

THE SOUTHWEST AS TREATED IN A SELECTED LIST OF AMERICAN NOVELS

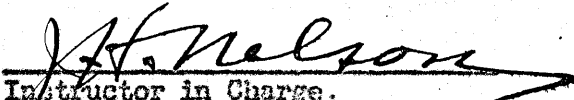
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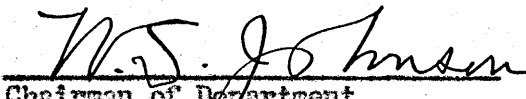
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>		<u>Page</u>
	Introduction	ii
I.	Nature In the Southwest	1
II.	The Indians	17
III.	The Settlers from the United States	53
IV.	The Spaniards and Mexicans	74
V.	Historical Material	96
	Conclusion	106
	Bibliography	111

PREFACE

In attempting a study of the novels written about the Southwest, I have had at my disposal about twenty books which seemed to be representative of the treatment so far afforded of the region. This number constitutes only a small portion of the books falling in this class, and there was some material which I should have greatly liked to have included, but was unable to procure. Nevertheless the twenty books used offer what I believe to be representative treatments, so that I doubt whether the use of added material would have materially changed the account. Several of the books from which material was drawn—the two by Walter Noble Burns and J. Frank Dobie's Coronado's Children—are not strictly speaking novels, yet in temper and method they are so closely allied to fiction that the use of them is justified.

I wish to acknowledge my deep indebtedness to Dr. J. H. Nelson, who has with great patience and helpfulness aided me in the writing of this thesis. Also, I wish to thank Professor R. D. O'Leary and Miss Nellie Barnes for their valuable assistance in helping me find material for my study.

INTRODUCTION

Like so many terms used by critics and literary historians, "the Southwest" lacks definiteness of meaning; hence an explanation is called for on the part of anyone employing it. In this study the term has been used to indicate the territory included in the states of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.¹ These states, it seems to the present writer, form a logical and distinct unit. Together they make a region having a character all its own, set apart from the country to the east, to the north, and to the west, although in some ways like that of the country to the south. This region may be said to have a soul of its own and to linger among the preponderantly Teutonic brotherhood of the United States as an exotic cousin.

Naturally this difference in fundamental temper and character has appealed to the writer of fiction, who has seen in the Southwest material of extraordinary variety and interest. Throughout most of the nineteenth century this interest made an appeal, as for example, to the popular G. P. R. James; yet it has been only within the last forty years that the full attractiveness of the Southwest has been felt. Novels, short stories, plays, frequently melodramatic, and poetry, have all utilized the subject-matter, and in all these essentially the same appreciation of the romantic and the glamorous shine through. The novels in particular are in general agreement in

1. In one novel considered in this study, 'Dobe Walls', the state of Arkansas is the setting.

their presentation of the country and its people, so that it is possible to generalize without misrepresenting.

Possibly the various aspects of nature form the theme on which there is most general agreement. The novelists have been quick to realize that in the wild beauty of the deserts, the sudden and tempestuous temper of the storms, the great stretches of plains, the intervening ridges of mountains, there is literary material of a rare value. They have seen, too, that the effect of physical nature on the inhabitants of the region is, as elsewhere in the world, marked and peculiar. The lives of those who live here are molded and influenced by their strange and exotic environment. The Indians have always felt its power, and even the white man has never gained complete control over the natural forces found here.

No less appealing is the procession of human types afforded by the region, some of these foreign to the large American audience to whom the novelists present them. To begin with there are the aborigines, unlike any race in the world. With their savagery, and their colorful customs and ceremonies, they have proved to be the most fascinating subject to the novelists. The Spaniards and Mexicans, with their love of pleasure and their courtly manners from the old country, have furnished romantic material for the authors. The Americans, with their vigorous manner and spirit of adventure, with their wish to change everything to their own desires, present a striking contrast to the primitive Indian and the gay, unconcerned Mexicans. When dealing with the American material, the writers have been inter-

ested mainly in showing the relationship between the "white man" and the earlier inhabitants. No type of American has been more striking than the reckless outlaw, who lived a turbulent and exciting life in the frontier towns.

For the American reader, also, the historical material furnished by the country is appealing, although on the whole the use of it is slight. Just as France and Great Britain struggled for a vast dominion in upper North America, so here in the south warriors of Spanish descent and warriors of American descent battled for a new empire. There were wars with the Indians, that make thrilling and exciting material for the novelists. There was the battle of the Alamo between the Mexicans and the Americans to gain supremacy of Texas. There was a struggle between the lawless and law abiding factions of the Americans. The outlaws had to be conquered as well as the Indians to make the country safe for settlers.

The novels which afforded material for this study have been written by a number of authors and range in setting from the days of the aborigines to the twentieth century. For the sake of indicating conveniently all the material used, the dates of its publication, and the periods of time with which the stories deal, the following list is offered here.

<u>Author</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Time and Theme of Story</u>
Mr. Adolph Bandelier	<u>The Delight Makers</u> (1890)	Pre-historic
Miss Willa Cather	<u>The Song of the Lark</u> (1915)	Ruins left by primitive Indians

<u>Author</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Time and Theme of Story</u>
Miss Willa Cather	<u>The Professor's House</u> (1925)	Ruins left by primitive Indians
Mr. W. O. Stoddard	<u>The Lost Gold of the Montezumas</u> (1897)	1835—the fall of the Alamo
Mrs. Amelia E. Barr	<u>Remember the Alamo</u> (1909)	1835—the fall of the Alamo
Miss Willa Cather	<u>Death Comes for the Archbishop</u> (1928)	1851 to time of railroads
Mr. Dane Coolidge	<u>Under the Sun</u> (1926)	During the "60's" to 1875
Mr. Jack O'Connor	<u>Conquest</u> (1930)	During late "50's" or early "60's" to the "80's"
Miss Alida Malkus	<u>Caravans to Santa Fe</u> (1928)	During late "50's" and early "60's"
Mr. Stanley Vestal	<u>'Dobe Walls</u> (1929)	During late "50's"
Mr. Harvey Fergusson	<u>In Those Days</u> (1929)	The "wagon days" to the "gas age"
Mr. Dane Coolidge	<u>Lorenzo the Magnificent</u> (1924)	Before the days of the railroad and after
Mr. Walter Noble Burns	<u>Tombstone</u> (1929)	During the "80's"
Mr. Walter Noble Burns	<u>The Saga of Billy the Kid</u> (1925)	During the "80's"
Miss Dorothy Scarborough	<u>The Wind</u> (1925)	Pioneer days of Texas and early days of the railroad
Mr. Harvey Fergusson	<u>Blood of the Conquerors</u> (1921)	During the "90's"
Miss Frances Gillmor	<u>Windsinger</u> (1930)	Present day
Miss Alida Malkus	<u>Dragon Fly of Zuni</u> (1928)	Present day
Mr. Oliver La Farge	<u>Laughing Boy</u> (1927)	Present day

The various interests presented by these books on the Southwest are likely to increase in their appeal as time goes on. The novels themselves make it clear that the country is changing, and that much that has been, will never be again. The Spanish Southwest, rapidly becomes an Americanized Southwest. The account "the old days" will more and more become to have the value like that in Scott's novels of the Middle Ages—the value, namely, which comes from interest in the remote, the distant. It is safe to predict, therefore, that in the future the treatment of the Southwest will be of wider interest and will perhaps be more frequent and enthusiastic than at present. The chapters that follow, however, should make clear an active and many-sided concern among novelists over the history, the beauty, and the spirit of the Southwest.

CHAPTER I

Nature in the Southwest

In reviewing the novels of the Southwest, one is impressed by the extensive use of nature. In almost all of the novels nature is an ever present and determining factor in the story. At times it may be said to constitute an actor, or it may influence a particular action in the progress of the story. In these novels picture after picture appears of the varied nature of the Southwest. It is a land of mountains and plains, of mesas and canyons, of deserts and sand hills, a land of sudden, violent storms, and of high winds—all told, a region of impressive sights. The relation of nature in the Southwest to human beings is peculiar and constitutes an attractive minor theme for the writers of fiction.

In the introduction of Coronado's Children, Mr. J. Frank Dobie writes that the history of the Southwest is different from that of any region in the world. "The New World," he writes, "has been a world of men exploring unknown continents, subduing wilderness and savage tribes, felling forests, butchering buffaloes, trailing millions of longhorned cattle, wilder than buffaloes, digging gold out of mountains, and pumping oil out of hot earth beneath plains. It has been a world in which men expected, fought for, and took riches beyond computation—a world, indeed, if not of men without women, then of men into whose imaginings woman has hardly entered." Perhaps we may say that nature has taken the place of woman and has shaped the destiny of the Southwest.

Mr. Dane Coolidge's Lorenzo the Magnificent reveals how nature is a determining factor in the lives of the Texans when they settled in New Mexico.

A year and a half before they had led the van of a mighty army, pouring into the promised land; and now, broken and thwarted by the hostile forces of Nature, they were retreating with the remnant of their herds. But the range which they had taken they held against all comers, maintaining a dead-line against Montemayor and his sheep; and though they shipped out thousands of steers they left their breeding stock behind, for summer merged into fall, the storm-clouds blew in from the east. Showers fell on the high plains, there was rain on the peaks, but with the cold it vanished like a mist. Only the wind blew, day and night, singing a dirge to all their hopes, and when winter came it brought no snow.¹

Finally the Texans are all driven out but Monk, an old Texan cowboy, and his young friend, Jason. Monk admits he is defeated and sells his property to Jason.

"And some day (declares Jason) those cows will be valuable."

"If it rains--yes," rumbled Monk.

"Well, it's going to!" maintained Jason.

"Liable to cut loose anytime. I know it! I can feel it in my bones."

"All right, son," agreed Monk with a fatherly smile. "I sure hope it does for your sake. But I'm going back to Texas, where a frog can learn to swim. I'm burnt out on this country--it's too dry."²

There is not a book written about the Southwest which does not reveal the influence of nature, even though nature is sometimes a minor feature of the book. The desert, the mountains, can-

1. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, pp. 222-223.

2. Ibid., pp. 234-235.

yons, the hot sun and dry air are always there to play at least an incidental part in the action.

The sudden terrific storms of the Southwest are important in Miss Cather's accounts of the Southwest. In the story Death Comes for the Archbishop, Jacinto and Father Latour are caught in a violent snow-storm. The Indian leads the Bishop to a hidden cave for shelter, and here he learns of an Indian tradition and ceremonial.

Miss Cather writes:

He found himself in a lofty cavern, shaped somewhat like a Gothic chapel, of vague outline,—the only light within was that which came through the narrow aperture between the stone lips. Great as was his need of shelter, the Bishop, on his way down the ladder, was struck by a reluctance, an extreme distaste for the place. The air in the cave was glacial, penetrated to the very bones, and he detected at once a fetid odour, not very strong but highly disagreeable. Some twenty feet or so above his head the open mouth let in grey daylight like a high transome.³

The Bishop learns the cause of the roaring noise in the cavern.

Father Latour lay with his ear to this crack for a long while, despite the cold that arose from it. He told himself he was listening to one of the oldest voices of the earth. What he heard was the sound of a great underground river, flowing through a resounding cavern. The water was far, far below, perhaps as deep as the foot of the mountain, a flood moving in utter darkness under the ribs of antediluvian rock. It was not a rushing noise, but the sound of a great flood moving with majesty and power.⁴

In Mr. Dana Coolidge's Lorenzo the Magnificent, the drouth and the scarcity of water supply play a major role. The Texans

3. Death Comes for the Archbishop, p. 129.
4. Ibid., p. 132.

come with their long-horned cattle, but in a few years are defeated by the drouth and driven out of the country because they do not know the rhythm of the seasons, as Lorenzo De Vega explains.

They had swarmed in willy-nilly, these rough, bearded Texanos, taking away streams which had served to water a few bands of sheep and turning them to the use of their cattle; but now the summer rains had failed already and the autumn was coming on dry. They had not believed him when he had told them about the drouths, which sometimes lasted two or three years; but now even the clouds had ceased to form and a dry wind whipped the dust across the plains. From the passes in the mountains huge wind-devils swept down, whirling the dust high in the air as they advanced in orderly procession until they died in the immensity of the plain. The Texans did not know the rhythm of the seasons--the long, dry winters, the brief period of moisture in the early spring, and the month or six weeks of summer rains. They did not realize that, with the passing of July and August, all hopes for a wet season were gone. ⁵

Mr. Oliver La Farge uses natural elements very little in his Laughing Boy. However, Laughing Boy and his wife, Slim Girl, are overtaken by a snowstorm and are forced to stay a few days with a poor Navajo family. His wife is again tested in adjusting herself to the crude Navajo life.

It began to snow on the morning of the third day of their trip home, not far from Kintiel. The ground, where it had any dampness in it, had been frozen since the night before, and they had hurried under a threatening sky, having still a good day's ride before them. The storm came like timber-wolves, rushing. A Mountain-top wind sent the dry flakes whirling past, stinging their ears and the sides of their faces; there was no sun, they could see only a few yards ahead of them. Pulling their blankets up over their heads, they guided themselves by the wind at their backs. . . . They continued, he fully occupied, she miserable with nothing to do save follow. Sometimes

5. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, pp. 132-133.

the snow whirled up at them, sometimes a flaw would sting their faces with fine, white dust. Their⁶ heavy blankets felt thin as cotton over their shoulders.

In the stories dealing with the Indians, the elements of nature are mingled closely in their lives. In all of the novels about the Navajo Indians, Tsayee or Canyon de Chelly, their home, is described in detail. A description of Tsayee or Canyon de Chelly and its part in the lives of the Navajo is given in Coolidge's Under the Sun:

And while the others dispersed Many Horses and his men entered the yawning mouth of Tsayee. At its entrance it was so wide that no bowman could shoot across it; a level riverbed of sand held in place by thick grass and the low, matted carrizos, or cane. Now in spring the creek was low and over the ledge that barred its entrance only a single, gurgling water-fall poured; but in times of flood a torrent rushed across it, covering the dyle from end to end. Logs of cedar and mountain spruce, brought down on its crest, were stranded along the shore; and a trail, broad and meandering, marked the passage of the people who still made Tsayee their home. . . .

Often at Taos and Santa Fe he had heard of the Canyon de Chelly as Tsayee was spelled by the Spanish, the great cleft in the rocks, impregnable to all assault, where the Navajos took shelter from their enemies. Three times, when their country had been invaded by the soldiers, they had fled into its all-enfolding depths; and so stupendous were the walls that the troops had turned back, well-content with a treaty of peace. . . .

The trail passed through broad savannahs, where herds of goats and sheep browsed peacefully by summer hogans; up side-canyons they caught vistas of peach-orchards; but at each zigzag turn the black stained walls became higher until they overhung the canyon floor. In horizontal fissures where the stratum had given way appeared the ruins of ancient cliff-dwellings, looking like mud-dauber's nests stuffed into the cracks; and the long rows of holes which had served the cliff-dwellers as paths looked like the tracks of climbing ants.

Gilpin forgot even his wounds and the hopelessness of his plight in the presence of such an awe-inspiring sight and as they approached a precipice fully a thousand

feet high the Navajos struck up a chant. It was a wall of red sandstone, split sheer from the floor to the edge of the overhanging rim, and, set high above the wash in a black and shadowy cavern, was a crenellated castle of purest white. Not for eight hundred years had a human being scaled the heights and set foot in this most ancient of dwellings, yet its walls were still complete, for the overhanging cliff had kept out the storms and rain. It stood out white and perfect, like a jewel set in black in the heart of the mighty rock; and there once had dwelt the Holy Ones of the Navajos, the gods who had founded their religion.

As they approached Kin Ni Neigai, the White House, old Nahtahlish rode out in front, and the chanting of the other men ceased; then, raising his hands to the house in the cliff, he intoned the hozho, or benediction. But as he sang he paused after every two words and an echo flung them back. To the Navajos it was magical, the voice of their Talking God, pronouncing a blessing on his people; and when the last words were spoken and echoed back from the rock they rode on in reverent silence.⁷

In Death Comes For the Archbishop, Miss Cather, who shows how the very life of this tribe seemed to depend on this old canyon, writes thus of the Canyon de Chelly:

It was his own misguided friend, Kit Carson, who finally subdued the last unconquered remnant of that people; who followed them into the depths of the Canyon de Chelly, whither they had fled from their grazing plains and pine forests to make their last stand. . . .

Carson followed them down into the hidden world between those towering walls of red sandstone, spoiled their stores, destroyed their deep-sheltered corn-fields, cut down the terraced peach orchards so dear to them. When they saw all that was sacred to them laid waste, the Navajos lost heart. They did not surrender; they simply ceased to fight, and were taken.⁸

Manuelito, a brave Navajo chief, is not captured and goes to Bishop Latour, asking him to plead with the Government for them.

7. Under the Sun, pp. 28-31.

8. Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 296-7.

They asked nothing of the Government, he told Father Latour, but their religion, and their own land where they had lived from immemorial times. Their country, he explained, was a part of their religion; the two were inseparable. The Canyon de Chelly the Padre knew; in that canyon his people had lived when they were a small weak tribe; it had nourished and protected them; it was their mother. Moreover, their gods dwelt there—in those inaccessible white houses set in caverns up in the face of the cliffs, which no living man had ever entered. Their gods were there, just as the Padre's God was in his church.

