from the Barclays, if not of much social consequence, had a power behind it that every father recognized. And what with three score girls from the Ridge, and young men from half a dozen neighboring states, - and young men are merely a background in any social picture, - the ballroom was as pretty as a garden. It was her own idea, - with perhaps a shade of suggestion from her father that the old century should be danced out and the new one danced in with the pioneers of Garrison County set in quadrilles in the center of the floor, while the young people whirled around them in the two step then in vogue."¹¹⁸

Athletic events became another source of entertainment for the people of the Kansas community. In Cuddy's Baby Mrs. McCarter describes the crowd which assembled for one of the first football games at the University of Kansas. She writes:

"Out beyond the little city, under the shadow of the hill slope was an athletic field where on this November after-

118. Wm. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 315.

noon the grand-stand was packed, and the open spaces lined with an expectant crowd watching a great football struggle. It was in the early years of the game's history, and enthusiasm over it was one of the newer emotions, but it was none the less abundant on that account."¹¹⁹

Theatres too, were introduced to provide amusement for the Kansas community. Lina Gona of T. F. Sproul's Prosy Romance gives her opinion of the theatre in a letter to her friend Dash Blank. She writes:

"Here in Topeka there is no way more effectual way of separating yourself from your money and getting nothing in return than going to the Grand. I've attended several matinees; and to see the fine ladies with their gold opera-glasses scrutinizing each other's head dresses and wearing apparel between the acts is enough to occupy a whole chapter in describing frivolities. The stage may be a civilizer; if so, it hasn't done much yet."¹²⁰

119. M. H. McCarter: Cuddy's Baby, p. 8.

120. T. F. Sproul: The Prosy Romance, p. 42.

PART III - THE FAMILY

Family life cannot be studied in the Kansas novel without taking into consideration the background of that life - the home. The Kansas home has passed through a number of different stages in the process of its development. The novels dealing with the early pioneer days picture the dugout, the "soddie", and the log cabin as centers of home life. The dugout seems to have been built chiefly by settlers from the South. Mrs. Humphrey pictures thus the construction of this type of home:

"The Charleston colonists turned their attention toward the construction of winter quarters, digging cellars and roofing them with boards, or else excavating a space in the side of a ravine or hill, and closing up the front with the exception of a small space which served for ingress or egress. These dwellings, called 'dugouts', in which families of six or seven persons contrived to exist were very common among pioneers from the South and Southwest."¹²¹

The sod house was the most popular type of pioneer dwelling, for the materials for it cost nothing and were always available at the 'Prairie Lumberyard'. It provided a much more satisfactory home than the dugout, whereas the only difference in output was in the expenditure of labor. The sod house pictured in Winning the Wilderness is practically identical with those of other Kansas novels dealing with the early days. Mrs. McCarter says:

 121. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 69.

"Two decades in Kansas saw hundreds of such cabins on the plains. The walls of this one were nearly two feet thick and smoothly plastered inside with a gypsum product, giving an ivory finish, smooth and hard as a bone. There was no floor but the bare earth into which a nail could scarcely have been driven. The furniture was plain and meagre. There was only one picture on the wall, the sweet face of Asher's mother. A bookshelf held a Bible with two or three other volumes, some newspapers, and a magazine. Sundry surprising little devices showed the inventive skill of the home-builder, but it was all home-made and unpainted." ¹²²

The log house was, of course, the most substantial of the three types of homes, and for this reason was, whenever the material was available, the choice of those settlers who intended to settle permanently in the state. This idea is expressed by William R. Lighton in Sons of Strength.

"We've got to build right. There's only one right way. We have to build as though we expected to stay. The best way to keep from being drove off is to fix so you can defend yourself. Poles and grass are all right for weather but they won't keep off a Missouri Blue Lodge. Logs is the thing!" ¹²³

The erection of this kind of home was usually a neighborhood event, for the 'raising' of the walls required the help of a number of strong men. Mr. Lighton explains the building process as follows:

122. M. H. McCarter: Winning the Wilderness, p. 25.

123. Wm. R. Lighton: Sons of Strength, p. 135.

"When our clearings were made upon the top of the low hill, we selected strong logs, trimming them into shape and matching them as well as we were able. Then we dug trenches in the form of the outer walls of our buildings, paving the bottom of the trenches with broad flat stones from the river-bed, until we had a secure foundation. Then our logs were set upon end in the trenches in two rows, the inner row covering the chinks of the outer, and after that the earth was filled into the trenches and packed down tightly. When the walls had been plentifully mud-plastered, they were safe and secure, proof against bullets, should such chance to come our way.....

From lighter and slenderer logs we fashioned the roofs of our buildings. The roofs were also plastered with mud, mixed with twigs and grasses, for strength's sake and over all was placed a thatching of the rank green stems, woven together, and making a roof that would stand storm and fire."¹²⁴

A slight variation from the log cabin described above is the two-roomed cabin pictured in Over the Border. The sides of this building were of 'shakes', a new style of lumber very much in vogue then, because it was the only kind available. 'Shakes' were made by splitting logs with an ax. This house had a floor made of cross sections of logs about six inches in length, placed firmly and compactly upon the ground. A few of the early houses were of stone. The walls

124. W. R. Lighton: Sons of Strength, p. 136.

of the Truman home in Free Soil were of natural stone, brownish yellow in color; the Baronet home in The Price of the Prairie "was of stone with every corner rounded like a turret wall,"¹²⁵ and the Lamond home of A Wall of Men, luxurious in comparison with other frontier homes, "was a stout little three-roomed stone cabin with walls almost two feet thick."¹²⁶

The furnishings of these crude homes of the frontier were meagre and poor, being for the most part hand-manufactured. Sometimes a few fine belongings, suggestive of a luxurious home in the East, only emphasized the coarseness of the other furnishings, as is illustrated by this picture from Over the Border:

"In a short time they all gathered around the pine box which was their table, and upon which the fine white linen, the sparse array of silver, and the remnants of fine china and glass with the tin dishes and heavy crockery looked¹²⁷ strangely incongruous."

In these crude pioneer houses, containing usually only one room, the entire family - and pioneer families were not as a rule small - slept, cooked, ate, and carried on all the many tasks necessary for the maintenance of life in a new country. In Free Soil Margaret Lynn pictures the housewife of the pioneer days knitting stockings, running candles, making bullets, conducting a hospital for sick neighbors,

125. M. H. McCarter: The Price of the Prairie, p. 24.

126. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 39.

127. Ruth Cowgill: Over the Border.

and a school for her own children, in addition to performing the usual household tasks without the aid of modern conveniences.