And north of the Canyon de Chelly was the Shiprock, a slender crag rising to a dizzy height, all alone out on a flat desert. Seen at a distance of fifty miles or so, that crag presents the figure of a one-masted fishing boat under full sail, and the white man named it accordingly. But the Indian has another name; he believes the rock was once a ship of the air. . . . That canyon and the Shiprock were like kind parents to his people, places more sacred to them than churches, more sacred than any place is to the white man. How, then, could they go three hundred miles away and live in a strange land?

In 1875 the Bishop took his French architect on a pack trip into Arizona to show him something of the country before he returned to France, and he had the pleasure of seeing the Navajo horsemen riding free over their great plains again. The two Frenchmen went as far as the Canyon de Chelly to behold the strange cliff ruins; once more crops were growing down at the bottom of the world between the towering sandstone walls; sheep were grazing under the magnificent cottonwoods and drinking at the streams of sweet water; it was like an Indian Garden of Eden.⁹

This material is used in a small way by Miss Cather in her novel The Song of the Lark, and by Miss Gillmor in his book Windsinger.

The forms of vegetation typical of this region—the piñon trees, the cactus, mesquite, sage-brush, and yucca—are frequently mentioned by the novelists. To Father Joseph in Death Comes For the Archbishop the tamarisk tree is a symbol of the Southwest:

9. Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 298-301.

Father Joseph had come to love the tamarisk above all trees. It had been the companion of his wanderings. All along his way through the deserts of New Mexico and Arizona, wherever he had come upon a Mexican homestead, out of the sun-baked earth, against the sun-baked adobe walls, the tamarisk waved its feathery plumes of bluish green. The family burro was tied to its trunk, the chickens scratched under it, the dogs slept in its shade, the washing was hung on its branches. Father Latour had often remarked that this tree seemed especially designed in shape and color for the adobe village. The sprays of bloom which adorn it are merely another shade of the red earth walls, and its fibrous trunk is full of gold and lavender tints. Father Joseph respected the Bishop's eye for such things, but himself he loved it merely because it was the tree of the people, and was like one of the family in every Mexican household. ¹⁰

The following quotations illustrate the novelists' use of nature to create action in their stories. Father Latour is prompted to perform his devotions before a juniper tree.

When he opened his eyes again, his glance immediately fell upon one juniper which differed in shape from the others. It was not a thick-growing cone, but a naked, twisted trunk, perhaps ten feet high, and at the top it parted into two lateral, flat-lying branches, with a little crest of green in the center, just above the cleavage. Living vegetation could not present more faithfully the form of the cross. The traveller dismounted, drew from his pocket a much worn book, and barring his head, knelt at the foot of the cruciform tree. ¹¹

Jard Pendleton, the hero of Mr. O'Connor's Conquest, is lost in the desert near Tucson with very little water and food. The cactus helps to sustain him until he reaches his destination. "He found a great saguaro cactus, cut out chunks of pulp, squeezed the green water into his mouth. He drank until he could hold no more and the hole in the cactus was like a jagged wound."¹²

10. Death Comes For the Archbishop, p. 201

11. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

12. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, p. 4.

The flat, rugged mesa is a characteristic formation of the Southwest. Miss Cather is especially fond of describing it. Acoma, one of the oldest pueblos, is located on an almost inaccessible mesa. One of her most interesting descriptions is of this unusual spot. The Indians who live on this rock have had to adjust their life to it. Miss Cather describes the mesa between Laguna and Acoma in Death Comes for the Archbishop:

In all his travels the Bishop had seen no country like this. From the flat red sea of sand rose great rock mesas, generally Gothic in outline, resembling vast cathedrals. They were not crowded together in disorder, but placed in wide spaces, long vistas between. This plain might once have been an enormous city, all the smaller quarters destroyed by time, only the public buildings left,—piles of architecture that were like mountains. The sandy soil of the plain had a light sprinkling of junipers, and was splotted with masses of blooming rabbit brush,—that olive-coloured plant that grows in high waves like a tossing sea, at this season covered with a thatch of bloom, yellow as a gorse, or orange like marigolds.

This mesa plain had an appearance of great antiquity, and of incompleteness; as if, with all the materials for world-making assembled, the Creator had desisted, gone away and left everything on the point of being brought together, on the eve of being arranged into mountain, plain, and plateau.¹⁵

As a general thing, the natural background serves as a picturesque environment, coming to the foreground in a few instances to play a part in the action of the story. In Book II of Miss Cather's novel, The Professor's House, for example, Blue Mesa is almost a character in Tom Outland's story, and the conquering of it is the basis of this part of the novel:

15. Death Comes For the Archbishop, p. 95.

The mesa was our only neighbor, and the closer we got to it, the more tantalizing it was. It was no longer a blue, featureless lump, as it had been from a distance. Its sky-line was like the profile of a big beast lying down; the head to the north, higher than the flanks around which the river curved. The north end we could easily believe impassable—sheer cliffs that fell from the summit to the plain, more than a thousand feet. But the south flank, just across the river from us, looked accessible by way of the deep canyon that split the bulk in two, from the top rim to the river, then wound back into the solid curve so that it was invisible at a distance. . . . Some mornings it would loom up above the dark river like a blazing volcanic mountain. It shortened our days, too, considerably. The sun got behind it early in the afternoon, and then our camp would lie in its shadow. . . . No wonder the thing bothered us and tempted us; it was always before us, and was always changing. Black thunder-storms used to roll up from behind it and pounce on us like a panther without warning. The lightning would play round it and jab it so that we were always expecting it would fire the brush. I've never heard thunder so loud as it was there. The cliffs threw it back at us, and we thought the mesa itself, though it seemed so solid, must be full of deep canyons and caverns, to account for the prolonged growl and rumble that followed every crash of thunder. After the burst in the sky was over, the mesa went on sounding like a drum, and seemed itself to be muttering and making noises.¹⁴

Miss Dorothy Scarborough's The Wind depicts the strength and relentlessness of the wind in western Texas. Letty's life is one of misery and unhappiness because of the sand and wind which in the end gain complete control over her, ruining her beauty, and, finally, her mind. The author writes thus of the barren country:

Outside, nothing but vast, desolate stretches of sand and dead grass, with a few stalks of bear grass with its spears frayed by the wind, stunted mesquite bushes, cactus, and prickly pear!¹⁵

14. The Professor's House, pp. 191-193.

15. The Wind, p. 105.

The following quotation shows the constant work of the wind:

And still the wind blew. The wind had robbed her of her beauty, her youth, her hope, she muttered to herself. Would it some time take away her reason or her life? It shrilled round the house by night as by day—or was it the wind that she heard as she lay awake to listen to the shrill, incessant, relentless sound—the wind or the kenning coyotes?¹⁶

In the end Letty is unable to withstand the wind any longer.

Why struggle against a force that was a devil, and all-powerful? She had known all along that the wind would get her! . . . No use to fight any more! She would give up. The wind had risen almost to cyclonic fury now. Again the curtains of sand were rolled up from the plains to the sky, wavering, shifting, their gigantic folds writhing with hideous suggestion. What horrors did those curtains hide? With a laugh that strangled on a scream, the woman sped to the door, flung it open and rushed out. She fled across the prairies like a leaf blown in a gale, borne along in the force of the wind that was at last to have its way with her.¹⁷

Miss Alide Malkus describes the cruelty of the deserts encountered by the traders in her book Caravans to Santa Fe. The desert, with its intense heat and lack of water, is a powerful force that has to be conquered:

Then Steven learned what the desert was. The heat of ten thousand burning ovens rose from the scorched sands at his feet; for with the heavier load on his wagon he had to walk. Singing cicadas and locusts flew up and struck stingingly on the face. . . . He sang as he walked, humming gay little French airs, and St. Varain himself came running back and spoke to him, harshly, gently, soothingly, marching with him from time to time, while Steven showed him every now and again where he saw water.

16. Ibid., p. 272.

17. Ibid., pp. 336-337.

At high white noon there came a cessation of the slow moving, the mules slunk with drooping heads, the oxen lay in the shade of the wagons, and the men lay beneath. . . .

Stupor followed, a merciful stupor that descended upon man and beast alike, and that ended only with the reviving of sundown and the awakened torments of thirst and thickened tongues. . . .

A fine alkaline dust hung over the desert, settling upon men, mules, and wagons, and sifted in upon the face of the sleeping girl. Far away spirals of whirling dust appeared, and died down. The horizon was lost in a vague haze and the universe seemed to be all one feverish, infernal plain. 18

Perhaps nature is never regarded as more significant than when it is shown as affecting the lives of the Indians. Some of the Indian gods were suggested by the curious formations of rock. Mr. Dobie gives this description of a formation in the shape of an Indian's head in his book Coronado's Children.

Upon one of the peaks of Mount Franklin there stands out against the perennially clear sky the distinct outline of an Indian's head. "The spinster and the knitters in the sun" and the mantilla-muffled old women who squat in the plaza with palm out-stretched and a mumbled "pido por Dios" to every passerby know how that head came there and what it means.

It is the head of the Cheeteah, chief of an ancient tribe of Indians. For two hundred years he held the mountain land of his people secure against all invaders. 19

In Mr. Coolidge's Under the Sun we find the weird rock formations having an effect on the minds of the Indians. The following example illustrates the religious beliefs of the Indians built around the formation called The Spider:

18. Caravans to Santa Fe, pp. 80-85.

19. Page 187.

They halted at the fork, beneath the high rock called The Spider, and smoked a parting cigarette. Here the gods who carved out Tsayee with the horns of a mountain ram had left fantastic records of their handiwork, for besides the lofty Spider there was a monument still more exalted—the Face-on-rock, across the canyon. Surely the Holy Ones had meant that men should mark this place well, for on the tip of a buttressed spire they had put a monster's head, pointing straight at Many Horses' home. Like the profile of a great eagle or the grim-shut jaws of a lizard, it stared across at The Spider, and to Nahtahlish its medicine was good.²⁰

A similar illustration has been quoted on page six from

Death Comes For the Archbishop.

Mr. Fergusson in his novel Blood of the Conquerors notes how the natural elements peculiar to the Southwest prevent many changes in the trees, and in the people and their institutions.

In the dry clean air of the Southwest all things change slowly. Growth is slow and decay is even slower. The body of a dead horse in the desert does not rot but dessicates, the hide remaining intact for months, the bones perhaps for years. Men and beasts often live to great age. The pincn trees on the red hills were there when the conquerors came, and they are not much larger—only gnarled and twisted.

This strange inertia seems to possess institutions and customs as well as life itself. In the valley towns, it is true, the railroads have bought and thrown down all the conveniences and incongruities of civilization. But ride away from the railroads into the mountains or among the lava mesas and you are riding into the past. You will see little earthen towns, brown or golden or red in the sunlight, according to the soil that bore them, which have not changed in a century. You will see grain threshed by herds of goats and ponies driven around and around the threshing floors, as men threshed grain before the Bible was written. You will see Indian pueblos which have not changed materially since the brave days when Coronado came to Taos and the Spanish soldiers stormed the heights of Acoma. You will hear of strange Gods and the devils and of evil eye. It is almost as though this crystal-

line air were indeed a great clear crystal, impervious to time, in which the past is forever encysted.²¹

As the rock formations have a special significance to the Indians, so corn, the main agricultural crop mentioned in the novels, has a particular importance to them. Besides its food value, the corn enters into the religious manifestations of the Indians, and is the basis for some of their dances and ceremonials. Its meaning to the Indian is given in Laughing Boy and Under the Sun. Mr. La Farge writes of Laughing Boy and the growing corn:

It had always been a pleasure to him to work in the corn, to help make the green shafts shoot up, to watch them dance, and contrast their deep, full green with the harsh, faded desert. Among his people corn was a living thing; to make a field beautiful was not so far from making a fine bracelet, and far more useful. He drew the precious water into his field thriftily. At its corners he planted the four sacred plants.²²

Mr. Coolidge writes of the custom observed when the Navajos planted their corn:

The warm days of spring came when the Navajos, digging deep, planted their corn sun-wise in the form of a helix. This was a prayer to Johano-ai, the Bearer of the Sun, who in his ride across the skies would look down into their canyon and behold the symbol of his power. Every field must be blessed by the song of the medicine-man or the pumpkins and beans would not prosper and Nahtahlish rode far to perform the ceremonials and receive his accustomed reward.²³

Accounts of the treasure found in the Southwest—mines of silver, jewels of turquoise—are found in Coronado's Children and in Tombstone. By far the most interesting descriptions of the In-

21. Pages 152-153.

22. Laughing Boy, p. 113.

23. Under the Sun, pp. 106-107.

dians' work with silver and turquoise are found in Laughing Boy.

Mr. La Farge tells the process that the Indian follows:

You make your dies out of iron files, you get some small piece of iron from a trader for your anvil. In a hard wooden board you cut depressions for hammering out bosses and conchos and hemispheres for beads. When you have bought or made your tools, and have your skill, you go ahead. You make many bridles, buttons, hatbands. No two are alike, but they are all of the silver, or of silver and turquoise.²⁴

Lark: Miss Cather writes of a turquoise in The Song of the

In a moment a stone, soft and blue as a robin's egg, lay in the hard palm of his hand. It was a turquoise, rubbed smooth in the Indian finish, which is much more beautiful than the incongruous high polish the white man gives that tender stone. "I got this from her necklace. See the hole where the string went through? You know how the Indians drill them? Work the drill with their teeth."²⁵

Mr. Dobie has collected the stories of hidden treasures of the Southwest and included them in his book Coronado's Children. He tells the reader of the Secret of the Guadalupe Mountains:

Since the advent of English-speaking prospectors it has been the Apaches who knew the whereabouts of gold in the Guadalupe. . . . Their most famous leader, hard, untamable old Geronimo, used to say that the richest gold mines in the western world lay hidden in the Guadalupe.²⁶

In glancing over these pages, the reader will notice the illustrations have been selected for the most part from Miss Cather. She in particular has left a strong impression of the beauty, the grandeur, and the significance in human life of nature in the

24. Laughing Boy, p. 123.

25. Pages 117-118

26. Dobie, J. Frank, Coronado's Children, pp. 256-257.

in the Southwest. What she has written of with great artistry, numerous others have treated with varying degrees of success, depending upon their ability. All of these authors, however, seem aware of a certain peculiar relationship with nature of men in the region. Men realize the terror of the storms, the relentlessness of the desert, and feel themselves in the presence of a great spirit. This feeling is very admirably suggested in the following excerpt from Miss Cather's Death Comes For the Archbishop:

"A fine sunset, Father. See how red the mountains are growing; Sangre de Christ."

Yes, Sangre de Christ; but no matter how scarlet the sunset, those red hills never became vermilion, but more and more intense rose-carnelian; not the colour of living blood, the Bishop had often reflected, but the colour of the dried blood of saints and martyrs preserved in old churches in Rome, which liquefies upon occasion. ²⁷

Chapter II

THE INDIANS

The Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Americans are the races found in the novel dealing with the Southwest. The Indian has received far more attention from the novelists than any of the other races. Even though they are less progressive, they present more colorful material in their manner of living and in their customs. There is a certain exotic attraction to the white author in their chants, and in their religious, slow-moving dances. True to their characteristics, the Apaches, for instance, are always pictured as fierce and war-like, and the Navajos as beauty-loving, with high morals.

The Pueblos, however, are the most interesting of all Indian tribes, and one of the most frequently described. There are many, many small tribes belonging to this group. Their homes, or pueblos, are interesting and unusual habitations, and made for permanent living. Mr. A. F. Bandelier, an eminent archaeologist, wrote his conception of the primitive Tehua of San Juan and the Querues of Cochise on the canon of the Tyuonyi. He describes a primitive house in the pueblo in his book The Delight Makers.

About forty cells, separated from each other by walls of earth, carried up from the ground to a few inches above the terraced roof, constituted a ground-floor on which rested a group of not more than a dozen similar cells. The walls of this structure were of stones, irregularly broken and clumsily piled, but they were covered by a thick coating of clay so that nothing of the rough core remained visible. Instead of doors

or entrances, air-holes, round or oval, perforated these walls.

North of this building, a circular structure thirty feet in diameter rose a few feet only above the soil, like the upper part of a sunken cylinder. Its top was flat, and large flags of stone formed a rough staircase leading to its roof. In the center, a square opening appeared, but of which a tall beam, notched at regular intervals like a primitive ladder, protruded, and down which also the beam disappeared as if extended into the bowels of the earth. This edifice, half under ground, half above the soil, was what to-day is called in New Mexico an estufa.

The estufa was school, club-house, nay, armory to a certain extent. . . . Many of the prominent religious exercises took place in it. The estufa on special occasions became transformed into a temple for the clan who had reared it.¹

The following quotation from The Dragon Fly of Zuñi, a romantic story of the Zuñians, pictures to us the pueblo of Zuñi in modern times. The Americans visiting the pueblo notice the similarity between this old form of architecture and of that found in New York.

"What does this primeval apartment house remind you of, eh? See how it's set back? Terraced! Just a few centuries ahead of New York architecture, isn't it?" . . .

Leaning forward, she (Lolo'itsi) touched Esther on the shoulder and motioned up to the little nest perched on the summit of the community dwelling. . . . Against the deep enamel of the sky the pink plaster of Lolo'itsi's walls glowed like a peach from the valley orchard. On the parapet stood Lolo'itsi's bowls, rose and ocher and black.²

Although the Pecos pueblo today is small and unimportant, it once was a flourishing village. Mr. Dobie and Miss Cather describe the Pecos pueblo, situated in the interesting and beautiful

1. Bandelier, A. F., pp. 18-19.

2. Malkus, A. S., The Dragon Fly of Zuñi, pp. 36-37.

country around the Pecos River, and give a brief history of it.

Miss Cather writes:

It was late in the afternoon when he reached the pueblo, lying low on its red rock ledges, half-surrounded by a crown of fir-clad mountains, and facing a sea of junipers and cedars.

Jacinto's house was at one end of the living pueblo; behind it were long rock ridges of dead pueblos,—empty houses ruined by the weather and now scarcely more than piles of earth and stone. The population of the living streets was less than one hundred adults. This was all that was left of the rich and populous *cicuye* of Coronado's expedition. Then, by his report, there were six thousand souls in the Indian town. They had rich fields irrigated from the Pecos River. The streams were full of fish, and the mountain was full of game. The pueblo, indeed, seemed to lie upon the verdant mountains, like a favoured child. Out yonder, on the juniper-spotted plateau in front of the village, the Spaniards had camped, exacting a heavy tribute of corn and furs and cotton garments from their hapless host.³

In Coronado's Children, we find this account of the Pecos pueblo, which gives us a more complete impression of its past and of its great age.

Pecos village, seven thousand feet up in the mountains of New Mexico and thirty miles southeast of antique Santa Fe, was a pueblo of Indians centuries before Columbus dreamed of a sail. On his long march in search of the Gran Quivira, Coronado camped at the village, then called *Cicuye*; it was at that time the largest and the strongest of the pueblos. By 1620 the Spaniards had erected a church at the place, and in the great Pueblo revolt of 1680 the priest of this church was assassinated while fleeing the village. The Pecos Mexicans point to the red earth along the high mesa southwest of the Arroyo Pecos and say that the Priest's blood stained it. The Santa Fe Trail from Missouri twisted by Pecos village. In the quadrangle against the Pecos church the fated Texans of the Santa Fe expedition were, in 1841, herded as prisoners before the setting out on their two-thousand Journey of Death to the prisons of Mexico City. Meanwhile the Pecos In-

3. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 120, 124-125.

dians had declined until the remnant, only seventeen souls, "abandoned the crumbling ruins of the dwelling that had housed their ancestors for so many centuries" and went to Jemez eighty miles away, leaving the relics for legend to mystify and archaeology to excavate. The modern Pecos village is down under the hill from the ancient pueblo.⁴

In Death Comes for the Archbishop the priests, Father Vaillant and Father Latour, travel to various pueblos on their missions. Father Vaillant visits the Indian pueblo of Santo Domingo—"a large and prosperous pueblo, set among clean sand-hills, with its rich irrigated farm lands lying just below, in the valley of the Rio Grande."⁵

Father Latour journeys to the white pueblo of Isleta and learns the cause of its whiteness for which it had long been famous.

When he approached this pueblo of Isleta, gleaming white across a low plain of grey sand, Father Latour's spirits rose. It was beautiful, that warm, rich whiteness of the church and the clustered town, shaded by a few bright acacia trees, with their intense blue-green like the colour of old paper window-blinds.

The priest's house was white within and without, like all the Isleta houses, and was almost as bare as an Indian dwelling. . . . When the Bishop remarked that everything in this pueblo, even the streets, seemed clean, the Padre told him that near Isleta there was a hill of some white mineral, which the Indians ground up and used as whitewash. They had done this from time immemorial, and the village had always been noted for its whiteness.⁶

The Bishop goes to the pueblo of Acoma high on an inaccessible rock. He finds, on this barren mesa, the isolated village living its own life independent of the outside world.

4. Dobie, J. F., p. 222

5. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 52-53.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 84-85.

The top of the mesa was about ten acres in extent, the Bishop judged, and there was not a tree or a blade of green upon it; not a handful of soil, except the churchyard, held in by an adobe wall, where the earth for burial had been carried up in baskets from the plain below. The white dwellings, two and three storeyed, were not scattered, but huddled together in a close cluster, with no protecting slope of ground or shoulder of rock, lying flat against the flat, bright against the bright,—both the rock and the plastered houses threw off the sun glare blindingly.⁷

The Padre at Taos takes Father Latour to the pueblo of Taos which is again different from the others previously described. More picturesque and more advanced than their brother Indians, they present a striking contrast to the meager life of the Ácoma pueblo.

They stopped just west of the pueblo a little before sunset,—a pueblo very different from all the others the Bishop had visited; two large communal houses, shaped like pyramids, gold-coloured in the afternoon light, with the purple mountain lying just behind them. Gold-coloured men in white burnouses came out on the stairlike flights of roofs, and stood still as statues, apparently watching the changing light on the mountain. There was a religious silence over the place; no sound at all but the bleating of goats coming home through clouds of golden dust.

These two houses, the Padre told him, had been continuously occupied by this tribe for more than a thousand years. Coronado's men found them there, and described them as a superior kind of Indian, handsome and dignified in bearing, dressed in deer-skin coats and trousers like those of Europeans.⁸

Father Latour's visit to the pueblo of Laguna causes him to view another colorful spot near Isleta and Ácoma. The blue of the lake, the yellow adobe walls, and the white church present an interesting contrast in colors.

7. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 100-101.

8. Ibid., pp 151-152.

About the middle of the afternoon Jacinto pointed out Laguna in the distance, lying, apparently, in the midst of bright yellow waves of high sand dunes--yellow as ochre. As they approached, Father Latour found these were petrified sand dunes; long waves of soft, gritty yellow rock, shining and bare except for a few lines of dark juniper that grew out of the weather cracks,--little trees, and very, very old. At the foot of this sweep of rock waves was the blue lake, a stone basin full of water, from which the pueblo took its name.

The church was clean and the doors were open; a small white church, painted above and about the altar with gods of wind and rain and thunder, sun and moon, linked together in a geometrical design of crimson and blue and dark green, so that the end of the church seemed to be hung with tapestry. . . .

As the sun dropped low, the light brought the white church and the yellow adobe houses up into relief from the flat ledges.⁹

Miss Cather has written in her books Song of the Lark and The Professor's House an account of the ruins found in ancient pueblos.

Artistic feeling found expression in making pottery in most of the pueblo tribes. The pueblo of Zuñi is the largest of Pueblo Indian villages, and like the other pueblos, the Zuñians have clung with great tenacity to their ancient culture. The rarity and beauty of the pink clay makes Lolo'itsi and her daughter take unusual care in their molding. The Dragon Fly of Zuñi gives the most detailed account of the art of fashioning pottery which has been handed down to present-day Zuñians.

Lolo'itsi and Squash Blossom had broken up the chosen pieces which had been sorted from the

9. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 89-90.

best of the pink clay, crushing it as fine as possible with a grinding-stone, and now they were tossing it that the fine dust might settle down on the blanket and they could pick out all the pebbles, no matter how infinitesimal.

It was finally sifted to their satisfaction, mixed with pulverized shards of old pottery, and then came the wetting of the clay dust. When the pink paste had been worked smooth and perfect and even Lolo'itsi's strong and capable fingers were tired, Squash Blossom thrust her shapely hands into the mass. Presently Lolo'itsi tasted a bit critically. When it was so smooth that even she could not detect a grain of sand or grit in its texture, she took a great lump and rolled it between her palms into a long snake-like piece, nicely calculated to reach about the base of the old pot on which she was to build up a new jar. Round the edge she had laid it, pinching the ends neatly together, and then she rolled another length of clay. The sides of the jar grew, swelling outward, with no guide other than Lolo'itsi's practiced eye, till the half of the bowl was there.

Now a skilful shaping and smoothing, till the surface was like satin, and not a sign of the separate pieces remained. Then, with infinite care, came the upper half. This was to be a water jar, an olla, and two mouths and two handles must balance it, one on either side. For these Lolo'itsi rolled her coil of clay smaller and finer. The handles she shaped in her hands before attacking them. With an hour of patting and smoothing the pot's shape reached a state which the maker judged perfection, and Lolo'itsi set it out on the roof to dry in the sun. 10

Miss Malkus gives us a complete description of the process used by the Zunians in decorating their pottery.

She chose a good brush of yucca fiber and chewed it with extra care, that it might be as fine as camel's hair. She dipped it into a stone mortar filled with smooth paste made from a bit of precious colored rock, ground fine and mixed with yucca juice, that the color might neither run nor spread. Beside her stood several such stone palettes, filled with mineral paints. With infinite care and skill she laid the colors on. The rose bowl was finished. She set it aside and turned to the jars of commoner clay. A rich cream slip

she had laid over a bowl of grayish clay. When it was quite dry, she drew a pattern in black and green, working without a model, and when she had circled the bowl, the pattern joined perfectly.¹¹

Miss Cather in her novel the Song of the Lark describes the pottery found in the ruins of an old pueblo. The Indians lived so closely to nature, that they were greatly influenced by it in all phases of their life. In her book Miss Cather explains how they used patterns derived from nature.¹²

The religion of the Pueblo Indians is bound up in various ceremonials or dancing and singing. The familiar elements and sights in nature—the seasons, the planting of corn, and the harvest—form the basis of their religion. The Delight Makers contains many detailed accounts of Indian dances, and explanations of their significance and meaning to the Indian. The following quotation is a partial description of the ayash tyucotz. The Koshare or Delight Makers, who are really clowns, open the dance.

White is the symbolic paint of the Koshare; hence all the actors who have performed their several parts, including the coarse jesters, make up and represent the society of the Delight Makers, whose office it is to open the ayash tyucotz. . . . The greatest uproar prevails all about; the Koshare are outdoing themselves; they scatter delirious joy, pleasure, delight, broadcast among the people. . . .

The dance is over, and the Koshare depart. . . . On the disappearance of the last of their number, including the jesters, whoops and shouts fill the air again from without, and a second procession similar to the former marches into the courtyard. It is composed of different persons similarly costumed, except that their paint is bluish instead of white. No clowns accompany them. They go through a similar performance, and sing the same songs; but everything is done with gravity and

11. Ibid., p. 158.

12. Cather, Willa, Song of the Lark, p. 305.

even solemnity. . . . A civilized ball is professedly for enjoyment; an Indian dance is a religious act, a public duty.

The society who are now exercising their calisthenics in the court has much similarity to the Koshare, yet their main functions are distinct. They are called the Guirana. . . . While the Koshare are especially charged with the duty of furthering the ripening of the fruit, the Guirana assist the sprouting of the seed.¹³

An abundance of corn means life and happiness to the Indian, and many of the ceremonies are built around it. The Corn Festival is one of the most important ceremonials of the year for the Zuñians. Indians of various tribes gathered at Zuñi for the Corn Dance. The pueblo was gay with the bright-colored blankets of the Zuñians and their visitors. Everywhere the men, women, and children were busy washing and drying their long black hair in preparation for the Corn Festival. Miss Malkus describes their dress and dance.

Squash Blossom hurried down to the far end of the plaza where, under the hampone, the pavilion of evergreen boughs, she took her place among the Maidens of the Corn, who would begin to dance early in the afternoon. There the helpers were dressing the maidens, combing their hair, painting the men. . . .

The dancers were ready, and now the drums began to beat. The chorus sang and shook, and to the sweet, shrill piping of the flutists came eight dancers, the Muluktakia. They passed out into the plaza on a path of golden meal sprinkled before them. Turning this way and that, they dropped the many-colored grains of corn. . . . The Corn Maidens now tossed their long bangs modestly over their eyes and moved in perfect unison out into the dance. Their shiny black heels lifted with one accord. . . . The Corn Maidens raised their hands in supplication for rain for the ripening corn. . . . The American nodded down towards the line of small, black-soled feet shuffling in unison up and down, up and down, in the dust of the plaza.¹⁴

13. Bandelier, A. F., The Delight Makers, pp. 134, 136-137, 142-143.
 14. Malkus, A. S., The Dragon Fly of Zuñi, pp. 34-35.

Late in November the Zuñians prepared for the Shalako ceremonies, the chief festival of the year. Various ceremonies were performed by the men in the Kiva before the general celebration. The Zuñians were different from many of the other pueblos in that they made sand paintings like the Navajos and were unusually skillful in sleight-of-hand tricks.

Before the altar to their gods lay a sand painting that resembled an unusually beautiful and delicately tinted Persian rug; a thing of subtle pinks and fawn-color, intricately figured in sooty black.

Blue Feather gazed at it with appreciation and interest, for the pueblos of the Rio Grande valley had no art like this. A Priest of the Bow, nude except for a skin covering and a foxtail that hung down behind, danced before the altar, his weirdly painted body twisting in the fire-light. He waved two feathers through the air in intricate movements, and stooping at the height of his dance, he touched the heavy jar that stood before the altar. After passing the plumes above the jar, he lifted it, to the amazement and incredulity of the boy from Zia, right off the floor with the very tips of the feathers. For the fraction of a moment the heavy pot actually hung suspended in the air, and then settled lightly back in its place. . . . Young as he was, Kuma'aa was a juggler of consummate skill, and now he proceeded to perform some rare tricks of twisting and coiling the rope, ending finally by severing the yucca with a knife in mid-air, merely by hurling knife and rope at each other.¹⁵

There is something of the Greek element in the joy and pleasure the Indians have in the races run at their Corn Festival held in June. The other important event is the beautiful Hopi Butterfly Dance—a ceremonial of their religion. The Dragon Fly of Zuñi contains a description of both.

15. Ibid., 92-93.

All day long the people of Zuni had danced in the big plaza—men, women, youths, and children. Babies of two and three toddled at the end of the line of the Praise Givers, their tiny moccasins following the movements of the feet of their elders. . . . Now the races were coming. They settled on their lines at either end of the long courses where they were to run, Zuni's goal at one end, that of Hopi at the other. . . . The runners of Zuni balanced on the goal, stripped except for their paint and their loincloths. An old man went back and forth behind them brushing their heels with a feather, to lend wings to their feet, that they might fly swiftly to their goal. . . .

This was to be one of the two big events of the day. The other would be the Hopi Butterfly Dance, when the boys and girls who cared for one another might openly show their preference and choose each other. . . . She saw that their hair was wound properly around the curved hoops, the "squash blossoms", which form the headdress of the maidens of Hopi and are so like great dark butterflies that the dance took its name from the maidens' heads. Kasineli, all smiles and friendly giggles, fastened the turquoise tablita, the wooden headdress, with its little fluffy plumelets and its coral streamers, to Squash Blossom's shining head and stood back to admire. . . . The youths and maidens who were to dance the Hopi Butterfly stepped from their evergreen pavilions and stood facing one another while the chorus sang:

"Now for corn blooms we wrestle,
Now for bean blooms we wrestle,
We are youths 'mid the corn,
Playing with Butterfly Maidens."

The maidens moved forward modestly, their eyes downcast, feet barely moving in time to the beat of the drums, hands rigidly holding little sprays of spruce or hemlock. They could not see their partners. . . . She laid her palm in his hard grasp and they moved away, her funny little shuffle furnishing a modest foil to his manly prancing. To the white visitors it was a gay bit of primitive soft-shoe dancing, but to the Zunians it was the prayer and the consummation of life, the song of the Children of the Sun.¹⁶

16. Ibid., pp. 204-205, 207, 209-210, 213.

The Indians have many superstitions and legends. One of the most persistent legends is that of the Pecos pueblo concerning a snake kept hidden for one of their mysterious ceremonies. In Coronado's Children, Mr. Dobie tells of this legend in his chapter In the Sunshine of the Pecos.

Somewhere in the mountains about Pecos, according to belief among both Indians and Mexicans, a fire is kept constantly burning in a cave awaiting the return of Montezuma from the south, though a giant serpent sometimes devours the pious tenders of the fire. . . . According to other Pecosenos, Montezuma never left their village at all.¹⁷

Miss Cather uses this legend in her book Death Comes For the Archbishop. The Bishop's Indian guide had led him to a cave, seeking shelter from a snowstorm. Afterwards when the Bishop hears additional stories of the snake legend, he realizes that probably he has been in this famous, but unknown cave. The following quotation illustrates the Indian's behaviour.

The air in the cave was glacial, penetrated to the very bones, and he detected at once a fetid odour, not very strong but highly disagreeable. Some twenty feet or so above his head the open mouth let in grey daylight like a high transom.

While he stood gazing about, his guide was intensely preoccupied in making a careful examination of the floor and walls. At the foot of the ladder lay a heap of half-burned logs. There had been a fire there, and it had been extinguished with fresh earth,— a pile of dust covered what had been the heart of the

17. Dobie, J. F., p. 230.

Author's Note, p. 333: The Pecos Indians kept the sacred fire for Montezuma burning until 1840, when the remnants of the village moved to Jemiz. — Bandelier, A. F., "A Visit to the Aboriginal Ruins in the Valley of the Pecos," Papers of the Archaeological Institute of America, Boston, 1881, p. 112.

In Willa Cather's recent Death Comes For the Archbishop, a noble and beautiful novel, use is made of the secret fire-chamber.

fire. Against the cavern wall was a heap of pinon faggots, neatly piled. After he had made a minute examination of the floor, the guide began cautiously to move this pile of wood, taking the sticks up one by one, and putting them in another spot. . . .