Life was hard in Kansas during those days. The homes of the settlers, especially those isolated from the rest, were at all times subject to attack from border ruffians and from hostile Indians. Homes were burned and families broken by these ruthless invaders. Many are the accounts of such attacks in the novels of Kansas. The following from Mrs. McCarter's Price of the Prairie pictures the insecurity of the frontier home:

"The Cheyennes came across here and up Spillman Creek, and over on the Solomon they killed a dozen or more people. They burned every farm house, and outraged every woman, and butchered every man and child they could lay hands on."¹²⁸

J. H. Whitson in Barbara, a Woman of the West pictures the disruption of a Kansas home by the Cheyennes while they were attempting to return to their old hunting grounds in Dakota from their reservation in the Indian territory:

"They marked their trail across the Sunflower State in fire and blood, and carried into temporary captivity the two small daughters of a lonely claimholder, after murdering the other members of the family."¹²⁹

This constant danger of attack was not the only hard-

128. M. H. McCarter: The Price of the Prairie, p. 247.

129. J. H. Whitson: A Woman of the West, p. 27.

ship the early settlers had to contend with. As Margaret Hill McCarter says in Cuddy's Baby, "There was hardly a human need that was not theirs, hunger, cold, toil, loneliness, and mourning - all were their daily portion."¹³⁰

The constant warfare, together with drouths, prairie fires, and blizzards, made food production difficult in Kansas. The lack of transportation facilities added greatly to the seriousness of the food problem. Crop failures meant starvation to many in the early days before the railroads had linked the West with the East. T. F. Sproul in The Prosy Romance gives a picture of the hardships of the early settlers. He writes:

"If you could know the anxiety and suffering the first settlers of that country had to endure, you would be a more sympathetic man. When I was a young girl about ten or twelve years old, I was deeply impressed with the hardships we all had to bear. One time about three o'clock in the afternoon I went out into the sunburnt cornfields to take water to my brothers, who still had hopes of getting a crop. The hot wind had been blowing for several days; perspiration had caused the fine dust to settle all over their faces; they looked sad and weary, but greeted me kindly; there was no crop raised the year before, consequently their horses were poor and weak, having had no grain for several days. The situation and the prospect caused such a sadness to come over me that I could not talk without crying. My oldest brother knew it was my

sympathy for the horses and brothers that made me so grieved; so, handing me the water-jug, he said: 'Better go back to the house, little girlie; it is too hot and dirty out here for you.' I shall never forget that trip back to the house. My dirty little brown feet were sore from having no shoes to wear, and tender because hot dust and last year's sandburs were prevalent everywhere. There had not been rain enough to sprout all the sandburs since the weather had gotten warm enough to make them grow. On arriving at the house, another picture of despondency was in view. My poor old mother was sitting in the shade of the sod house scraping some new potatoes no larger than marbles, hoping to get a nice supper for her dear children. Her calico dress was in shreds, but it was clean. 'Better lie down and rest, Lina, dear, as soon as you water the chickens, - you look so tired.' After saying this her poor old wrinkled face again showed the anxiety she had for her children, live stock, and crops."

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There was a great deal of sickness during the pioneer days in Kansas, as always the case in a new country where living conditions are poor and medical aid is scarce. The settlers in A Wall of Men anticipate the winter with dread as they think of the trials it will bring and the toll it will take in human life:

"This will be a long hard winter, of course. So many settlers are not ready yet to have cold weather come; so many

poor houses and such a lack of food and no doctors for the sick, nor preachers for the dying." ¹³²

In Ruth Cowgill's Over the Border Baby Belle, the youngest daughter, dies of pneumonia, brought on by exposure in the crude cabin during hard winter in Kansas. In Cuddy's Baby the small Perine boys die of this disease during the second winter in Kansas. The Judson baby in The Price of the Prairie dies soon after its birth, while the father is trying to get across the creek on his way for the doctor.

Ruth Cowgill gives an idea of the prevalence of such conditions when she tells the readers of Over the Border that Sarah went to visit her neighbors and "found them living in a way that mader her bare home seem very homelike when she reached it again. In some places there was sickness, and had been death. Hopelessness, sorrow, squalor greeted her in these rude prairie homes." ¹³³

One of the greatest trials, for women especially, of the early pioneer life was that of the loneliness and monotony of the plains. Ruth Cowgill has emphasized in Over the Border this trial of the women of early Kansas:

"Sarah thought sometimes that if it were not for her wee sister to love and pet, she would be driven to desperation by the vast loneliness of her habitation. For the prairies are beautiful as the ocean is beautiful; wide-stretching, immeasurable, aloof - and the winds, those monotonous, un-

132. M. H. McCarter: A Wall of Men, p. 82.

133. Ruth Cowgill: Over the Border.

resting winds! They got on her nerves and sang her strange songs. And the constant blazing sun!"¹³⁴

Another hardship felt most keenly by the women of Kansas was the absence of the beauties and niceties of life to which many of them were accustomed. Mrs. Nathan Hornby in The Wind before the Dawn is one of these. Miss Munger says of her:

"She read and was well informed on general topics of the day, but her life for more than fifteen years had been spent with Nathan and with the hired men who ate at her table and she had become careless of small things, so she listened with an amused smile but with real profit as well, to Lizzie's confidences that you shouldn't cross your knife and fork on your plate when you are through eating like the hired men, but lay them side by side neat and straight; that 'You shouldn't eat with your knife, neither,' and that 'To sip your coffee out of your saucer with a noise like grass-hopper's wings was just awful!'"¹³⁵

Another woman of this class is Mrs. Perine of Cuddy's Baby. In characterizing her Mrs. McCarter writes:

"She had determination, too, as well as her husband, but an inborn love of beautiful things, which she could not have, made a void in her life of which he never dreamed. So, busy as she was, she trained her vines and filled her dooryard with flowers, and patiently replanted what the chickens

134. Ibid.,

135. Dell Munger: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 54.

scratched out, and worked and waited, looking forward to the time when a better house and better fences and blue grass and flowers, and a little leisure for books, of which she was fond, might make life more comfortable."¹³⁶

With the development of the country and the coming of prosperity came a gradual improvement in living conditions in Kansas. In A Certain Rich Man during the middle 60's were built the Hendricks house and the Culpepper house, the show places of Sycamore Ridge. The former was "a great brick structure, with square towers and square 'ells' rambling off on the prairie, and square turrets with ornate cornice pikes pricking the sky;"¹³⁷ the latter, a large building with its tall pillars reaching to the roof, its double door and its two white wings spreading over the wide green lawn. About the same time the Barclay home "grew to a kitchen and two bedrooms as well as the big room with its fireplace."¹³⁸