"Padre," said the Indian boy, "I do not know if it was right to bring you here. This place is used by my people for ceremonies and is known only to us. When you go out from here, you must forget."

The Bishop kept his word, and never spoke of Jacinto's cave to anyone, but he did not cease from wandering about it. . . . At home again, in his own house, he still felt a certain curiosity about this ceremonial cave, and Jacinto's puzzling behaviour. It seemed almost to lend colour of probability to some of those unpleasant stories about the Pecos religion. He was already convinced that neither white men nor Mexicans in Santa Fe understood any thing about Indian beliefs or the workings of the Indian mind. 18

The religion of the Indians was made up of the observance of ceremonies. These Indians of the Southwest had their own primitive ideas of another world, and peculiar burial customs of their own. These ideas and customs seem matters of superstition to us, but they were very real and full of meaning to them. The book Delight Makers relates in detail the burial customs of the Queres.

Four days the redman fasts or does penance; four days he mourns, for that is the time required by the soul to travel from the place where it has been liberated from the thralls of earthly life to the place of eternal felicity. At the time of which we are speaking, the body was still cremated, and with it everything that made up the personal effects of the deceased. . . . In this manner the deceased was accompanied by his worldly goods, in the shape of smoke and steam, through that air in which the soul travelled toward Shipapu, in the far-distant mythical North. . . . Therefore the survivors placed on the spot where the body had rested for the last time an effigy of the dead, a wooden carving, and covered it with a piece

of cloth; while by the side of this effigy they deposited food and water, in order that neither cold, hunger, nor thirst might cause the travelling spirit to suffer. . . . To protect himself against them a small war-club is added to the other necessaries, and to render the journey safe beyond a doubt a magic circle is drawn, encompassing the statuette with a circle of cruciform marks, imitating the footprints of the shashka, or road-runner. As these crosses point in all four directions, it is supposed that evil spirits will become bewildered and unable to pursue the soul in transit. At the end of the fourth day, with many prayers and ceremonies, the circle is obliterated, and the other objects, including the effigy, are taken away by the shamans to be disposed of in a manner known to them alone. During the period of official mourning the loud wail was carried on incessantly, or at least at frequent intervals; fasting was practised; the women wept, sobbed, screamed, and yelled.¹⁹

Severe punishment and cruelty have always been characteristic faults of the Indian. These examples from the books The Delight Makers and The Dragon Fly of Zuñi serve to illustrate this characteristic. Witchcraft was always regarded as a serious offense, and no punishment was cruel or ignominious enough to serve as chastisement for this crime. Lallo, a young Indian, has been accused of bewitching a child of the pueblo.

"He is hanging over the beam now. They will end his daylight."

The newcomer could scarcely repress the shudder that shook him at mention of that torture. The older men could talk of nothing else. It had been some time since such a case of sorcery had furnished them food for discussion. . . .

Na'iuchi spoke with fearful authority, for he was also a cacique of the pueblo. "When he had hung by his thumbs for two hours," he continued, "he spoke. The moment he confessed she became better. . . . But unless she is cured by morning. . . ." The unspoken threat hinted at more terrible punishment to come. . . .

19. Bandelier, A. F., pp. 347-348.

Dragging the heavy ladder over, she dropped it down inside, but Lallo did not look up. His ankles and wrists were bound with yucca. His thighs were tied to a stake driven into the ground behind him. . .

"Oh, brother," wept Squash Blossom, "why did you tell them you were a sorcerer?"

"That's what they wanted to hear," he replied defiantly. "And what should I gain by having my fingers broken for life, my sinews twisted until I am no good for any kind of work?"²⁰

Say, an important character in The Delight Makers, has used black corn and owl's feathers, instruments of witchcraft, to rid herself of a fever. If the pueblo finds this out, she will be punished severely.

"I know of nothing evil," she stammered, "unless it be bad men."

"And yet you have used owl's feathers!" . . .

"Have the Koshare sent you here father?"

"No," was the gloomy answer; "but if the old men come to me and say, 'kill the witch,' I must do it. For you know I am Maseua, head-war-chief, and whatever the principals command I must do, even if it takes the life of my only child!"²¹

Unlike the Pueblo Indians, with their permanent homes, the Navajos roamed through the country. Their homes were different, too. Each Navajo family lived in its own hogan. Although the Navajos were nomadic, they always returned to the Canyon de Chelly for shelter. Miss Willa Cather makes this contrast in her book

Death Comes For the Archbishop:

Though this nomad people were much slower to adopt white man's ways than the home-staying Indians who dwelt in pueblos, and were much more indifferent to missionaries and the white man's religion, Father Latour felt a superior strength in them. There

20. Malkus, A. S., The Dragon Fly of Zuñi, pp. 11, 13, 16, 20.

21. Bandelier, A. F., The Delight Makers, pp. 35.

was purpose and conviction behind their inscrutable reserve; something active and quick, something with an edge.²²

They were more warlike than the peace-loving dwellers of the pueblos, and lived a simple life in their huts or "hogans," going out to fight wars to protect themselves, and returning to their work with silver and turquoise. Their women tended to the sheep and to their weaving. At certain seasons of the year the Navajo bands gathered at the Canyon de Chelly for their religious ceremonies. The Navajos lived in the 'trail of beauty'—hozoji—their prayer which means so much to them.

'Hozoji, hozoji, hozoji, hozoji!

'Dawn Boy, Little Chief,
 Let all be beautiful before me as I wander,
 All beautiful behind me as I wander,
 All beautiful above me as I wander,
 All beautiful below me as I wander.
 Let my eyes see only beauty
 This day as I wander.
 In beauty,
 In beauty,
 In beauty,
 In beauty!²³

In Laughing Boy we have a description of the modern Navajo at work with his silver, and his fine appreciation of beauty.

He eased his soul by shaping the half-stubborn, half-willing metal. It is a matter of patience, from the lump or the coins to the bar, from the bar to the bracelet. This, the most precious and beautiful of metals, is the easiest to work. This is a gift from the gods. Slow, slow, under successive light strokes the bar becomes longer, flatter, thinner: it is struck and it grows towards its appointed shape.

22. Pages 295-296.

23. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, p. 294.

I am impatient these days, I get tired of the finishing. One must have one's mind made up to it from the start, from four Mexican coins to the finely finished ornament; one must see it as it will be, and not stop short of what he has seen. . . . He was curving the strip of flattened silver. This bracelet is coming out just as I thought of it. One must know his design before he starts; when this strip was still four coins, I knew that there would be tracks pointing one way from each end to the center, clouds at each end, and that stone where the tracks meet. How do I know it? Not all men can; what is it I have? . . . The turquoise is the important thing in this bracelet. I looked at it and saw the setting for it.²⁴

A splendid account is given, also, of Slim Girl's weaving of her blankets, and how her thoughts are inter-twined with her threads as she plies them back and forth across her loom. She realizes that she has found a new and unexpected pleasure in her weaving.²⁵

Like the Pueblo Indians, the Navajo punishments are very severe, especially on unfaithfulness. This illustration is given in Laughing Boy when Laughing Boy discovers Slim Girl has not been true to him:

He notched the fourth arrow meticulously, drew to the head, released. The twang of the string echoed and reechoed over great spaces. At the sound, he became aware of agony pent up behind his mind like high waters behind a too-slight dam, about to break through and carry away. At the same time, with the instant of releasing the string, he saw her open right hand pass across the face of the bow, her left arm rise. Now she stood, smiling stiffly, her eyes her own again. Her right hand was still in front of the bow in a stiff, quaint gesture. There was blood on the tips of the fingers. The arrow stood, through nearly to the feathers, in her left forearm.²⁶

24. La Farge, Oliver, pp. 227, 229.

25. Ibid., pp. 121, 123, 228.

26. Ibid., p. 251.

Navajos do not live in villages, but live unto themselves in their own hogans. Under the Sun tells how they are under a disadvantage in an attack by an enemy, and how they seek the Canyon de Chelly for refuge.

From three ways at once the dreaded warriors of the south had invaded their country at night; and at dawn in small bands they had sought out each lone hogan, for the Navajos do not live in villages. Every man for himself they scatter our through the cedars, hiding their hogans in little canyons where there is water and grass for their herds; and only the signal smokes and the tall columns from burning houses gave notice that an enemy approached.

Whole families had been cut off and killed by the vengeful Apaches in the sight of those who fled on before. . . . And now, sobbing with terror, still looking behind, they pressed on up Tsayee, their stronghold. On the flat below Talking Rock, beneath the menacing Spider and the grim-visaged Face-on-the-rock, they crowded in until no more could find room; and there all night while their people made camp the war-chiefs sat in council.²⁷

Two contrasting pictures are given by the authors of Under the Sun and Laughing Boy. The former writes an idyllic account of the life of the Navajos in the summer. The latter depicts the ugliness and sordidness of the life in a winter hogan in modern times. However, they both show the rigorous customs observed by the Indians.

But as he lay idly in his doorway watching the home-life of the Indians, it seemed to have more and more charm. Every morning at dawn the men and children ran their races and plunged into the rippling brook; and then, after breakfast, they returned to their endless games—playing at war, shooting at marks, racing their horses.

27. Coolidge, Dane, Under the Sun, pp. 83-84.

In the hogan the word of the mother was law, the sheep and goats were her property; and after cooking the meals she could return to weaving blankets while her slaves carried the water and wood. As for the men, they did nothing but engage in warlike sports and tend to their horses and cattle. And always there were dances and invitations to distant feasts—and then another raid or hunt. The children were never punished, more than to threaten them with wicker owls hung as bugaboos in the darkness of the hogan; and though they ran about at will, they still obeyed their parents, and were half-spoiled by caresses and love.²⁸

They lost no time over the horses, and crawled gladly into the smoky, fetid, warm hogan. There were the man, two women, four children between eight and fifteen, and two dogs. The space was a circle some twelve feet in diameter—the average size; with the people, the fire in the middle, saddles, cooking utensils, a loom and blankets, it was well filled. . . . The elder wife served them a pot of boiled mutton and corn, with a chunk of the unusual tough wheat bread. . . . It was a long time since he had been confined in a winter hogan, with its crowded things and people and close-packed smells. Their house at Los Palos was always aired. . . . He went outside only on rising, when they all rolled in the snow (it had never occurred to him to warn Slim Girl of that custom, but she followed suit without a sign). . . . Then there were the lice. His wife had rid him of them, conquering his sincere belief that they were a gift from Old Couple in the World Below to enable people to sleep. He had rated that as one of her minor magics.²⁹

The place of woman in the Navajo hogan is one of importance. She owns and tends to the sheep, the main source of wealth, and, in fact, rules the hogan. The man's place is to protect the hogan, prepare for and fight wars. In the previous quota-

28. Coolidge, Dane, Under the Sun, pp. 53-54.

29. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, pp. 193, 195.

tion from Under the Sun, the duties of each in the hogan are described. In the novel Windsinger, we find a description of Clear-Eyed One's care and ability to accumulate more wealth.³⁰

The Navajos are very superstitious about their hogans. If anyone has died in one, the Navajo believes that it is sacred, and that he must not enter it. When Slim Girl and Laughing Boy are seeking shelter, she is disgusted to think that he will not find refuge in a deserted hogan.

"There's a hogan." She pushed forward.

"Hogay-gahn, bad. Do not stop here!"

"What do you mean?"

"Don't you see it is deserted? Don't you see the hole in the north side? Some one has died here. Come along."

She sighed in anger, gritted her teeth, swore under her breath, and turned her horse back. Nothing on earth would make a Navajo stop there; he would not even use the dry timbers for firewood to save his life. Well, it was part of the rest.³¹

The description of the burial of Windsinger's father illustrates their belief in the custom of burning the hogan of the dead.

At the foot of the cliff they had buried the Man Who Rode a Black Horse, buried him with all his silver and coral and turquoise that he might go unashamed to his fathers. Smoke rose from the hogan which they had fired, obedient to a command given long ago to the People, when the wind whispered in the ear of one bereaved, saying,

"Go not back into the hogan. You have had sorrow there."³²

30. Gillmor, Frances, pp. 103, 105.

31. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, p. 192.

32. Gillmor, Frances, Windsinger, p. 24.

Detailed accounts are given of the Navajo ceremonials and religious customs in the three books dealing solely with the Navajo—Laughing Boy, Windsinger, and Under the Sun. The use of sand painting in their ceremonials is peculiar to the Navajo. More accounts are given in Windsinger than any of the other novels. On his death-bed Windsinger hears his son sing the chants he had taught him:

Now Windsinger stayed out of the hogan while a younger voice gave brief commands for the making of the sand painting—"Blue," "Yellow," "Black". He sat silent through the chanting and heard a younger voice carrying on from song to song. But he knew again the quiteness of the chanted prayers as he had known it singing. Quiteness as the afternoon light slanted through the smokehole on the colored sands.³³

As a youth, Windsinger learns the chants and ritual of the Navajo ceremonies. An account is given in Windsinger of the first time he leads a chant for a sick man:

Now at the great chants he was often with the men who were making prayer sticks, learning to fashion them and place them according to the will of the gods. He learned designs and colors as the singer gave his orders and the bright sands fell. Finally under the tutelage of an old man singing in the fire light, he began to learn the chanted prayers. With eyes half closed and body tense, he sang the songs of the Wind Chant in their order.

The four days passed, and Windsinger, gravely exultant, led his first chant. Now indeed he was a man, in the presence of gods. . . . The song lifted to the beat of rattles and fell like a sigh into stillness. Steadily the voice of the young wind singer move into the new song. And the gods were near him.

He took from his bag four sacred feathers and pressed them with low cries against the feet and hands and head of the sick old man. The fire sank low. In the shadow the beat of rattles and the throbbing song went on. Darkness and song in the hogan--and the presence of the gods. . . .

33. Ibid., p. 212.

Song after song in their order he lifted, for the man who had used as fuel the branches of a wind-felled tree. Song after song, until body and mind had lost all memory and desire. In that hogan he was a priest of the wind rite, chanting the songs of the gods.³⁴

One of the most interesting accounts of Navajo dancing is found in Laughing Boy. We learn here the etiquette of the dance, and especially that governing the relations of partners toward each other.³⁵

The customs developed around the wooing and marriage ceremonies are primitive and differ widely from those of the white man. The interesting description of the wooing of the Navajos in Under the Sun is the most vivid of all the accounts found in the novels read in the preparation of this paper.

In the lead rode an old warrior whom Many Horses greeted warmly, then a man and his wife in gala costume; and in the rear a couple of boys drove up a band of fifteen ponies, which they staked before the door of the hogan. Then the spacious house was cleared and a long talk began, the purpose of which was not far to seek.

Some one of the many warriors who had been smitten with Debeth's charms had sent the old man to ask for her hand and to dilate on his valor and hardihood. The husband and wife were his parents, the band of horses was the price offered, and now the bargaining was on. . . .

According to custom, four days were allowed for the girl to make up her mind; and when she had decided, if she wished to accept the husband, she fed his horses and led one to his door. But if, despite the pleadings of her parents, she refused to become his wife; then quietly, in the night, the staked horses were turned loose and allowed to stray back home.³⁶

34. Gillmor, Frances, p. 70-71, 90-91.

35. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, pp. 7-11.

36. Coolidge, Dane, pp. 48-49.

The treatment of the marriage customs of the Navajos differs in the three novels about the Navajos. In Windsinger the emphasis is upon the marriage meal, in Laughing Boy, a marriage without the customary attending relatives is emphasized, and special emphasis is given to the mother-in-law taboo in Under the Sun.

The strongest taboo among the Navajo people is that which relates to the mother-in-law. Rather than meet her on the trail, if by accident she should approach, the young son-in-law will risk his life climbing the cliffs or turn and flee like the wind. The whole family, and neighbors and friends, make it their business to shout out warnings in case such a meeting is imminent; for, if they meet face to face, they believe the mother-in-law will die and the son-in-law be stricken blind. Yet, despite this strange fear, mother and daughter may still meet and the husband send presents to his mother-in-law. But the young wife, when she is married, is absolute mistress in her hogan—it and the children belong to her.³⁷

Each author writing solely of the Navajos gives his version of the marriage ceremony. Although married without relatives, Slim Girl and Laughing Boy are married according to the usual ritual, i. e., by eating the marriage meal. Mr. La Farge writes as follows:

Yellow Singer's wife handed a medicine basket to Slim Girl, which she filled with the corn mush she had prepared. The singer placed it in the correct place on the floor of the house. Laughing Boy entered carefully. He was thinking hard about what he was doing; he was putting forth every effort to make it good and beautiful. He thought about the gods, about Slim Girl, about the future. It was all confused, because he was excited. . . . Now Yellow Singer's wife was leading her in. . . .

She sat on the rug beside him. Yellow Singer divided the mush in four directions. Now he was praying for them. . . . Now they partook of the

37. Ibid., p. 152.

yellow corn, ceremonially, and now it was Laughing Boy's turn to make a prayer. He sang the prayer to House God with solemn emphasis:

'House made of dawn light,
House made of evening light,
House made of dark cloud,
House made of he-rain,
House made of dark mist,
House made of pollen. . . .
In beauty it is finished,
In beauty it is finished.'