In the middle 70's John Hunter of The Wind before the Dawn built a farm house for his wife and his mother that was fairly modern in structure and furnishing. In the late 80's the Aydelots in Winning the Wilderness were living in a beautiful farm house ornamented with vine-draped columns, surrounded by a well-kept lawn, and shaded by big elm trees. In Peace of Solomon Valley, which is a story of modern Kansas

136. M. H. McCarter: Cuddy's Baby, p. 15.

137. W. A. White: A Certain Rich Man, p. 54

138. Ibid., p. 56.

life, Mrs. McCarter pictures the marked changes that have come about in the living conditions of Kansas. While writing to his son, the father of the hero reflects thus upon the developments he has seen take place in Kansas during his life time:

"The little dug-out is the dog-house now and the twelve by fourteen homestead a vine-covered tool shelter. Fourteen rooms, and upper and lower verandas, hot and cold water, a lighting and heating system - these things have grown up from year to year."¹³⁹

The Kansas novels which picture family life may be divided into two distinct groups - first, the sentimental or romantic novels represented by the work of Margaret Hill McCarter, Mary Humphrey, and Margaret Lynn; secondly, the realistic novels such as those of E. W. Howe, Dell Munger, and Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius.

In the first group family life is pictured in an idealistic manner. The husband, wife, and children work together in blissful contentment and perfect understanding, sacrificing nobly and generously for the sake of building a free state on the frontier. After this aim has been attained, they continue their lives of happy cooperation, enjoying the fruits of their effort and striving unselfishly to make Kansas a better state to live in. In these novels the relationship between various members of the family is perfect -

139. M. H. McCarter: Peace of Solomon Valley, p. 79.

children love and honor their parents and parents have abundant love and sympathy for their children. Such is the feeling that exists between Judge Baronet and his son Phil of The Price of the Prairie; between Mr. Darrow and his son Eliot, between Eliot and his mother, and between Mr. Lamond and his daughter Beth - all of A Wall of Men; between Asher Aydelot and his son Thaine in Winning the Wilderness; between the Trumans and their two sons in Free Soil; and between Janet and her parents in The Land of Promise. These parents are happy in sacrificing the best years of their lives in building for their children comfortable homes in a free land. The children in turn, appreciate the tremendous sacrifice their parents have made, and strive to repay them by leading noble, upright lives and by loving deeply the land for which their fathers have struggled.

The relationship between husband and wife as shown in this group of novels is particularly idealistic. One in heart and in mind, the husband and wife come to Kansas, determined to establish a home and to help make Kansas free. They meet hardships and trials with brave hearts, happy in their partnership and becoming increasingly devoted to each other as they share adversity.

Mary Humphrey speaks thus in The Squatter Sovereign of the happy relationship between John Alden and his wife, Amy.

"The first dawnings of that holy passion are no more to be compared to the love which has stood the test of time and

absence, the trituration of petty differences, and daily commonplaces, and which, knowing of each others imperfections, can look forward without shrinking to years of toil, and self-denial, amid uncongenial surroundings, than is the rushlight by which we can dimly discern each others faces in the night to the fully glory of the noonday sun."¹⁴⁰

Throughout the trials of the years this passion remains unchanged, for in their old age:

"John and Amy Alden sit at evening, on the veranda of a large and commodious farm house, their faces bearing an unmistakable impress of content - content material and spiritual - beautifying and glorifying all the lines left by toil and care, by sacrifice and subordination of things selfish, to the higher motives of patriotism and humanity."¹⁴¹

The Langtrys in the same novel also enjoy a very happy married life. Mrs. Humphrey suggests by the following, their devotion to each other:

"Mrs. Langtry participated in the general good cheer with a buoyancy unknown to her of late, her husband's absence having plunged her into deepest gloom. He was her sunshine, and like the flowers, she drooped when the life-giving rays were withdrawn. But the time was at hand for his return, and she brightened up in consequence."¹⁴²

140. Mary A. Humphrey: The Squatter Sovereign, p. 121.

141. Ibid., p. 353.

142. Ibid., p. 245.

Always happy are the relationships between the husbands and wives of Mrs. McCarter's novels. The following paragraph from A Wall of Men gives an insight into the married life of Mr. and Mrs. Lamond, as well as an idea of the father's attitude toward his daughter who is in love with a man he dislikes:

"The best husband that ever lived, the kindest father, the lovinest, truest man," Mrs. Lamond said to herself. "But that stubborn Scotch nature that, once set, is unchangeable, that stern notion of courage and loyalty, and, deep down, that wonderful love for his own child, that makes him cling to her, nor want to give her up to anybody, - he doesn't reckon with all these, and it's no use for me to try to show him. I'll trust the Lord and let matters take their course. But, she added, with a triumphant smile, 'his will has always been supreme here - a good will, of course - and he hasn't counted on Beth - who's got a chin built just like her father's and a mouth every bit as firm. It will be a pretty fight when the day of reckoning with her comes."¹⁴³

In the same novel the happy married life of Coke Wren and his wife Patty is much to be admired. Together they meet the trials of the frontier bravely and with smiling faces. Patty explains it thus:

"Me and Cokey ain't got nobody but our two selves," she chirped, as she soothed her stricken guests. "An' the Lord just favors us by lettin' us help where we can. We

didn't git beauty ner riches to our share, ner no special amount of book knowledge. So He made it up to us in givin' us friends and the quality of endurin' - we can live on bird-seed if we need to, - and we ain't neither of us afraid none. An' that's a blessin' in this part of His footstool." ¹⁴⁴

Admirable too, is the depth of feeling and the sympathetic understanding that exists between Hiriam and Isabel Darrow in the same story. Of them Mrs. McCarter says:

"And of such as these two does a state grow to Empire." ¹⁴⁵

The relationship between Asher and Virginia Aydelot, as Mrs. McCarter pictures it in Winning the Wilderness leaves nothing to be desired. When, after twenty-five years of hardship in early Kansas they recall a romantic evening of their courtship days in Virginia, Virginia Aydelot shows her devotion to her husband by saying:

"We're not old until we forget our own romance days. You were my hero that night. You are my hero still." ¹⁴⁶

The novels of the realistic group give an entirely different picture of family life - a picture that is unpleasant and unhappy. They would show that family life in Kansas is far from being a golden dream of happiness - that the drabness and monotony of the struggle for existence on the Kansas prairies has warped the very lives of the people, has made them bitter and hard by cheating them out of the share of joy

144. Ibid., p. 280.

145. Ibid., p. 413.

146. M. H. McCarter: Winning the Wilderness, p. 217.

that should be theirs.

The family relationships pictured in these novels are distorted and unhappy. Parents do not understand their children; children do not love their parents; husbands and wives live together without love or make each other wretched through misunderstanding. Always wretchedness and misery prevail.

The relationship between the Reverend Mr. Westlock and his son Ned in The Story of a Country Town is a very peculiar one. The son writes thus of his fear for his father:

"My mother was as timid in his presense as I was, and during the day, if I came upon her suddenly, she looked frightened, thinking it was he, but when she found it was not, her composure returned again. Neither of us had reason to be afraid of him, I am certain of that; but as we never seemed able to please him (although he never said so), we were in constant dread of displeasing him more than ever, or of causing him to become more silent and dissatisfied, and to give up the short prayers in which we were so graciously mentioned for a blessing."¹⁴⁷

And further:

"I could find no fault with him except that he never spoke kindly to me, and it annoyed him if I asked him questions concerning what I read in his books. When Jo and I worked with him in the field, which we both began to do very early in

life, he always did that which was hardest and most disagreeable, and was not a tyrant in anything save the ungrumbling obedience he exacted in whatever he thought about the matter in hand, without reference to what others thought on the same subject. We had to be at something steadily, whether it helped him or not, because he believed idle boys grew up into idle men." ¹⁴⁸

Still further he writes:

"I think he was kinder with us when at work than at any other time, and we admired him in spite of the hard and exacting tasks he gave us to do - he called them stints - for he was powerful and quick to aid us when we needed it, and tender as a child if we were sick. Sometimes on cold days we walked rather than rode to the timber, where my father went to chop wood while Jo and I corded it. On one of these occasions I became ill while returning home at night - a slight difficulty, it must have been for I was always stout and robust - and he carried me all the way in his arms. Though I insisted I could walk, and was better, he said I was not heavy, and trudged along like a great giant, holding me so tenderly that I thought for the first time that perhaps he loved me. For weeks after that I tried as hard as I could to please him and to induce him to commend my work; but he never did, for whether I was good or bad, he was just the same, silent and grave, so that if I became indifferent in my tasks, I fear

he was the cause of it."

The relationship between Ned and his mother was also very strange. She was a small, weak woman who always seemed unhappy, about what, her son did not know. She had very little to do with the boy after he became old enough to get along without her care, for she left his training entirely to his father, "believing that as his ideas were good in everything else, he would of course know how to manage a boy."¹⁵⁰

Although she was kind to her son, she was never affectionate and he, receiving no affection, returned none. After many years of such indifference on the part of the mother and son, Ned was surprised to hear from his cousin Joe the following account of his mother's confession:

"I have never spoken of this before; I never intend to speak of it again, and I mention it now because I feel that I can live but a few years longer, and I must speak of it to make clear a request I have to make. Ned is out of the house tonight and fartheraway from me than ever before since he was born. After you two have gone to sleep here in this room, I always come in to kiss him good-night. And, Jo, I frequently kiss you, too. Since he was a baby in my arms, I have never kissed him except when he was asleep, because his father seemed to dislike such exhibitions of affection. But I come to his bed every night, and kiss him after he has gone to sleep."

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149. Ibid., p. 22.

150. Ibid., p. 19.

"She cried softly to herself awhile, and remained so quiet that I could hear her tears fall in little splashes to the floor.

"The request that I have to make is that after I am dead you will tell him of this. I have made a mistake in raising him, and I know I should have cultivated his affection after he put on boots and mittens, and went out with his father to work, but I was afraid, for none of that is allowed in this house, as you know. I do not feel free to be kind to you Jo, or to show you any attention for fear my husband will regard it as an interference with his disciplin, which excuse he has used to separate me from my boy.

"I know he regards me as cold-hearted, like his father, but I am not. I love him as every mother loves her only child, but he does not understand it, and lately he avoids me whenever he can."¹⁵¹

After this account Ned resolved to be more considerate of his mother in the future, since he understood her strange disposition toward him.

Mrs. Westlock seemed to become even more unhappy after the family's removal to Twin Mounds, and of these days her son writes:

"Had I those days to live over, I would pursue a different course, but it never occurred to me then that I could be of more use to her than I was, or that I could in any way

lessen her sorrow. She never regretted that I no longer slept in the house or that I was growing as cold toward her as my father, which must have been the case, so I never knew that she cared much about it. Indeed I interpreted her unhappiness as indifference toward me, and it had been that way since I could remember. Had she put her arms around me, and asked me to love her because no one else did, I am sure I should have been devoted to her, but her quietness convinced me that she was so troubled in other ways that there was no time to think of me, and while I believe I was always kind and thoughtful to her, I fear I was never affectionate."¹⁵²

Another relationship between parents and child very clearly pictured in the realistic novel is that of Mr. and Mrs. Farnshaw and their daughter Elizabeth in The Wind before the Dawn. Mr. Farnshaw was a domineering tyrant of a man, whose frequent uncontrollable fits of rage were a source of constant terror to his family. He was stubborn and selfish and "Usually regarded a request from his children as a thing to be denied promptly, and always as a matter for suspicion."¹⁵³ He consented to let Elizabeth attend school, only because her hope of becoming a school teacher appealed to his pride in the importance of the family. He begrudged her the little money he gave her to spend for clothing and resolved that she should teach school during the summer to repay him. He secured the

152. Ibid., p. 176.

153. Dell Munger: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 40.

home school for her and appropriated her salary for the purchase of corn and implements. Though he had permitted her to attend high school, he resented any attempt she made to pass on to her family the higher standards of conduct she had found there. He became angry and sullen when he overheard her advising her mother to leave him, and he flew into a mad rage when Elizabeth tried to beg his pardon for what she had said. He tried to strike her, but was prevented from it by the sudden lunging of the team he was unhitching.

"I'll thrash you within an inch of your life!" he cried, however, when he saw her disappearing through the open door of the house."¹⁵⁴

True to his promise, he did thrash her. On her wedding day Elizabeth went out to the barnyard to make one last attempt to make friends with her father. He was feeding the hogs and, in jerking away to avoid Elizabeth's touch, he overturned the pail of swill, slipped and fell in the slimy liquid. Elizabeth laughed at the ridiculous picture he presented. This was too much - he became insane with fury. The scene that followed is pictured by Miss Munger thus:

"There was such a look of malignity on his face as he jerked away and turned to face her that the girl, suddenly sobered, dodged and started to run. Her long hair trailed across his arm, and lost to every consideration but that of satisfying his temper, he caught it as she passed and swing-

ing the osage stick to which he still clung, he shouted:

"Damn you! This is the kind of friends I'll be!"

"He struck with all his force, jerking her hair at the same time. Thrown from her feet, the full weight of the girl's body came on her hair. It hurt cruelly. She veered around on her knees and caught the now tangled hair with both hands to ease the strain. He grabbed her by one arm and rained blows on her thinly clad shoulders which hissed in tune with the man's temper as they fell."