The confident, solemn voice ceased. He looked at Slim Girl. Now they were married 'in a beautiful way.' It might seem a little furtive, that ceremony without relatives, almost without guests, but now the gods had married them.³⁸

A contrasting version is given in Under the Sun. Gilpin and Debeth are married with the customary ritual, surrounded by friends and relatives.³⁹

The ceremonial basket was placed before the couple, with the closed strand pointing towards the east. Then with the pollen of white corn—from which woman was formed—Chief Many Horses drew a line across the basket, from the east to the west and back. With the pollen of yellow corn—from which man was formed—he drew a line across the basket from south to north and back, and a circle around the whole. The porridge being now prepared he placed the water jar before Debeth, who dipped out a gourdful and poured it over Bajo Sol's hands while he went through the ceremonial washing. Then he dipped for her and when this ceremony was finished the basket was set before them.

Like an automaton, Gilpin reached out and took a pinch of the porridge from the exact spot where the line to the east began, and put it into his mouth. Debeth followed him, dipping and eating as he progressed from the south to the west and then to the north; and when the circle was complete they were considered to be married and everyone called down a blessing. Invocations were made to Esdzanadle, the Turquoise Goddess,

38. Laughing Boy, pp. 87-89.

39. Coolidge, Dane, Under the Sun, p. 155.

whose home is in the western ocean; to the sun and moon, the rain and the dawn and all the beneficent deities. Then the basket of porridge was passed around like a wedding cake and each guest claimed his share.⁴⁴

The account of the marriage meal in Windsinger is comparable to that given in the previous quotation. Its preparation by the bride's mother is described in detail.⁴⁰

By far the most poignant and touching burial scene is described in Laughing Boy. Slim Girl dies from exposure, and is buried by her husband, who is alone. Laughing Boy goes through the burial ritual for his wife with minute care and with intense pathos. For four days he keeps vigil over her grave and on the fourth day he takes his bath of purification.

The farthest corner of the cliffs made a niche about twelve feet square, in which the rocks came to the ground sheer, or slightly overhanging, without talus. Here he carried her, and set her in the farthest recess. He walked carefully, avoiding bushes, observing all the requirements, in so far as was possible for a single individual. Over her he put her blankets, at her head, food, by her hands, her weaving tools, cooking implements and coral and coins. As he arranged her, he prayed. Then he looked about for fair-sized slabs, of which there were plenty round-about, in the talus. He began to bring them, covering her. He had placed the first few, at her feet, when he straightened up and stood still. He walked to his own pile of goods and looked at it. Returning to her, he found her arm under the blankets, and took from it a thin gold bracelet that she had bought in California. From his own goods he set aside the finest saddle-blanket of her weaving, an old trade blanket, a coffee-pot and coffee. Bundling all the rest together, he carried it to the grave and spread it over her. Slowly he took off his heavy silver belt, his turquoise and coral necklace, his two bracelets, his garnet ring and his turquoise ring, his earrings of turquoise matrix, laying each one gently upon the heap. Remembering something, he went to his pony, took off his silver-mounted bridle, and added it.

40. Gillmor, Frances, Windsinger, pp. 95-96.

With difficulty he forced the thin gold circle up over his right hand, taking some of the skin with it: it was but little wider than his wrist, it would not come off easily. Then he continued covering her. . . .

It was nearly dark when he had laid the last stone, and he began to be aware that he was weary. Blowing cigarette smoke four ways, he stood in prayer for a minute or two. He untethered her pony and led it into the niche. It stood patiently by the pile while he notched his arrow and spoke the requisite words. The string twanged, the shaft struck, the pony leapt and fell partly over the tomb. Those clear-cut things, happening rapidly, were out of tempo with everything else; they put a period to it.

Now began the four days of waiting. But just waiting was not enough; there had been no women to wail for her, no outcry of bereaved relatives; he would make it a vigil, all four days should be one prayer. . . .

He built his sweat-lodge, and, since it was hard to get mud out of the frozen ground, covered it with blankets. In the mid-afternoon he put in the hot rocks, stripped, and entered. He had made it good and hot; he sat in there chanting as long as he could stand it, then he burst out, rolled in the snow, and dressed hastily. He felt infinitely better. He looked at the sun, low in the west; the fourth days were ended. . . . As he rode away he repeated, 'In beauty it is finished, in beauty it is finished. Thanks.'⁴¹

The material on the Apaches is not so extensive in the books used for this study as that found on the Navajos.⁴² They are a more warlike tribe than the Navajos, and live in wickiups instead of hogans. Almost all the information given about them is about their methods of warfare. However, this brief description of an Apache camp is found in the novel In Those Days:

They first saw the Apache camp from a hill top. It was in a flat green valley walled close with pine and rock, Round yellow-thatched Apache huts,

41. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, pp. 280, 283, 295-296.

42. A new book has been published recently by Will Levington Comfort, Apache.

scattered in three groups, looked like little haystacks from above and they could see figures moving and a great herd of horses and mules in the lower valley with mounted men on guard.⁴³

Under the Sun draws a contrast between the Navajos and the Apaches in warfare and also in the way they treat their slaves. The cruelty of the Apaches is described and emphasized.

Knowing the nature of the Apaches he had not thought of yielding to them, for to do so meant torture and slow death; but the Navajos, keeping slaves, treated their captives more kindly and he had decided to surrender to their chief.

And it seemed to him the Apaches were possessed of a sterner courage than any of the Navajos, save Nahtahlish. The Navajos were raiders, brave when strategy could not win, but the Apaches were terrifying in their daring. Whether they charged his stone fort or fought the Navajos hand to hand to make their way back to their horses they had shown a reckless courage in the face of death that only the white man could match.⁴⁴

Mr. O'Connor in Conquest points out the dependence of the Apache warriors on their chief in battle. If he is killed, the spot where he had been killed is shunned by the others. It is a place of horror and terror for them.

"Chance, hell! I knew that Apaches always streak when their chief gets killed," was the laconic answer.

With Casteneda's aid Pendleton hung the body of the chief to a mesquite tree not far from camp, and until the depot was completed and the party had moved on there was no more trouble with the Apaches. The savages avoided the place with superstitious fear: the locality where a chief had fallen was for them taboo.⁴⁵

43. Fergusson, Harvey, p. 74.

44. Coolidge, Dane, Under the Sun, p. 9.

45. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, pp. 18-19.

A summary of the characteristics and of the religion of the Pima Indians is given in Conquest. In Jard Pendleton's travels through Arizona, he lived for a while with the Pima Indians and learned of their habits and customs.

They often brought game and tobacco to the peaceful Pimas who had their villages near Arronville. As they were both natural linguists, they soon picked up enough Pima to hold conversations with the half-naked bucks. Hours they spent squatting on the ground in the shade of the brush huts, eating, smoking, gossiping. Both of the men were members of civilized races, but they found the life of the Pimas strangely agreeable. The climate was hot, but as the savages went practically naked the heat bothered them but little. The women did most of the work, including, indeed, a great part of that done in the fields. The bucks kept the irrigation ditches in order and did the heaviest field work, but the ditches had been soundly constructed in the beginning and aside from cleaning out the collected sand now and then they had little to do. Most of the time they lay in the sun, gossiped, and made weapons. Weapon-making was a man's task, as they had a taboo which held that a weapon made by a woman would not kill an Apache.

Their religion consisted mostly of a series of taboos, which both Pendleton and Casteneda soon learned and respected. They had a flock of idols which represented their gods, but the tribe was a slave to none of them and would kick them outdoors as quickly as they would oust a stray dog. The tribe had become Christians over a century before when the Franciscan Fathers had been active thereabouts. But they had gone heathen again.⁴⁶

Mr. William O. Stoddard wrote a novel about the Lipans and the white men at the time of the Alamo called The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: a Story of the Alamo, but little local color is given about the Indian. The white men and their Lipan guides find the sacrificial altar to the Aztec gods; however, the Lipan chief feels that they should forget what they have seen:

46. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, p. 21

He said more, but his entire meaning seemed to be that it was a well-understood doctrine that any white adventurer learning the secrets of the Aztec gods was a doomed man. They would surely follow him up and kill him. It was not so bad for a full-blooded Indian, but even a Lipan would do well to forget anything he had heard or seen that belonged to the bloody mysteries of the evil "manitous" of the old race. It was evidently a deeply rooted superstition, and Red Wolf was quite ready to accept it fully.⁴⁷

A few of the novelists have written on the social relationship between the Indian and the Americans. However, Mr. La Farge is the only one who has dwelt on this aspect of the Indian material to any extent. Laughing Boy is the only novel which shows only the harmful effect of the American influence on the Indians. Although Mr. La Farge says in his Introductory Note that he has not written his book as an indictment of the Americans' treatment of the Indians, this attitude, nevertheless, is decidedly manifest. In this quotation from Laughing Boy we see Laughing Boy's dim realization of the harm resulting from American contacts and especially from whiskey.

He saw a very clear picture of Yellow Singer and his wife as he had first met them, sober, and reaching for the bottle; he saw the other scarecrow Indians he had met in this American's country. He looked at them, and behind them saw incoherently the great, ominous cloud of the American system, something for which he had no name or description.

That was another thing about which Slim Girl had been right, that drink. She knew how to tame it. She had the secret of how to prevent American knowledge from doing harm; she made it serve a good purpose. . . .

Yellow Singer and all his kind were bad. They were like an offensive smell. But a smell came from a carcass. Those people were the way they were because of the Americans. The town of Los Palos in the drenching sunlight, quiet, dead-looking beside its irrigated fields. What was it? Something in the air, something

47. Stoddard, William O., The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: A Story of the Alamo, p. 217.

that perverted the world. Where they were was no place for Earth People. They had done something to Slim Girl, one could see that, but she seemed to have risen above it. But they were bad for her, too. It was beyond him.⁴⁸

Laughing Boy is talking to Slim Girl about the American system. He is trying to understand the Americans and their methods. He knows that they do some good, but, it seems to him, more harm than benefit comes from them.

'I do not understand them, those people. They stop us from raiding the Stone House People and the Mexicans, which is a pity; but they stop the Utes and the Comanches from raiding us. They brought in money and silver, and those goods for our clothes. They bring up water out of the ground for us. We are better off than before they came.

'But yet it does not matter whether they do good things or bad things or stupid things, I think. When one or two come among us, they are not bad. If they are, sometimes we kill them, as we did Yellow Beard at Kien Dotklish. But a lot of them and we cannot live together, I think. They do good things, and then they do something like taking a child away to school for five years. Around Lukachukai there are many men who went to school; they wear their hair short; they all hate Americans. I understand that now. There is no reason in what they do, they are blind, but in the end they will destroy everything that is different from them, or else what is different must destroy them. If you destroyed everything in me that is different from them, there would only be a quarter of a man left, I think. Look at what they tried to do to you. And yet they were not deliberately trying.⁴⁹

Windsinger and The Dragon Fly of Zuñi show in the main the friendly and beneficial side of the Americans toward the Indians. In the second book the Americans help with medical aid, and in the selling of the Zuñians' pottery. This quotation from

48. La Farge, Oliver, Laughing Boy, pp. 222-223.

49. Ibid., pp. 269-270.

The Dragon Fly of Zuni illustrates the Zunians' attitude toward the Americans:

"Good fortune will come to you today, my little anwowa," said the Old One. "Much has been said about the white man's treatment of his red brother, but when he is a friend, he is indeed a friend. You will find that a white friend will do you great service."

"Well, it is fitting," mused Withered Plum, "that some return should be given them. They come to our ceremonies to learn of Zuni and Acoma."

"It is true that they have none of their own in which to take part," said Squash Blossom naively, "but they are not so old a people as we. They have much yet to learn."⁵⁰

Mr. Coolidge has written in detail about the reservation system and the treatment of the Indians there. First he gives the appeal of Old Humpback, trying to persuade the Navajos to come to the reservation. Then he relates the pitiful experience the simple Navajos have had at Hwalte. The Paradise that Old Humpback pictured for them is in great contrast to their own bitter experience.

It was to punish them for fighting, for making war on all their neighbors and raiding against the Pueblos and Mexicans, that the Navajos had been deported to Hwalte. . . . And now, after two years of homesickness and misery, of short rations and bitter cold, their young men had proved that the Big Chief was right. They had brought on this battle at the fort. . . .

The chiefs departed sorrowfully and told the news to the people and the women began to wail. Then winter set in with its freezing cold and with their axes and mattocks the men went to the distant sand-hills and dug out the mesquite stumps for wood. They loaded them on their backs and toiled back to their hogans, where their families sat huddled by the fire-places; and the women, having no wool to weave into blankets,

50. Malkus, Alida, p. 32.

spent their days in apathetic idleness. There was nothing for them to do but to grind and cook the corn and prepare the monotonous meals, and once more the white man's diseases crept among them like chinday devils, taking their toll from many hogans.

All winter there was wailing and blackening of faces to resist the devils of death, and as spring came on the people's courage was broken—they refused to work in the fields. Why plant again when in three successive summers they had seen their crops swept away? Why not eat the corn that had been given them for seed and get the best of the worms and drouth? But at last with great pains Red Shirt over-persuaded them and they planted the fields of corn. But hardly was it up when a black frost mowed it down and the Navajos would plant no more.⁵¹

Mr. Fergusson writes of another aspect of the Indian-American relationship. Throughout the period of the conquest of the west, the Indians tried to drive back the ever increasing Americans, but without success. The author compares the attitudes of the Eastern and Western peoples toward the Indians, and intimates the ruin of the Indian world by American diseases and drink.

All at once Indians struck ranches, mines and wagon trains. Those were the days of surprises and outrages that filled the papers, of lurid stories written by reporters who followed Crook and Custer, of Indian controversy between Easterners who loved Indians because they had been wronged, and Westerners who hated Indians because they had killed wives and children and burned crops and houses.

In those days a world was being destroyed—an old and savage world, rich in Gods and rituals, a world of cruel happy children living in a fairyland of imagined monsters. . . . A wild beautiful world was being destroyed with engines and guns, with germs and poisons. . . .

Indians were out of luck these days. It was hard to realize that just a few years ago they had owned the country, all but a few settlements and guarded roads. Smart men then believed they would never let the railroad through. Daniel Webster wanted to give them the West and get out and back in the sixties the Secretary of War recommended withdrawing all troops. All

at once they had gone to pieces. . . . People never would know what Indians had been like. . . . He remembered the swoop and yell of painted warriors. . . . But he no longer hated the Indians. The Indians he hated all were dead and what remained were a few drunken beggars.⁵²

Conquest describes the downfall of the Apache Indians by the white man. Compare the Apaches, downtrodden by the Americans as described here, with those Indian warriors written about in the first pages of this chapter. Mr. O'Connor shows the enervating influence of the reservation system on the Indians. In the end, he shows the complete defeat of the last Apache warrior and his loss of spirit as he is taken to Florida against his will.

The year marked, too, the beginning of the end of the Apache troubles. They were to continue for years, it is true, but the Apaches were diminishing in numbers and growing more cautious. Never a prolific race, they were being killed more rapidly than they could propagate. Through a long process of obscure and nameless skirmishes with white soldiers and pioneers their ranks were so decimated that their utter conquest was but a matter of years.

And in addition the various tribes were seduced and emasculated by the reservation system. They found it easier to be fed by the government than to rustle for themselves. They liked the taste of American liquor and American canned goods. Whereas raiding and murder had one been the means of livelihood for the nation, they now became the pastimes of idle and hot-blooded young bucks. As the old warriors remained behind on the reservations to grow fat and lazy, the bands of young bucks suffered from lack of leadership and lost heavily. . . . Where once the very name of the nation had been a threat and a terror to all but the most stout-hearted and the Apache country had been an unexplored no-man's land, Pendleton's ranch, the largest in the territory, cut deep into it, and traders went clear through it and only occasionally were murdered. . . .

Nan-yah stood before them: the wolf before the sheep. . . . The same glittering black eyes, the

52. Fergusson, Harvey, In Those Days, pp. 96-97, 191.

same round flat face, the same cruel slit of a mouth. But he was thin and the hair that fell to his shoulders from under his dirty turban was streaked with gray. . .

"You don't want to go back there. There aren't any more Apaches in the White Mountains. We've sent them all to Florida and they'll play hell walking back."

The old Apache was stunned. The glitter went out of his eyes and he looked dull and beaten.

"No more Apaches in the White Mountains?
 No more Apaches in the White Mountains. . . . "

He turned and went back into the car, his chains clanking behind him, his shoulders sagging. ⁵³

In considering the time covered by the novelists, we find books dealing with the prehistoric Indian, as, for example, Bandelier's Delight Makers down to the present day Indian as illustrated in La Farge's Laughing Boy. We have seen how the religion of the Indian is based on what he knows of nature. Even though the Indian accepts the new religion brought to him, he retains elements of his old religion, which is, after all, a universal trait of men. As nature is the main influence in his religion, so it is in every phase of his life. His life is molded by it, and, unlike the white man, he makes no effort to change any part of it. He works diligently on his silver and his weaving, but has no desire to carry his creative talents any farther. Miss Cather draws this excellent contrast between the attitude of the white man and the Indian toward nature.

When they left the rock or tree or sand dune that had sheltered them for the night, the Navajo was careful to obliterate every trace of their temporary occupation. He buried the embers of the fire and the remnants of food, unpiled any stones he had piled together, filled up the holes he had scooped in

the sand. Since this was exactly Jacinto's procedure, Father Latour judged that, just as it was the white man's way to assert himself in any landscape, to change it, make it over a little (at least to leave some mark or memorial of his sojourn), it was the Indian's way to pass and leave no trace, like fish through the water, or birds through the air.