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This was the final break between Elizabeth and her father. They had nothing more to do with each other after Elizabeth went to be the wife of John Hunter.

Equally unpleasant is the relationship pictured between Elizabeth and her mother. Mrs. Farnshaw loved her daughter as much as it was possible for her selfish, warped nature to love anyone, but she made life miserable for her by whining about her husband's tyranny over her and by begging Elizabeth to concede to his demands and to humor his temper. She took a selfish pride in Elizabeth's choice of a husband, thinking of the envy his new house and his shiny buggy would create among the neighbors, rather than of her daughter's happiness in her new life. This same selfishness and love of display, together with her jealousy of Mrs. Thornby, who was as a mother to Elizabeth, prompted her to insist upon her daughter's being married in her own home where she had known only unhappiness and

misery, instead of at the Hornby home as she had planned.

Elizabeth loved her mother and pitied her but she saw nothing in her to admire and much to abhor. She received no guidance and encouragement from her when she was in trouble, instead she was forced to add her mother's problems to her own and to be scolded whenever she suggested a solution.

Even more unpleasant than the instances already mentioned is the relationship between Martin Wade and his son Billy, pictured in Dust. Martin Wade had no love for his son - he was incapable of loving anyone, even himself - he saw in him only the person who was to carry on his work after he was gone. Billy was to till the broad acres he had tamed by back-breaking toil, he was to care for his pure-bred stock and look after his splendid barns. He had no sympathy with the boy's sensitive nature, his dreamy disposition, and his pronounced distaste for work.

When Billy was nine, Martin set about to grind out his objectionable tendencies - to bend him to the work he wished him to do. He set him to hauling manure, threatening to whip him if the task were not finished by a certain time; he ordered him to harness the horses, though the harness was much too heavy and the horses' backs much too high for him; and he gave him three cows to milk twice a day, while his hands were yet so weak that the task made his fingers cramp.

"At twelve, Bill was plowing behind four heavy horses. He could run the mower, and clean a pasture of weeds in a day. He could cultivate and handle the manure spreader. In

the hot, blazing sun, he could shock wheat behind Martin, who sat on the binder and cut the beautiful swaying gold. There wasn't a thing he could not do, but there was not one that he did with a willing heart. His dreams were all of escape from this grinding, harsh farm. It seemed to him that it was as ruthless as his father; that everything it demanded of him was, at best just a little beyond his strength. If there was a lever to be pulled on the disk, very likely it was rusted and refused to give unless he yanked until he was short of breath and his heart beat fast; four horses were so unruly and hard to keep in place; the gates were all so heavy - they were not easy to lift and drag open. It was such a bitter struggle every step of the way. It was so hard to plow as deeply as he was commanded. It was so wearing to make the seed bed smooth enough to measure up to his father's standard. Never was there a person who saw less to love about a farm than this son of Martin's." ¹⁵⁶

And because Martin had been so cruel in his demands, had driven him so mercilessly to the tasks he hated, Billy hated and feared him and while still a child, determined to run away from the farm as soon as he was old enough.

Between Billy and his mother however, there was a deep bond of affection.

"She gave him all the sympathy and help her great heart knew. His rebellion had been her own, but she had allowed it

to be ground out of her, with her soul now in complete surrender. And here was her boy going through it all over again, for himself, learning the dull religion of toil from one of its most fanatical priests. What if Bill, too, should finally have acquiescence to Martin rubbed into his very marrow, should absorb his father's point of view, grow up and run, with mechanical obedience, the farm he abhorred? The very possibility made her shudder.¹⁵⁷"

Martin felt the sympathy that existed between the mother and son and resented it, as may be seen from these lines:

"'You are like old Dorcas,' she once told her husband, driven desperate by the exhausted, harrowed look that was becoming habitual in Bill's face. 'You're trampling down your own flesh and blood, that's what you're doing - eating the heart out of your own boy.'

"'Go right on,' retorted Martin, all his loneliness finding vent in his bitter sneer, 'tell that to Bill. You've turned him against me from the day he was born. A fine chance I've ever had with my son!'"¹⁵⁸

The enmity between Martin and his son finally led to an open break. Bill left home and was killed soon afterward while working as shot-firer in the mines.

The relationship between husband and wife is also a favorite theme of the realistic novels of Kansas. In The Story

157. Ibid., p. 130.

158. Ibid., p. 131.

of a Country Town, the oldest novel of this group, the unhappiness pictured in the relationships between husbands and wives is caused, not by any absence of love, but by misunderstandings and mistaken ideas. Mrs. Westlock, a sad, nervous, little woman is timid in the presence of her domineering husband, not because she is afraid of him, but because she fears she may displease him by some act or word. Ned, her son, writes:

"While I never heard my father speak harshly to her, he was often impatient, as though he regretted he had not married a wife as ambitious and capable as himself; but if he thought of it, he gave it no other attention than to become more gloomy, and pacified himself by reading far into the night without speaking to anyone."¹⁵⁹

Jo, Ned's cousin, gives a further insight into the relations existing between Mr. and Mrs. Westlock:

"Your father is never unkind to her," he continued, determined to talk on that subject, "but they are more like strangers than man and wife. They have not occupied the same room for years, therefore she is always striving to reconcile him, knowing that he is discontented and dissatisfied, though I cannot see that she is to blame for it, and as a true woman, - and she is one, if ever one lived - this makes her very unhappy. I know less of your father every day, and I fear that something unfortunate will come of his discontent."¹⁶⁰
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159. E. W. Howe: The Story of a Country Town, p. 20.

160. Ibid., p. 106.

What did come of it was that Mr. Westlock deserted his family and left town with a woman who had long attracted him. Although she was changed and broken by her husband's desertion, Mrs. Westlock believed that he would some day return to her. Her son writes of this faith in his return:

"I believe that she always thought it possible that her husband would tire of his fancy, and coming back to her poor and old, they would finish their lives together. Perhaps she never went to bed at night because she was always expecting his knock at the door, and remained up to assure him that he was welcome. She believed that a man of his sturdy, honest principles could not be content wandering aimlessly about, ashamed to own his name and his country, so the vigils through the long nights were kept up. He would not come during the day, when he would meet familiar and accusing faces at every turn, but at night, when the town was quiet, and the people were asleep, therefore there was always a light in his old room, and his deserted but forgiving wife was always waiting to hear his step in the street, and his knock on the door."¹⁶¹

Mr. Westlock did tire of his fancy and after many years came back to beg forgiveness, - but too late. The one who could have forgiven him had been dead since morning. He confessed to his son the mistake that had wrecked both his life and that of his wife:

"It was I who made the mistake," he said finally, with-

out changing his position, and as though we had been saying that some one had made a mistake. 'She was always patient but I was dissatisfied and restless. I thought that if I were married to a flashy, ambitious woman, nothing would be impossible; but I know now that her quiet patience and content were rare jewels which I spurned and neglected. I confess to you now that I was wrong, and that she was right.'

Equally unhappy and even more tragic in its outcome is the relationship pictured between Jo and Manteel Erring in the same book. Jo had a very idealistic idea of love, as may be seen from the following:

"My first impression of the subject (love) is that I would as soon marry a widow as a girl who had been in love before. If I were king of a country, I would punish second marriage with death, and make it unlawful for a man or woman to be engaged more than once, thus preventing the marital unhappiness which I am sure always results when either the wife or husband knows the other has been in love before."

After Jo and Manteel had been married three happy and contented years, Jo received a love letter that had been written by Manteel to Clinton Bragg, Jo's enemy, when she was engaged to him. Even though Manteel told him that she had been only sixteen and not at all serious when she wrote the letter, Jo allowed it to put a blight upon his life. He became bitter and sullen because he had not been the first

162. Ibid., p. 332.

163. Ibid., p. 144.

to receive Manteel's affection. Manteel, hurt by his lack of faith in her, sadly and silently accepted the gulf between them as a great calamity that had fallen upon their home, and did not try to triumph over it.

When Jo returned home one afternoon to find Clinton Bragg there, he flew into a rage, although Manteel told him that Bragg had only at that moment arrived on an errand for his mother, and ordered Manteel to leave his house. She returned to her parents and Jo obtained a divorce. About a year later, Manteel was married to Bragg. Jo watched for the couple as they rode home after the ceremony, seized Bragg from the buggy and killed him; then, after sending Manteel home to her parents, he notified the officers of his deed and went to spend the night in jail. He spent several weeks in jail, then killed himself.

Manteel, weak and ill from grieving over the state of affairs, revealed her side of the horrible misunderstanding between her and her husband. Her mind was wandering and she spoke thus to Ned Westlock, thinking he was her husband:

"I must tell you, to relieve my own mind, if for nothing else, that I have always been true to you, and that I only consented to receive Clinton Bragg in this house in the hope that you would rescue me. I was afraid it might be wrong, but did not know what else to do. I hoped that when you heard that he was coming here, you would walk in like the brave man that you are, and demand to know what it meant; then you would give me opportunity to explain, and I hoped you would praise me

for making us happy again. I am sorry it has offended you, Jo, but I could think of nothing else and I desired to see you so much. I was always weak and helpless, and perhaps I did wrong, but I felt I must do something. When still you did not come, I let it be said that I intended to marry him, but it was all for love of my husband; God is my witness and I appeal to Him!"¹⁶⁴

A word from either Manteel or Joe might have prevented this tragedy, but both were proud and neither understood the other.

The problem of the relationship between husband and wife is the principal theme of Dell Munger's Wind before the Dawn. Miss Munger takes the problem through two generations, and in the end reaches a solution. She pictures first the married life of Josiah Farnshaw and his wife. Mr. Farnshaw, selfish, surly, and domineering by nature and made more so by the worry and work of the struggle for existence in the Kansas of the '70's, was regarded by his wife with greatest fear. Miss Munger writes:

"Reconciliation for one thing or another had been the most driving inspiration her twenty years of married life had known; it was her most potent incentive. Cowed and broken, fear bound her fast to his footsteps."¹⁶⁵

Mrs. Farnshaw complained thus to her daughter, Elizabeth, of her position:

164. Ibid., p. 406.

165. Dell Munger: The Wind before the Dawn, p. 220.

"I don't get my way about nothing'. I can't go t' town t' pick out a new dress that is bought with money I get from th' eggs, even. He'll manage most anyway t' get off t' town so's t' keep me from knowin' he's goin' an' then makes me send th' eggs an' butter by some one that's goin' by. He makes me stay at home t' watch something if he has t' let me know he's goin' his self. I don't own my house, nor my children, nor myself."¹⁶⁶

Elizabeth pointed out her mother's weakness and inconsistency in her relation with her husband when she said:

"When we're alone you talk about him domineering over you, but when he's here you let him say anything he wants to and never try to help yourself. Why don't you strike out on a new tack and say you won't do it when he makes unreasonable demands?"¹⁶⁷

Her mother's answer goes to the heart of the marriage problem:

"I don't know, Lizzie," the mother interposed slowly. "I sometimes think I will an' then when he's here something won't let me. It ain't what he says to you; it's - it's - something he does to you when he looks at you. I'm as weak as water when he looks at me. I don't know why. I guess it's because I've always given up - an' - an' - I can't tell why. A woman does just like a horse - there's more'n one kind of whippin' a man can give - an' she gets scared - an'

166. Ibid., p. 148.

167. Ibid., p. 82.

minds. A man begins right from th' the first t' tell her what to do an' she loves 'im and wants t' please 'im, an' before long she don't have her way no more'n a nigger.'"¹⁶⁷

Although Mrs. Farnshaw was unhappy in her married life and admitted that her husband did not treat her as a man should treat a woman, she became angry when Elizabeth suggested divorce.

"'When folks is married, they're married an' I don't believe in partin' nor talk of partin',"¹⁶⁸ she told her daughter shortly.

So saying, Mrs. Farnshaw worried on through the years with the man who owned her and tyrannized over her.

Elizabeth, her daughter, had high ideals of married life and resolutely determined to avoid the mistakes of her parents, should she ever have a home of her own. She welcomed the attentions of John Hunter, a man of culture and refinement, and told herself that here was a man who was different from the rough farmers who browbeat their wives, a man who respected women and was considerate of their wishes. Well might she think this, for Miss Munger writes:

"John Hunter, during the season of his courtship served the girl of his choice almost upon his knees. He made her feel that she could command his services, his time, and himself. By his request he ceased to ask when he could come

167. Ibid., p. 82.

168. Ibid., p. 82.

again, but encouraged, even commanded, her to tell him when and where she wished to be taken and to let him come to see her unannounced. He paid tribute to her as if she had been a goddess and he her devotee."¹⁶⁹

She did not realize the purpose behind John Hunter's courtship, Mrs. Hornby expresses this purpose thus, to Nathan, her husband:

"He has a farm; now he's going to need a wife to help him run it - just as he needs a horse. If he'd only be fair about it, but he's misleading her. She thinks he'll always do things the way he's doing them now, but he won't; there'll be an end to that kind of thing, someday - and - an' when they're married and he's got her fast, that kind of man won't be nice about it - and - they'll live on the farm - and life's so hard sometimes. Oh! I can't bear to see her broken to it."¹⁷⁰