It was the Indian manner to vanish into the landscape, not to stand out against it. The Hopi villages that were set upon rock mesas, were made to look like the rock on which they sat, were imperceptible at a distance. The Navajo hogans, among the sand and willows, were made of sand and willows. None of the pueblos would at that time admit glass windows into their dwellings. The reflection of the sun on the glazing was to them ugly and unnatural—even dangerous. Moreover, these Indians disliked novelty and change. They came and went by the old paths worn into the rock by the feet of their fathers, used the old natural stairway of stone to climb to their mesa towns, carried water from the old springs, even after white men had dug wells.

In the working of silver or drilling of turquoise the Indians had exhaustless patience; upon their blankets and belts and ceremonial robes they lavished their skill and pains. But their conception of decoration did not extend to the landscape. They seemed to have none of the European's desire to "master" nature, to arrange and re-create. They spent their ingenuity in the other direction; in accommodating themselves. This was not so much from indolence, the Bishop thought, as from an inherited caution and respect. It was as if the great country were asleep, and they wished to carry on their lives without awakening it; as if the spirits of earth and air and water were things not to antagonize and arouse. When they hunted, it was with the same discretion; an Indian hunt was never a slaughter. They ravaged neither the rivers nor the forest, and if they irrigated, they took as little water as would serve their needs. The land and all that it bore they treated with consideration; not attempting to improve it, they never desecrated it.⁵⁴

In conclusion, it is worth pointing out that Miss Gather, again, has written the most artistic account of the Indians. Certain tribes, namely, the Pueblo and the Navajo, have proved to be

54. Gather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 235-236.

more attractive to the novelists than any of the other tribes. On the Navajos, in fact, Mr. La Farge and Miss Gillmor have written their books entirely, but their treatment of the material varies considerably. The accounts found in Conquest and In Those Days are similar in relating the downfall of the Indians. Mr. Bandelier's novel is unusual in that he pictures the primitive Pueblo Indians as he imagined them to have lived.

For the purpose of this study, the material available on the Indian has been much more extensive than that on the Spaniard and the Mexican or the American. The novelists apparently have found the picturesque side of the Indian the most useable and attractive. They have been interested in the use of the Indians' tribal customs, their religious ceremonies, their dwellings, and their crafts. They have shown that the culture of the Indian has been developed from his reactions to his environment, and have made clear the influence of the American on him. Apparently the Mexicans have had little effect on the race, or, at any rate, the effect they have had has been little dwelt upon by the writers. In brief, many sides of the material on the Indian have been handled adequately, yet there is still opportunity for further development in this field by other novelists.

Chapter III

THE SETTLERS FROM THE UNITED STATES

The Americans have invaded the Southwest in great numbers, leaving their imprint wherever they have stopped. There have been all kinds of types contributing to the development of the country. The pioneer, the traders, the cowboy, and the outlaw have all had their share. The white man brought barbed wire with his cattle, then the railroad, and finally the automobile, which revolutionized the country. The white man has brought progress and growth, but he also brought guns and crime. Many of the unscrupulous adventurers and outlaws presented a real problem. Although the Indian and the country had to be conquered, the outlaw, too, had to be quelled and driven from the country.

The pioneer or the ranch man settled on the great Texas ranches, built crude homes, and bred cattle. Wind gives an excellent description of the typical ranch house out on the plains and of the drudgery and monotony of the life there.

As they entered the house, Letty looked about her at the rude interior. Truly it was like a place where two men kept back alone! There was no paper on the walls, not even canvas to keep out the wind and sand, so that a coat of sand lay over everything with an impartial yellow grayness. The front room had in it a ramshackle bed—pessimistic, discouraged looking—half a dozen chairs with rawhide bottoms, across one of which lay the Navajo blanket that probably served as a spread for the bed, a plain pine table, and a box partly protruding from under the bed which might contain the wardrobe for the room's owner, save for the coat and hat hung on the door. The walls were relieved

from their bareness only by a wolf skin and a couple of skunk skins stretched out for display, and a couple of crossed rifles, while several goat skins and a wild-cat skin were on the floor—unmistakably a masculine dwelling!

Letty is brought to her new home by her husband, which is hardly a house, but she tries to make a few improvements.

She gazed at the house, which had a bald and naked look, with its shutterless windows, its unpainted walls set up on a few rocks, just a box-house, with no clap-boards. Set up in makeshift fashion with a rock at each corner, and an occasional one along the walls, it looked as if it might blow away in a strong wind, to go bouncing across the plains like a leaf. No trees about it, no flowers, no grass! This was to be her home! . . .

But she found in a box under the bed, a stack of old newspapers and she decided to use them as a substitute. She made paste of flour and water, and one day when Lige came home, he found the lower part of the walls of the front room covered—rather unevenly, it is true—with newspapers.

"I left the tall reaching for you to do," she told him. . . .

When he had finished the papering job, he rearranged the decorations on the wall—the skins, the polished longhorns, the crossed rifles. On the floor, which she had scrubbed vehemently, she placed again the goat skins, the wolf skin. She covered the bed with the Navajo blanket. She contrived a dressing table from an old goods box, over which she draped the skirt of a white muslin dress of hers, and placed on it her simple toilet articles. Lige beamed with admiration of the result of her efforts.¹

Another type of pioneer is described in Conquest. Jard Pendleton is a man from the South who comes to the West to try his fortune, and finally settles in Arizona. He is not at all admirable except that he is a hard worker. He realizes the value of the natural resources of the country and helps to develop them. By 1872 a thriving town was built where Pendleton had started his home.

1. Scarborough, Dorothy, The Wind, pp. 99, 182, 190-191.

Though it was ugly and cruel and crude in most respects, the town was a real oasis in the territory. . . . Leather-brown farmers and their wives, fighting barren and cactus-riddled quarter-sections on the edge of the desert, looked forward to the time when they could move to town and send their children to school. To the Pimas and the Maricopas, already robbed of most of their land and herded onto reservations, the town was delight and mystery and wonder—the place where all good things came from: whiskey, red calico, bright beads, and cartridges. . . .

Pendleton owned the Pendleton Trading Company, which occupied the only two-story brick building in town, the flour mill, a livery stable, and a saloon. He also owned sixty percent of the stock in the Pendleton City Canal and Irrigation Company, which had started with his original canal as a nucleus and now furnished water to most of the farms in the Valley. And in addition to his commercial enterprises, the deeds for a thousand acres of fat Valley lands lay in his safe.²

One of the most colorful and interesting types of the newcomers was the trader. He led a varied, exciting life, carrying his goods across the country to New Mexico and Santa Fe. The white man traded his goods with the Indians, Mexicans, and Spaniards. Both the honest and dishonest traders are described. 'Colonel' William Bent was a famous old trader with a famous trading post. His integrity and his life at the post is told in 'Dobe Walls'. Many traders engaged in illicit traffic—a thing William Bent would not tolerate. This quotation illustrates the methods used by the unlicensed trader—

Chaves was up to the old, old game of the unlicensed trader. The Indians had the robes and the ponies. It was the trader's object to get these away from them as quickly as possible. Whiskey—diluted for economy and poisoned to give it a strong taste—was the one sure means of accomplishing his purpose.

2. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, pp. 147-148.

Cyrus Edwards found Chaves and a Mexican helper inside the tent and treating the Indians freely to potent aguardiente. Again and again the cup was filled and passed around, until the group had all had enough to dull their wits and rouse their appetite for more. Then Chaves said he would trade.

They brought their robes, their ponies, their weapons, their clothes, their women and children even. And with each cup the trader served less whiskey and more water. . . . The trade was ever more rapid. The exchange? One pint of poison for one prime tanned buffalo robe, the labor of a woman for many a back-breaking day.³

The author of Caravans to Santa Fe writes a picturesque account of the Mexicans buying from the white traders when they arrive. It is particularly interesting because the author shows the commodities that especially attract the Mexicans.

The dust of the caravan came rolling along to the accompaniment of shouts of greeting, of long whistles. On it came in the late afternoon sun, like a special cloud of gold; and now from the cloud emerged the first wagon, lumbering and swaying behind three teams of great white oxen that to Consuelo's ravished gaze seemed to snort blood and to be harnessed with gilded leather. Strange, clear-cut voices rang out among the familiar gritos of the arrieros. . . . On came the carros and the laden mules, helter skelter, right down the street. . . .

There in a large bodega the caravaners had set out their goods. . . . The traders were spreading out their merchandise on the long low tables that served for counters. Several of them were disposing of their goods outside, from the wagons, which were surrounded by Pueblo Indians from Tesuque, above Santa Fe, from Taos, and from the pueblos down upon the Rio Grande. Silver exchanged hands rapidly within the bodega, while outside furs and supple deer hides were bartered for the manufactured articles coveted by the Indians.

He (Bragdon) had earrings, rope, paint, cheap knives and good knives, liquor, and sugar. He had increased the amount of his whiskey by diluting a gallon at least one half, and obtaining for the diluted pints a buffalo hide each, or the equivalent in the nearer pelts of the Rockies. . . .

A line of naked trousers was interesting the

3. Vestal, Stanley, 'Dobe Walls, p. 263.

young men of the town. They sold out rapidly, and the majority were donned at once. Bragdon's shoes did not meet with approval, however, and Luis scornfully laid down the pair he had been considering when he had discovered that they were neither rights nor lefts, but straight lasts, to be worn on either foot.

"What! These are not de modo. Does he think we know nothing here?" Bragdon was much taken aback, but later was able to convince other purchasers of the advantages of the good old-fashioned shoe that would go on either foot. . . . And then came Bragdon's prize. He opened a case in which were numerous small boxes. Opening one, he extracted a sliver of wood tipped with a yellow and blue substance. Calling attention to what he was about to do, he struck the small stick upon a wall and immediately it flamed, burning like a tiny taper with a full flame, and emitting a sulphurous odor. . . .

The packages went like tortillas, and Bragdon had at length to admit that there were no more. Don Anabel was himself enormously interested, and pleased, too, with this new fancy, though it was his opinion that the things were not in the least practical and would never be of much real use or value.⁴

The sturdy, rugged Texan cowboys are written about in Lorenzo the Magnificent. They were stern and forceful men. Don Lorenzo has made the country safe from Indians, and then the Americans came. He realizes that the Texan is more fearless than the other "Gringos". He struggles against the Texans, but finally has to admit that he is defeated.

"These are not Indians, hombre, they are the first of many Gringos who will come crowding in upon us. We did not think, amigo mio, when we joined with the soldiers and chased the last Apaches into Mexico; we did not stop to consider that, when this country was made safe, the Gringos would come in and take it. These men we see here are the first of many thousands who will come with their cows to our plains. . . ."

The times had changed and where before they had warred with Indians they now had the Americanos to

4. Malkus, Alida Sims, Caravans to Santa Fe, pp. 115-116, 138-141.

contend with. All his life he had known Americans-- the courteous officers from the forts, who went out under his guidance against the Apaches; the prospectors, who would dare the devil himself if you showed them a piece of gold; the traders and Jewish merchants along the river-- but none of them were Texans. They were a race by themselves, Americans but not Americans, and they too had been bred to war.

As he and his family had fought the Navajos for generations so the Texanos had battled against the Comanches and Lipans, and all the northern Indians as well. They had battled until the Comanches and Lipans were all dead, or driven, a mere remnant, out of their country; and now these same Texans had moved into his country and were taking it for their own. . . . And he and his father had talked it over for days and agreed that the Texans were fighters.

They alone had defeated the Mexicans under the Dictator, Santa Anna, and set up a republic of their own; and at the Alamo at San Antonio a hundred and fifty Texans had fought until the last one was killed. They had resisted a whole army and, though conquered in the end, they had piled up the dead in the windows. They fought with the knife, as his own people fought, and knife-fighters are always dangerous.

Here, written with iron on the hides of cattle, was the story and record of his defeat; for where formerly his family rubic had been on the side of every steer as they stood, fat and full-fed by his lake, now after six months not a Cross I remained, except the waifs and strays of his herd. The Texans had come in from the east like grasshoppers, mowing the grass down with herd after herd; and in one short summer they had swept everything before them, taking all the watered land except his. And now, as if in mockery, their longhorned cattle crowded his lake shore while his own cows were nowhere to be seen. They were gone, stolen away under his very nose, taken so far that he could never find them; and all without a blow or the crack of a rifle in defense, though he was ready to fight to the death. He had been tricked at every turn, outguessed and outwitted by the Texans he had thought so simple; and everywhere he went, among the Texans or his own people, he would meet the laugh of scorn.⁵

5. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, pp. 48, 80-81, 131.

There were too many pseudo-cowboys who were in reality outlaws. These men were daring, resourceful fellows who were necessarily quick on the trigger. Tombstone and Billy the Kid both dealt with the famous outlaws of the Southwest. Tombstone, Arizona, an important mining town in the 70's and 80's, was a favorite spot for the men who plundered the caravans and stagecoaches of other men. They were all skilful gamblers and gunmen. Billy the Kid is the most notorious and famous of all the bandits of the Southwest. These quotations show the characteristics of the man that have made him known even today:

Billy the Kid was the Southwest's most famous desperado and its last great outlaw. He died when he was twenty-one years old and was credited with having killed twenty-one men—a man for every year of his life. Few careers in pioneer annals have been more colourful; certain of his exploits rank among the classic adventures of the west. . . . His life closed the past; his death opened the present. His destructive and seemingly futile career served a constructive purpose: it drove home the lesson that New Mexico's prosperity could be built only upon a basis of stability and peace. . . .

That a boy in a brief life-span of twenty-one years should have attained his sinister preeminence on a lawless and turbulent frontier would seem proof of a unique and extraordinary personality. He was born for his career. The mental and physical equipment that gave his genius for depopulation effectiveness and background and enabled him to survive in a tumultuous time of plots and murders was a birthright rather than an accomplishment. He had the desperado complex which, to endure for any appreciable time in his environment, combined necessarily a peculiarly intricate and enigmatic psychology with a dextrous trigger-finger. . . .

With this tragic record in mind, one might be pardoned for visualizing Billy the Kid as an inhuman monster revelling in blood. But this conception would do him injustice. He was a boy of bright, alert mind, generous, not unkindly, of quick sympathies. The steadfast loyalty of his friendships was proverbial. Among

his friends he was scrupulously honest. . . . He was cheerful, hopeful, talkative, given to laughter. He was not addicted to swagger or braggadocio. He was quiet, unassuming, courteous. He was a great favorite with women, and in his attitude toward them he lived up to the best traditions of the frontier.

But hidden away somewhere among these pleasant human qualities was a hiatus in his character—a sub-zero vacuum—devoid of all human emotions. He was upon occasion the personification of merciless, remorseless deadliness. He placed no value on human life, least of all his own. He killed a man as nonchalantly as he smoked a cigarette. Murder did not appeal to Billy the Kid as tragedy; it was merely a physical process of pressing a trigger. . . . He fought fair and shot it out face to face if the occasion demanded, but under other circumstances he did not scruple at assassination. . . .

His courage was beyond question. It was a static courage that remained the same under all circumstances, at noon or at three o'clock in the morning. . . . But no tale has come down that Billy the Kid ever showed the "yellow streak."

But courage alone would not have stamped him as extraordinary in the Southwest where courage is a tradition. The quality that distinguished his courage from that of other brave men lay in a nerveless imperturbability. Nothing excited him. He had nerve but no nerves. . . .

The secret of Billy the Kid's greatness as a desperado—and by connoisseurs in such matters he was rated as an approach to the ideal desperado type—lay in a marvelous coordination between mind and body. He not only had the will but the skill to kill. . . . While certain other men were a fair match for him in target practice, no man in the Southwest, it is said, could equal him in the lightning-like quickness with which he could draw a six-shooter from its holster and with the same movement fire with deadly accuracy.⁶

Mr. Burns is evidently a fatalist and enjoys pointing out the times when fate played a part in the life of this young bandit. The following quotation tells of the death of Billy the Kid when he becomes the victim of Fate.

6. Burns, Walter Noble, Billy the Kid, pp. 54-59.

On this night of nights, Fate, it might seem, was setting the stage. There was no need for the Kid to come in from the sheep camp. But he had come. There was now no need for him to go for the meat. But he went. . . . He did not see the two deputies sitting in the heavy shadows of the porch. With quick, easy stride, still thinking of his supper, he walked straight toward them, his soul off watch. . . .

The Kid backed into the doorway of Maxwell's room. There he paused for an instant, half-hidden by the thick adobe wall, his gun still at aim.

"Quien es?" he called a third time.

Then he turned and stepped into the black darkness of the chamber; into security, as he fancied; into a death trap, in reality. In the darkness, Death crouched, waiting, ready. . . .