A short time before her marriage to John Hunter, however, Elizabeth began to have some fear of the step she was about to take. She confessed her misgivings thus to Susan Hornby:

"Will I get like the rest of them, Aunt Susan? - Never go anywhere, never read anything, have nothing ahead but the same weary round over again every day? Don't think I don't want to be married. I do,' she felt bound to interpose. 'It's just - just that - well, you can see how it is; the married women around here wear faded things, and

169. Ibid., p. 126.

170. Ibid., p. 128.

their teeth get bad - and a man hardly ever wants to take his wife anywhere. Look at Mrs. Carter, and Mrs. Crane, and Ma. Poor Ma! She never gets to go anywhere she wants to."¹⁷¹

It was only a matter of time until Elizabeth was very much like the rest of them. She worked from early morning until late at night, for "John demanded that the house and cooking be kept up to the city standard, forgetting that there was a garden to keep in order also, besides little chickens to feed and butter to be made."¹⁷² She had no leisure time, entertained no company, and seldom left the farm. As Miss Munger writes:

"She had told her mother but two short years before that she would not live with a man who would treat her as her father treated his wife, and here she found herself in those few months as emeshed as her mother had been Aye! even more so. Hers was a position even more to be feared, because it was more subtle, more intangible, more refined, and John's rule as determined and unyielding as that of Josiah Farnshaw."¹⁷³

While striving for a solution to her problem, Elizabeth considers her position thus:

"Two things absorbed her attention; one was the domination of men, and the other was the need of money adjustment.

171. Ibid., p. 158.

172. Ibid., p. 256.

173. Ibid., p. 348.

To live under the continual interference of a man who refused to listen to the story of one's needs was bad enough, but to live without income while one had a small child was worse. She would leave this phase of her difficulty at times and wander back to the character of the treatment she received and compare it to that accorded to her mother. It occasioned great surprise to find herself admiring her father's manner more than that of her husband. Mr. Farnshaw had the virtue of frankness in his mastery, John used subterfuges; Mr. Farnshaw was openly brutal, John secretly heartless; her father was a domineering man, her husband even more determined, more inflexible. While considering the possibility of escape by running away, many things were clarified in Elizabeth's mind regarding her position as a wife, and the position of all wives. She, for the first time, began to see the many whips which a determined husband had at his command, chief of which was the crippling processes of motherhood. She could not teach school - Jack was too young; neither could she take any other work and keep the child with her. As she meditated upon the impossibility of the various kinds of work a woman could do, another phase of the situation arose before her; even if the baby were older, and a school easily obtainable, the gossip that would follow a separation would be unendurable. Having accumulated a reputation for snobbishness and aristocratic seclusion, people would not neglect so rare an opportunity to even scores. She would be a grass widow, a subject for all the vulgar jest and loathsome wit of the community."

Doctor Morgan, the Hunters' family doctor, also considered Elizabeth's position, and suggested a solution for the entire marriage problem. His belief was:

"The trouble's in men owning everything. Theoretically, a woman shares in the property, and of course she does it she gets a divorce, but as long as she lives with him he's the one that has the money and she has to ask for it if she has ever so little. You take Mrs. Hunter: she don't spend a cent he don't oversee and comment on; she's dependent on that man for every bite she eats and for every stitch she wears and he interferes with every blessed thing she does. Give that woman some money of her own, Noland, and where'd she be? John Hunter'd treat her as an equal in a minute; he'd know she could quit, and he'd come to terms."

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Noland did leave Elizabeth some money, enough to make her completely independent of John Hunter, and the Doctor's statement proved to be true. John came to terms and he and Elizabeth began life anew on a plane of equality and complete understanding.

Having found the solution to the marriage problem, Elizabeth became concerned about the rest of the women of Kansas who were still in the position she had just escaped. She said to her mother:

"And do you know I think about it every day - what could be done for the poor women on these hot Kansas prairies if there were some way to see that every girl that loves a man

could have money enough to keep her if she couldn't live
 under the work and children he crowds on her.'"¹⁷⁶

The bitterest picture of married life to be found in the novels of Kansas is that of Rose and Martin Wade in Dust, written by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius. Martin's idea of marriage is expressed in his answer to Rose's question after he has proposed to her:

"'But Martin, what makes you think I could make you happy?'

"Martin felt embarrassed. He was not looking for happiness but merely for more of the physical comforts, and an escape from loneliness. He was practical; he fancied he knew about what could be expected from marriage, just as he knew exactly how many steers and hogs his farm could support. This was a new idea - happiness. It had never entered into his calculations. Life as he knew it was hard. There was no happiness in those fields when burned by the hot August winds, the soil breaking into cakes that left crevices which seemed to groan for water. The sky with its clouds that gave no rain was a hard sky. The people he knew were sometimes contented, but he could not remember ever having known any to whom the word 'happy' could be applied. His father and mother - they had been a good husband and wife. But happy? They had been far too absorbed in the bitter struggle for a livelihood to have time to think of happiness. This had been equally true

of the elder Malls, was true today of Nellie and her husband. A man and woman needed each other's help, could make a more successful fight, go farther together than either could alone. To Martin that was the whole matter in a nutshell, and Rose's gentle question threw him into momentary confusion.

"I don't know", he answered uneasily. "We both like to make a success of things and we'd have plenty to do with. We'd make a pretty good pulling team."¹⁷⁷

Rose had higher ideals of married life than these, but she was lonely and yearned for a home and children of her own; so she accepted Martin Wade's proposal, telling herself that "perhaps his emotions were far deeper than he could express in words."¹⁷⁸

With these ideas in mind, they were married and their drab existence began. Martin resented Rose's presence in his home; it hurt him to see her handle his belongings. He had no sympathy for her feelings; he was angered by her caresses, and annoyed by her tears. Rose sadly laid aside her idea of expecting something rare, even spiritual, from marriage; and began to look forward to motherhood as a compensation for her disappointment.

Instead of the beautiful two-story home Martin had promised Rose before their marriage, he built a "four-room house that was the old one born again, putting the money that was

177. Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius: Dust, p. 45.

178. Ibid., p. 47.

to have built the second story, the fire place, and the hard wood floors into well-equipped farm buildings. Rose protested at first, but, because she was eager to please her husband, she yielded to his wishes; and, having submitted once, she found she could not resist them. In this shadow of the house that was to have been, Martin and Rose settled into a matter-of-fact existence in which work was the beginning, the middle, and the end.

Rose looked forward with great joy to the birth of their first child. When Martin heard the news, "'It's lucky harvest will be over; silo filling, too,'" was his only comment. Martin laughed at Rose's suggestion that she ought to have extra help during this critical period of her life.