Dropping over sideways from the chair toward the floor in a tricky, dodging movement, Garrett answered the question with a shot. A flare of lurid flame lighted up the darkness for an instant, the room shook with a sudden crashing explosion, and Billy the Kid fell dead with a bullet through his heart.⁷

In Tombstone, Mr. Burns tells his readers about many of the interesting characters around the large mining town of Tombstone, Arizona. The most unusual and striking of the outlaws were Curly Bill, "his end being as enigmatic as his beginning",⁸ and Russian Bill who "displayed an amazing familiarity—for an outlaw—with history, literature, and science."⁹

Wyatt Earp was the man of law who "cleaned up" Tombstone and was a person of strength and resourcefulness. He and his four brothers represented the law abiding faction of Tombstone and won the respect of the town because of their courage and fearlessness. Wyatt Earp's best friend was Doc Holliday, "the fighting ace of the Earp faction and considered by connoisseurs in deadliness the coldest-

7. Ibid., pp. 280-281, 283-284.

8. Burns, Walter Noble, Tombstone, pp. 74.

9. Ibid., p. 147.

blooded killer in Tombstone."¹⁰ Mr. Burns writes of their friendship—"Between Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday, as cold, deadly men, perhaps, as the frontier knew, existed a friendship classic in its loyalty."¹¹ Wyatt Earp is described thus:

With the turbulent conditions Wyatt Earp found in Tombstone, he had been familiar all his life. He was a natural master of such conditions. Probably no man of his day in the West was more logically fitted to become the man of Tombstone's hour. Brains, courage, and dominant qualities as a leader carried him quickly to the top; a myriad enemies pulled him down. He rose to power in romance and fell from power in tragedy, and the story of his rise and fall is one of the most dramatic in the history of the frontier.¹²

This quotation illustrates the statement of Wyatt Earp that "he was a natural master of such conditions." Wyatt Earp was alone on one side of the street, protecting a prisoner from an angry, eager mob of men.

One foot advanced, his shotgun held tensely across his breast ready for instant action, Wyatt Earp stood, one man against five hundred. Grimly alone. Hopelessly isolated for the moment from all the rest of the world. No help to fall back on, no chance to run, no shelter, no place of refuge. Just a man out there in the middle of the street, all by himself with only his own courage to save him. Before him a mob thirsting for blood, closing in for the kill, its victim almost within reach. The front line, stretching across the street from wall to wall, bristled with six-shooters and rifles, every face twisted and flaming with passion. One solitary man blocked the road to vengeance. . . .

"Kill me." His voice had a conversational steadiness. "I'm ready. Ought to be easy; there are enough of you. But I'll do a little killing myself. You can get me; but I'll take a few of you to hell with me."

10. Ibid., p. 47

11. Ibid., p. 51

12. Ibid., p. 47

The drama had reached a crisis. Here was a proposition. They could take it or leave it. He was ready to die. If they were, too, all right. Yes, they could kill him. One shot would do the business. They couldn't miss him. But he would take some of them to the grave with him. . . .

Silence fell. For a space the mob stood motionless, hesitating, undecided, weighing the odds. Then abruptly the tension snapped. Some men in front, looking a little sheepish, drew back into the crowd. Others followed. The front line grew ragged; it was breaking up.¹³

One of Curly Bill's most famous and ruthless exploits was his attack on a Mexican caravan going through Skeleton Canyon. A month later Jim Hughes and his fellow outlaws made a similar attack in this same place. The following quotation illustrates the cruelty and the barbarity of these Western bandits.

Down through Skeleton Canon over the Peloncillo Mountains came the Mexican smuggler train, mule bells jingling in the morning sunlight. A half mile from the mouth of the canon and an equal distance below Devil't Kitchen, the scene of Curly Bill's murderous exploit of a month before, the fifteen Mexicans halted for lunch. While their coffee simmered on a little camp fire and they sat eating on the grass, the canon wall above them flamed with crashing rifles. Three Mexicans fell dead. Panic seized the others. They sprang on their ponies. Down the canon they galloped in the midst of a mad welter of pack mules stampeding with wildly jangling bells. Three more Mexicans were killed, it is said, before the smugglers went racing out of the mouth of the canon and escaped across the San Simon Valley.

The Mexicans routed, Jim Hughes and his men mounted their ponies and went helter-skelter in pursuit of the pack mules to kill them and save the treasure. . . . Lumbering under their heavy loads of silver money and gold bullion, the animals, one by one, were soon overtaken and shot. . . .

The treasure was lifted by the outlaws within the next few days, it is supposed, and under the guidance

13. Ibid., p. 71-72.

of Zwing Hunt and Billy Grounds hauled in a four-horse wagon, driven by a Mexican, to the Davis Mountain Canon and reburied in a pit already half filled with robber loot brought by Zwing Hunt and Billy Grounds out of Mexico.¹⁴

Mr. Dobie refers to this massacre in his book Coronado's Children. He also tells about a series of stage holdups that Mr. Burns presents more in detail in his book. The following quotation is part of Mr. Dobie's account:

While the negroes were haying and the lieutenant was commanding, four American outlaws came into the country from the west. Their names were Zwing Hunt, Jim Hughes, Red Curly (called Sandy King), and Doc Neal. Hughes was the leader. Some of them had been mixed up in the Lincoln County War, wherein Billy the Kid won his fame. Following John Ringo, the gang had raided cattle off the Sonora ranches. They had all helped materially in giving Tombstone the reputation of being the rowdiest and roughest mining town in the West. . . .

In the spring of 1881 the gang made three separate robberies—apparently not from need of money but for the love of the game. The boldest of these acts was holding up the train near Tombstone. In this holdup they killed a mail clerk, blew open the express safe, and got off with a sum of gold so vast that the express company would not admit the amount.

Next, in the Chiricahua Mountains, east of Tombstone, the outlaws killed a man and his son for nothing more than a wagon and two horses.¹⁵

14. Ibid., 283-285.

15. Dobie, J. Frank, Coronado's Children, 192, 196.

See also Author's Note, p. 351: "Should anyone wish to know more about Jim Hughes, Red Curly (Sandy King), Zwing Hunt, and Russian Bill, he can do no better than read three books that have recently been published around the outlaws of the Southwest: Hellorado, by William M. Breakenridge; Tombstone's Yesterday, by Lorenzo D. Walters, and Tombstone, by Walter Noble Burns. Mr. Burns devotes a whole chapter to the Skeleton Canyon treasure, as Bill Cole's phantom is called in Arizona."

With the prospector in the mining districts, these different types of white men influenced the Southwest in various ways. Of course, there was the usual evidence of American energy and ingenuity. The American opened and developed mines; he cut down trees and started the saw mill; the Texan bred his fine cattle and brought them into New Mexico; but the greatest change from the old Spanish way of life came with the barbed wire. It made for a permanent dwelling and did away with the open range—the basis of the life of the Mexican and the Indian. They were pushed back farther and farther. The barbed wire was a necessity and in the end proved beneficial, as it helped to clear the titles of property and the ownership of cattle. This quotation from Lorenzo the Magnificent shows how the barbed wire pushed the Texans from their native state:

Texas cattle went down until the market was glutted and, to fill to the brim the cup of woe of Texas cattlemen, barwire fences began to spring up everywhere. Texas lands were choap, but rail fences were dear, used only for corrals and hay-fields; but with the advent of the railroads the first wire had come in, and after that more wire.

It came in by the train-load and, as the range became more over-stocked, every cattleman in self-defense began to fence in his scripped land, enclosing pastures hundreds of miles in extent. Then the range wars followed, whole communities rising up in arms to defend or tear down the fences; until at last, in spite of everything, the barbed-wire conquered and the days of free grass were over. The Texas legislature made it a penitentiary offense to cut another man's wire, and, seeing the handwriting on the wall, the free-grass men moved west, driving their cattle they knew not where.¹⁶

16. Coolidge, Dane, p. 102.

The breeding of cattle was a fundamental means of livelihood and of great importance for the Texans. It brought great prosperity to them when the railroad came and opened the markets for them. The significance of this change from the covered wagon to the railroad is illustrated by this passage in The Saga of Billy the Kid:

A new day was about to dawn. The first glimmer of change was beginning to show on the dark horizon. The year of 1867 was big with fate in the history of the West. The day of the covered wagon and the old immigrant trails was drawing to a close. The day of the railroad was at hand. With the completion of the Union Pacific, a through transportation line joined the two oceans. The Kansas-Pacific was pushing rapidly westward. New York and San Francisco suddenly became neighbors. The rich markets of the East were at last open to the prairie.

Market! The magic of markets transformed the whole cattle situation of Texas overnight. Prosperity swept over the ranges in an avalanche. Tragedy changed into bonanza. From cattle poor, the state became cattle rich. The dollar cow of yesterday was the twenty-dollar cow of today. . . . Soon the longhorns by hundreds of thousands were pouring toward the railroads across Red River, the Indian Nations, the Staked Plains, No Man's Land, over trails a thousand and two thousand miles long from every part of Texas--the Gulf Coast, the Rio Grande, the Nueces, the Frio, the Colorado, the Brazos.¹⁷

John Chisum, a frontiersman who gained immense prosperity in New Mexico, lived in a typical ranch house and was "King of the Pecos Valley." The following description of John Chisum's wealth in cattle makes us realize the size of the cattle business that prosperous men of that time handled.

17. Burns, Walter Noble, p. 7.

John Chisum failed to sense the imminent great change that was to turn the Texas cattle ranges into gold mines. Few men did. The new prosperity stormed up out of a blue sky almost without sign or portent to herald its approach. . . . The coming of the railroads that had boomed the price of cattle in Texas boomed it likewise in New Mexico. . . .

But Chisum at last had found his markets. He rose to his new opportunities in a big way. His business developed to gigantic proportions as the years went by. He made his market radius as wide as the map of the Southwest and took in Colorado and Kansas for good measure. Within two years, at the height of his prosperity, he drove five thousand cattle to Tucson, six thousand to the San Carlos Apache reservation in Arizona, four thousand to the Gila River, and six thousand to Dodge City. Never a season passed that he did not have three or four herds on the move to different markets at the same time. Despite his wholesale operations, and despite wholesale thefts, his cattle increased in numbers annually. Fifteen thousand calves were born under his brand in 1876 and fresh importations from Texas were constantly coming in. . . .

Chisum abandoned Bosque Grande as his headquarters in 1873, and moving down the Pecos forty miles, established South Spring Ranch, which remained his home to the end of his life. Where the South Spring River gushes from the earth in a never-failing giant spring of crystal water, he built a home fit for a cattle king and made it one of the show places of the Southwest. Cottonwood trees brought from Las Vegas by mule pack-train he planted about his dwelling and in two winding rows that formed a noble avenue a quarter of a mile long leading from road to residence. . . . He brought fruit trees from Arkansas and set out a vast acreage in orchards of apple, pear, peach, and plum. He imported roses from Texas to make a hedge about the house, and scarlet tanagers and bob-white quail from Tennessee—birds unknown in New Mexico—and set them at liberty in the oasis of beauty he had created.

Here, with royal hand, Chisum dispensed frontier hospitality. His great, rambling, one-story adobe house, with verandas at front and rear, stood on the highway between Texas and New Mexico, and the stranger was as free as the invited guest to bed and board for as long as he wanted to stay, and no money or questions asked.¹⁸

Cattle brought prosperity to Arizona as well as to Texas and New Mexico. Jard Pendleton, hero of Conquest, found great wealth in his herds during the 60's and 70's.

On the great ranch which he started on his Spanish grant five thousand calves were now born each year, and the drive which his small army of tough Texas cowboys made to the rail-head at Dodge City, Kansas, in the fall was the talk of the territory.

When he had started his ranch in '65 after he had cleaned the Apaches off it, he had moved most of his long-horned cattle from the Valley. But as they were better as food rustlers and fighters than they were as beef animals, he soon began to butcher his native bulls and replace them with Herefords, big, full of beef, and as ponderous as locomotives. Even now, after only seven years, most of his cattle had lost their wiriness, their longness of horn, and showed the red-and-white Hereford markings and the capacity of the breed for carrying beef.¹⁹

As already suggested, with the coming of the railroad, a new era opened. New markets were created, and new industries were made possible. In Those Days, which really gives an impression of change, we find the most effective account of the change the railroad brought. The author gave a picture of the "wagon days" and then of the days of the railroad. Mr. Fergusson describes the effect the railroad had on the Indians, and the progress and influence it had.

Indians sat back on the hills and saw the first trains run. . . . Indians charged the iron horse waving blankets to scare it, yelling their war yells and the iron horse plowed right through them, never shying, spouting rifle fire.

Then Indians got wise. Turkey Leg's Cheyennes bent up the rails, piled ties and rocks in the road, sat down and waited. A mixed freight hit the trap, threw the fireman into his own woodburning fire box,

19. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, p. 149.

killed the crew, raided the box cars, found wet goods and dry goods, got Indian crazy drunk, dressed up in ladies bonnets and shawls, tied bolts of cloth to ponies' tails and ran races with a hundred yards of calico streaming in the wind. They set the train on fire and danced a scalp dance round a flame that lit the sky. So Indians danced at their own funeral.

The railroads had to sell the land along the tracks and they began to comb the world for settlers. The Santa Fe sent to Europe and got fifteen thousand Mennonites to come to Kansas. . . . So the Santa Fe crept across the prairie. Then Leadville boomed and trains began running packed both ways taking in the flush and bringing out the broke. . . .

The Santa Fe and the Denver and Rio Grande fought for the Royal Gorge to the West and Raton Pass to the South. They shipped in bad men from Dodge with rifles, and rival graders slugged it out on the right of way.

The Santa Fe won Raton Pass. Slow and late it crawled down the Rio Grande.

It followed the trail the Indians made, the trail conquistadores in iron armor had followed, and after them the mountain men—the trail the wagons and coaches had widened into a road.

Rails crept down the Rio Grande, prodded sleepy 'dobe towns into sudden frantic life. The stage from Los Vegas to Albuquerque made its last trip. Uncle Dick Wootton closed his toll road. The great Murphy wagons dropped their tongues on the ground forever. . . . Once more the good old days were gone.²⁰

Another industry stimulated by the arrival of the railroads was the lumber business. In New Mexico and Arizona trees were cut extravagantly. The supply seemed endless and little thought was given to the future. The following account relates the feeling of the hero in the novel In Those Days as he watches the trees go:

His men were cutting timber far up on the mountain-side now. Standing beside the mill he had seen

20. Fergusson, Harvey, In Those Days, pp. 131, 133-5.

the great green tops sway to the whang of axes, heard the crashing fall of a hundred feet of timber, the roar of longs skidding to the canyon bottom, the shouts of teamsters hauling them to the saw.

The canyon all around the mill was a stripped and ravished thing. In the spring it had been the prettiest stand of yellow pine he ever saw with nearly every tree a hundred feet high or better and the ground brown and slippery with needles centuries deep. He had always liked pine timber best of all—fragrant time-defying forest where storm turned into music and sunlight splintered into living patterns. It shocked him a little to see this one reduced to stumps and smoking piles of topbrush and the ground torn to dust by heavy-loaded wheels. But if he hadn't done it someone else would have. He had been lucky to get there first. Likely as not it would have been burned if it hadn't been cut. There were forest fires all over the mountains ever since the railroads came. Some said the Utes set them to spite the whites but the camp fires of prospectors and settlers were probably as much to blame as anything else. Men were overrunning the country, eating it up. But you couldn't stop progress and after all it was a big country and there seemed to be more than enough of everything for everybody.²¹

In Arizona, Jared Pendleton gets contracts for railroad ties, but does not hesitate to take lumber from the unsuspecting government. The method used by this man is described in the following account.

In the meantime he began to get ready for the production of ties. His own great ranch contained thousands of acres of yellow pine, but he was far too shrewd to cut it when the public domain lay all around him ready to be looted. Better grab the nation's timber while the government's clutch on it was still weak and save his for the lean days that were sure to follow when the howl was raised.

He bought a shipload of sawmill machinery in New York, landed it at Yuma during high water on the Colorado, and hauled it overland to the places where it was to be installed. He hired Mexicans and Pimas and put them to work under his own cowpunchers, extending his

21. Ibid., pp. 189-190.

ranch roads to the timberlands and grading the road to Pendleton City. He made a flying trip to the East and returned with Missouri mules and Swede lumberjacks.

By the time of the next spring floods he had a million ties roaring down the Salt, riding the muddy waters into the Gila, where they were snaked out and piled up to await the coming of the railroad.²²

The last change which came to the country is suggested by the phrase the "Gas Age", used by Mr. Fergusson, the only author to emphasize this phase. The hero of In Those Days is stunned by this new age. The sawmill has gone, and mining has collapsed. He is not able to accustom himself to the change, and feels that he can not cope with the automobile and its age.

He had learned to love the crack of a whip, the shouted curse of teamsters, the heavy rumble of rolling wagons. He had welcomed the voice of the locomotive as the sound of a triumph he shared. But the putter and screech of the flivver never ceased to torture his ear. It was the voice of a life he could not live. It made him realize that he was old. . . .

A whole generation had grown up and moved in to which the building of the railroad was a remote historical event. And to him it was the last important thing that happened. It seemed so recent and yet it belonged to such a different day. Things he had used a little while ago were already stuff for a museum.²³

The coming of the white man had an effect on the people who were already in the Southwest as well as on the country. In the novels read for this study there are many more instances given of the white man's influence on the Indian than on the Mexicans. Both the good and the bad influence of the Americans are brought out by the novelists. In Chapter II of this study on the Indians both

22. O'Connor, Jack, Conquest, pp. 221-222.

23. Fergusson, Harvey, In Those Days, pp. 230-231.

sides are illustrated from quotations taken from the novels studied. The results of the reservation system on the Indian is also discussed. The Mexicans and Spanish, also, felt the harmful effects of the associations with the Americans, and particularly from their methods of business. This phase of the American influence on the peoples of the Southwest will be discussed more in detail in the next chapter.