"Didn't this mares work almost to the day of foaling? It was good for them, keeping them in shape. And the cows - didn't they go about placidly until within a few hours of bringing their calves? Even the sows - did they droop as they neared farrowing? Why should a woman be so different? Her child would be healthier and she able to bring it into the world with less discomfort to herself if she went about her ordinary duties in her usual way. Thus Martin, impersonally, logically.

"'That would be true,' Rose agreed, 'if the work weren't so heavy and if I were younger.'

"'It's the work you're used to doing all the time, isn't it? Because you aren't young is all the more reason you need exercise. You're not going to hire extra help, so you

might as well get any to-do out of your mind,' he retorted, the dreaded note in his voice.¹⁷⁹"

Rose considered leaving Martin, but remembered that her child must have a father, and told herself that Martin might be softened by daily contact with a son or daughter. So she carried her usual load of work even to the milking of the eight cows twice a day. All went well until a restless cow, irritated by Rose's tense hands, kicked her square on the stomach with such force that she staggered backward. Martin's utter cruelty is displayed to the fullest here:

"'Now what have you done?' demanded Martin sternly. 'Haven't I warned you time and again that milk cows are sensitive, nervous? Fidgety people drive them crazy. Why can't you behave simply and directly with them! Why is it I always get more milk from mine! It's your own fault this happened - fussing around, taking your ill temper at me out on her. Shouting at me. What could you expect?'"

Rose became hysterical and told Martin exactly what she thought of him:

"'You devil !' she burst out wildly. 'That's what you are, Martin Wade. You're not human. Your child may be lost and you talk about cows letting down more milk. Oh God! I didn't know there was anyone living who could be so cruel, so cold, so diabolical.'"¹⁸⁰

179. Ibid., p. 82.

180. Ibid., p. 85.

The following night the child was born, - dead. Instead of pitying Rose and making life easier for her to bear, Martin now "frankly hated her. There was not dislike merely; there was acute antipathy. He took a delight in having her work harder. It used to be 'Rose', but now it was always 'say' or 'hey'. Once she asked him cynically if he had ever heard of a 'Rose of Sharon', to which he maliciously replied: 'She turned out to be a Rag-weed.'

"Yet such a leveller of emotions and an adjuster of disparate dispositions is Time that when they rounded their fourth year, Martin viewed his life, with a few reservations, as fairly satisfactory. He turned the matter over judicially in his mind and concluded that even though he cared not a jot for Rose, at least he could think of no other woman who could carry a larger share of the drudgery in their dusty lives, help save more and, on the whole, bother him less. He, like his rag-weed, had settled down to an apathetic jog."¹⁸¹

Although Martin had never loved Rose, she had always, in spite of his harsh treatment of her, loved him and yearned for him to show her some degree of affection. After twenty years of married life, during which time Martin had seemed incapable of loving any human being, he fell in love with his young niece and demonstrated before his wife the depth of feeling that had lain dormant in him all those years.

181. Ibid., p.

The picture of married life given by Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius is a harsh one, but it is powerful in its reality and its dramatic appeal.

CONCLUSION

In looking back over the novels considered in this study, one may divide them roughly into the two classes used in the discussion of the family, the optimistic or romantic and the pessimistic or realistic. This division rests primarily upon the temperament of the authors as revealed in the novels.

Beginning with a novel as early as Mary Ellen Jackson's Spy of Osawatomie, published in 1881, the romantic group includes Mrs. Humphrey's Squatter Sovereign, Ruth Cowgill's Over the Border, William K. Marshall's Entering Wedge, John A. Martin's Jayhawker, Margaret Hill McCarter's long list of novels, Mack Cretcher's Kansan, and Margaret Lynn's Free Soil, and Land of Promise.

The second group, the pessimistic or realistic group, consists of E. W. Howe's Story of a Country Town, Dell Munger's Wind before the Dawn, and Mr. and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius's Dust.

The novels of the first group are characterized by idealism, optimism, and hopefulness. Although they deal with the struggle for existence in Kansas, a struggle against invaders, hardships, and privation, they treat this struggle as a noble conflict which is sure to end victoriously. The very tone of these books makes one confident that all will end happily. And one is seldom disappointed. The villain

receives his just dues, the hero marries the heroine, and they live happily ever afterward on a prosperous Kansas farm, which is covered with acre upon acre of swaying golden wheat, and which has for a background a gorgeous Kansas sunset.

Very different are the novels of the second group. They are dominated by a spirit of dissatisfaction with things as they exist and a spirit of hopelessness for any improvement in the future. They are unpleasant, harsh, and bitter in their realism.

It is not surprising to note that the two groups of novelists have not dealt with the same period of Kansas life. The writers of the optimistic or romantic novel have chosen to deal with the pioneer days - a period dominated by idealism and optimism. Mr. Becker says in his essay on Kansas:

"Idealism must always prevail on the frontier, for the frontier, whether geographical or intellectual, offers little hope to those who see things as they are. To venture into the wilderness, one must see it, not as it is, but as it will be."^{182.}

In Kansas this idealism was colored by the fact that the pioneers had come to Kansas for a very definite purpose - to make Kansas free. Their very mission enobled them and gave them strength to meet the trials of the new country courageously. It is this spirit of idealism and faith in the future that the romantic novelists have emphasized in dealing

with the life of the pioneers.

The realistic group of Kansas novelists have chosen to treat a later period of Kansas life - the period of dissatisfaction and unrest which followed the period treated by the romantic group of writers. After the cause of freedom had been won, the people settled down to a monotonous existence, occupied chiefly with earning a living. Then, they began to realize that all was not well with Kansas life. They realized for the first time that the soil might be free and people still be slaves. They began to see that there was something vitally lacking in a life which consisted of nothing but back-breaking toil. They recognized the injustice that lies in the subjection of Kansas wives to the power of their husbands. They came to a realization of all these wrongs and began to wonder what might be done to improve their condition.

The novelists of the pessimistic group have seized upon this period of Kansas life and pictured it in their novels with intense realism, stressing the spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction which characterized it.

Neither class of novelists tells the whole truth about Kansas social life. The first emphasizes the pleasant side of life in Kansas, to the exclusion of the unplesant; whereas, the second pictures Kansas social life as dark and gloomy.

William Allen White, in his novels, has tried to show both sides of Kansas life, but even he has not told the whole truth. He has subordinated everything to his dominant aim, that of teaching a moral lesson, and the truth of his picture

of Kansas social life has suffered.

The novel which tells the whole truth belongs to the literature of the future. When it is written, if it ever is, it will strike a happy balance between the idealistic and the realistic novels, and it will emphasize strongly that dominant trait which is stressed in both types of novels, in the one by its satisfaction, in the other by its denial, the Kansas love of freedom.

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