Only two books referred to in this chapter relate stories of progress. Conquest shows the change made by Americans in the natural environment. It shows how a crude, unlettered man gains respectability and wealth by developing the land and the natural resources in Arizona. The other novel, In Those Days, follows the history of the country from the times of the earliest settlers down to the present day. It, too, shows how the Americans have changed the country--sometimes for good, sometimes for bad.

Many strong and distinguished men helped to make the country a region of interest to the novelists, as, for example, the notorious outlaw, Billy the Kid, the famous Kit Carson, and the well-known trader, William Bent. Yet despite the cowboys, ranchers, and traders and all that these men did to the region, the Southwest has never become wholly theirs. One thinks of it still as the land belonging to the Mexican and Indian. People speak of it as the Spanish Southwest, or the Southwest of the Indian. It is not altogether sentimental to contend that the settlers from the United States have never completely entered into the spirit of the South-

west, have never altogether fathomed its significance or ceased to regard it as strange and peculiar, not as a homeland. This argument, in fact, is admirably presented in a poem by Robert L. Roe, recently published in Seas and Singing Country:

These are the Indian lands, ascetic and chaste and
barren,
Waiting for the corn-chant and the rain-bringer's
song
And the healthy and vital dances—grotesque, aphro-
disiac, phallic—
to become fecund.
You cannot successfully worship this crude god of
the Indian lands
With turbine pumps and mechanical motions
He asks more. . . .
Meanwhile sits with his hands clasped while the In-
dian molds red clay pots,
weaves blankets and baskets,
pounds silver.

This is still Indian country, cragged and jagged
and red and mighty.
It was never good for anything but to grow a little
corn,
Enough to keep an Indian happy—Apache, Navajo,
Yavapai, Hopi.
It will never get into your heart or your blood,
White Man.
It will never nourish you with its silence of great
mountains
Sitting all around, immutable, stern, aboriginal,
crude.
knowing they will conquer,
will last. . . .
You can conquer the Amerind but you cannot conquer the
land.
It belongs to him.
It fights for him.
It's all his.
He knows it.
Indian country—
sinewy Indian fingers
clasp in a deathgrip
nothing can loosen.²⁴

Chapter IV

SPANIARDS AND MEXICANS

The Spaniards were the earliest European settlers in the Southwest. They came over with their own customs, and quite naturally attempted to continue the standard of life maintained in the mother country. Even when they had become Mexicans, as they were ultimately called, and citizens of the new world, they still clung to Spanish standards, and in a measure to the Spanish philosophy of life. Among the Mexican were several classes of men differing widely in cultural attainments and in the amount of Spanish blood in their veins. The novels considered in this study, however, center attention almost exclusively on one class: the high-cast Mexican of almost pure Spanish blood. This fact should be kept clearly in mind, as one reads the term Mexican here, a term suggesting to many minds a peon type, largely Indian in blood.

Most of the aristocratic Mexican families dwelt on vast landed estates. They built spacious adobe houses, had many servants, and lived a life of comparative ease. Such a family is the chief interest in, for example, Lorenzo the Magnificent. There were treated, in several of the works, however, aristocratic citizens of the towns and cities, rich and usually land owners, such as are described in Death Comes For the Archbishop, In Those Days, and Caravans of Santa Fe. Then finally we find accounts of aristocratic families on the decline, and the decadent families on the small ranches as illustrated in Blood of the Conquerors.

Just prior to the advent of the railroads, the Mexican families lived about as they had for two hundred years past. The progressive movements of the East had not touched the Southwest.

Mr. Fergusson writes of the influence of the railroads:

So it happened that in the seventies, when New York was growing into a metropolis, and the factory system was fastening itself upon New England, and the middle west was getting fat and populous and tame, life in the Southwest remained much as it had been a century before.

Laws and governments were powerless there to change ways of life, as they have always been, but two parallel bars of steel reaching across the prairies brought change with them, and it was great and sudden. The railroad reached the Rio Grande Valley early in the eighties, and it smashed the colorful barbaric pattern of the old life as the ruthless fist of an infidel might smash a stained glass window. The metropolis of the northern valley in those days was a sleepy little adobe town of a few hundred people, reclining about its dusty plaza near the river. The railroad, scorning to notice it, passed a mile away. Forthwith a new town began growing up between the old one and the railroad. And this new town was such a town as had never before been seen in all the Southwest. It was built of wood and only half painted. It was ugly, noisy and raw. It was populated largely by real estate agents, lawyers, politicians and bar-keepers. It cared little for joy, leisure, beauty or tradition. Its God was money and its occupation was business.¹

Mr. Fergusson describes the lives of the Mexican dons before the Americans had had much influence on them. He lets us see how they had carried over the old Spanish manner of living into their life in the Southwest. He points out that although they observed the Spanish ceremonies, they had lost all contact with Spain. They were concerned only with the Indians.

1. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, pp. 20-21.

There was (writes Mr. Fergusson) a pleasant social life among the aristocrats of dances and visits. Marriages, funerals and christenings were occasions of great ceremony and social importance. Indeed everything done by the Dons was characterized by much formality and ceremony, the custom of which had been brought over from Spain. But they were no longer really in touch with Spanish civilization. They never went back to the mother country. They had no books save the Bible and a few other religious works, and many of them never learned to read these. Their lives were made up of fighting, with the Indians and also among themselves, for there were many feuds; of hunting and primitive trade; and of vengence upon a generous and patriarchal scale. They were Spanish gentlemen by descent; all for honour and tradition and sentiment; but by circumstances they were barbarian lords, and their lives were full of lust and blood.²

The home of a prosperous Mexican rancher is described in Lorenzo the Magnificent. The many-roomed house built around the courtyard is a typical Mexican house. We learn of the occupations of the women of the household as they work in the courtyard.

These were doors of hewn pine logs, hauled down from the mountains near by and strapped together with broad bands of iron. Enormous hinges, set in oak, upheld them from the sides and the outside was studded with spikes; while in the inside two stout timbers hung ready at hand to bar the huge puerta against assault. Monk glimpsed guns and men in the guard-room as he passed through into the courtyard.

Here within the unpierced walls which shut them off from the outside world the women lived a secluded life of their own. Dark faces peered out curiously from the doors of cell-like rooms that lined the four sides of the patio and by the well in the center an Indian woman stood straight and slim with an olla of water on her head. Pigs and goats wandered about, chickens darted to and fro, watching the doorways for something to eat; and under the arcade that shaded the western wall Navajo squaws were weaving blankets at their looms. There was a smell of washed wool, of stored corn and panoche sugar, and the fragrance of roasting coffee, and they they stepped into the long, cool dining-room.³

2. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

3. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, pp. 3-4.

Another type of Mexican rancher is described by Mr. Fergusson. The home of Archulera is like many small ranch houses owned by Mexicans. Archulera is described by the author as being a remnant of an old aristocratic family long deprived of their former possessions, and a man who has deteriorated from the position his ancestors formerly enjoyed.

Archulera's place was typical of the little Mexican ranches that dot the Southwest wherever there is water enough to irrigate a few acres. The brown block of adobe house stood on an arid, rocky hillside, and looked like a part of it, save for the white door, and a few bright scarlet strings of chile hung over the rafter ends to dry. Down in the arroyo was the little fenced patch where corn and chile and beans were raised, and behind the house was a round goat corral of wattled brush. The skyward rocky waste of the mountain lifted behind the house, and the empty reach of the mesa lay before—an immense and arid loneliness, now softened and beautified by many shadows.

He was descended, like Ramon, from one of the old families which had received occasional infusions of native blood. There was probably more Indian in him than in the young man, but the chief difference between the two was due to the fact that the Archuleras had lost most of their wealth a couple of generations before, so that the old man had come down in the social scale to the condition of an ordinary goat-herding pelado. There are many such fallen aristocrats among the New Mexican peasantry. Most of them, like Archulera, are distinguished by their remarkably choice and fluent use of the Spanish language, and by the formal, eighteenth-century perfection of their manners, which contrast strangely with the barbaric way of their lives.⁴

The aristocratic Mexican families found in the towns are described by three of the authors. In her book Caravans to Santa Fe, Miss Malkus gives a general impression of luxury, a profusion of old silver, old paintings, and the sight of beautiful flower gardens sur-

4. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, pp. 43, 45.

rounded by high walls. She describes the early days of the nineteenth century during the time of the traders at old Santa Fe.

There were no sidewalks and the walls of the houses rose straight from the road. There were occasional glimpses into green patios, and fragrant sprays of deep pink tamarack drooped occasionally over the walls, waving their plumes against a very blue sky. When it wishes, the reserve of Old Spain was well houses behind those shuttered windows and crooked little doors. Yet when so disposed it could overflow merrily into the street, or peer intimately from windows through which a hand could thrust to pluck at one's cloak as he passed, to pick one's pocket, or to drop a note within the hand.⁵

Mr. Fergusson uses this material in his novel In Those Days.

However, Miss Gather writes of it more vividly still in her account of the beautiful old possessions of the Olivares' family. She shows the pleasure and enjoyment Father Latour and Father Vaillant derive from visiting this home of culture and refinement.

The Senora Olivares had made a pleasant place of the rambling adobe building, with its great courtyard and gateway, carved joists and beams, fine herring-bone ceilings and snug fire-places. . . .

Certainly it was a great piece of luck for Father Latour and Father Vaillant, who lived so much among peons and Indians and rough frontiersmen, to be able to converse in their own tongue now and then with a cultivated woman; to sit by that hospitable fireside, in rooms enriched by old mirrors and engravings and upholstered chairs, where the windows had clean curtains, and the sideboard and cupboards were stocked with plate and Belgian glass.⁶

The home of another type of Mexican family is described in The Blood of the Conquerors. The Delcasars family was one of those families who had lost much of their money, but still held their position. Mr. Fergusson describes the old, run-down house of the Delcasars family, and their feeling for it.

5. Malkus, Alida, Caravans to Santa Fe, p. 143.

6. Gather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 176-177.

It was a long, low adobe with a paintless and rickety wooden verandah along its front, and with deep-set, iron-barred windows looking upon the square about which Old Town was built. Delcasars had lived in this house for over a century. Once it has been the best in town. Now it was an antiquity pointed out to tourists. Most of the Mexicans who had money had moved away from Old Town and built modern brick houses in New Town. But this was an expensive proceeding. The old adobe houses which they left brought them little. The Delcasars had never been able to afford this removal. They were deeply attached to the old house and also deeply ashamed of it.⁷

Outstanding characteristics of the Mexicans are their love of luxury and love of pleasure. They enjoyed their gay dances, or bailes as they called them. Many guests came to their homes and were treated with great hospitality. Even strangers were shown the same graciousness as their friends were. Miss Cather characterizes the Mexican hospitality in these words: "The Senora received him with that quiet but unabashed hospitality which is a common grace in Mexican households."⁸

In the novel Lorenzo the Magnificent Don Lorenzo welcomes the cowboy, Ike Monk, a stranger who has stopped at the Mexican's house. Don Lorenzo explains the meaning of the name he has given his home. When the cowboy admires a Navajo blanket, he is immediately presented the blanket as a gift, according to Mexican custom.

"Every man who comes here is my guest. This is your house, my friend, as long as you are in it, and all that I have is yours." . . .

"I have lived here for twenty years and no one has paid me yet. That is, with one exception--and he is the only man that I ever turned away from my door. It is the custom of my people and all are welcome to Su Casa, which is the name I give my poor home. It means

7. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, pp. 38-39.

8. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, pp. 154-155.

in Spanish: 'Your house.'"

DeVega turned to the woman and spoke rapidly in Navajo, then picked up the blanket and handed it to him.

"This is a present from me," he said.

"Oh, no, no!" protested Monk. "I don't want you to give it to me! Just ask her what it is and I'll pay for it." . . .

"Please don't mention it, my friend," broke in Don Lorenzo with a smile, "it is a custom of the country, with us. I am very glad you were able to find something which pleased you in this poor place of mine."⁹

Mr. Fergusson makes use of this same custom in his novel

Blood of the Conquerors. Before the two men are able to transact their business they must exchange gifts.

"Ha! you like the saddle!" Ramon exclaimed in well-stimulated delight. He rose, swiftly undid the cinches, and dropped saddle and blanket at the feet of his host. "It is yours!" he announced.

"A thousand thanks," Alfego replied. "Come; I wish to show you some Navajo blankets I bought the other day." At last when he had seen them all, Ramon permitted himself to pick up and examine the one he considered the best with a restrained murmur of admiration.

"You like it!" exclaimed Alfego with delight. "It is yours!"

Mutual good feeling having thus been signaled in the traditional Mexican manner by an exchange of gifts, Alfego now showed his guest all over his establishment.¹⁰

Robert Jayson, the hero of In Those Days, is the invited guest of the Aragon family. He enjoys their warm hospitality, and joins in with their after-supper games. Here again we see the friendliness of the Mexicans, and, also, their love of pleasure.

Never had he been greeted with such kindly perfect courtesy. "My house is yours," the Don told him

9. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, pp. 2-3, 9.

10. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, pp. 158-159.

and bowed and pressed his hand with a manner that was perfectly formal and yet seemed warm and spontaneous as a kiss. . . . The Dona spoke no English but her beaming placid smile was worth more than words.

Neither of them had ever looked at him before but now that chance had brought him inside their house he was that sacred thing, a guest. . . .

After supper all played merry childish games—drop the handkerchief and blind man's buff and another one strange to him in which each tried to bite a bullet off a precarious pyramid of flour without mussing up his face. Dignified Don Aragon played a surprising graceful part in all this and glowed and beamed with unctuous family feeling.¹¹

Just as the Mexicans put their whole hearts into their hospitality, so they threw themselves with equal spontaneity into their dances and fun. Mr. Coolidge writes more often, and gives more detailed accounts, of the dances, or bailes, than any of the other authors. He describes the preparations made for the baile, and the various dances as the Mexicans dance them. He explains, for example, the danza, danced in imitation of the dove. Then he describes the jarabe tapatio:

As the orchestra struck up the stirring music of the jarabe, each dancer seized his partner and joined the rout. Standing face to face, they beat time to the music, and the ladies led off the dance. Holding her rebozo now above her and now before her like a veil, each girl danced and swayed before her partner until, as a tribute to her charms, he succumbed and threw down his hat. Then, pacing about its broad brim with dainty feet, the girl simulated coquetries of a dove; putting off the time when she must snatch it up from the ground and put it on her partner's head.¹²

A country baile is described in Blood of the Conquerors.

The author relates the manner of dancing and points out the interest-

11. Fergusson, Harvey, In Those Days, pp. 55-57.

12. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, p. 71

ing fact that part of the dances were those introduced by the courtly Spaniards.

Each number was preceded by a march, several times around the room, which was sedate and formal in the extreme. The favourite dance was a fast, hopping waltz, in which the swain seized his partner firmly in both hands under the arms and put her through a vigorous test of wind and agility. The floor was rough and sanded, and the rasping of feet almost drowned the music. There were long Virginia reels, led with peremptory dash by a master of ceremonies, full of grace and importance. Swarthy faces were bedewed with sweat and dark eyes glowed with excitement, but there was never the slightest relaxation of the formalism of the affair. For this dance in an earthen hovel on a plank floor was the degenerate but lineal descendant of the splendid and formal balls which the Dons had held in the old days, when New Spain belonged to its proud and wealthy conquerors; it was the wistful and grotesque remnant of a dying order.¹³

Miss Malkus writes an account of a baile given in Santa Fe. Although the assemblage is more heterogeneous than that found at the country baile, the dance had more aspects of formality. Everyone came to the dances, from the richest and proudest Mexicans of Spanish blood, down to the trappers and poor peons. This account is given in Caravans to Santa Fe.¹⁴

Interspersed through the novels, characteristics of the Mexicans are shown incidentally. Mexicans have always been known as a race that is not very thrifty. There is, however, one character in Miss Cather's Death Comes For the Archbishop, a parsimonious Mexican priest, who has the uncommon trait of thrift in such a marked degree that his fellows "find it very amusing; his people loved to tell how he never bought anything, but picked up old brooms after

13. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, p. 186.

14. Malkus, Alida, Caravans to Santa Fe, pp. 122-123.

housewives had thrown them away, and that he wore Padre Martinez's garments after the Padre would have them no longer, though they were so much too big for him."¹⁵

Another well-known trait of the Mexicans is their love for wines. When, for example, the Olivares family is about to entertain guests, the first thought of the servant Pablo is to bring out the wines. Apropos of this episode Miss Cather comments in parentheses:

The Mexicans are very fond of sparkling wines. Only a few years before this, an American trader who had got into serious political trouble with the Mexican military authorities in Santa Fe, regained their confidence and friendship by presenting them with a large wagon shipment of champagne—three thousand, three hundred and ninety-two bottles, indeed!¹⁶

Much more important, as Mr. Fergusson makes clear, is the Mexican's deep attachment to the soil. "Devotion to one particular bit of soil," writes Mr. Fergusson in recounting the adventures of one of his heroes, "is a Mexican characteristic, and in Ramon it was highly developed because he had spent so much of his life close to the earth. Every summer of his boyhood he had been sent to one of the sheep ranches which belonged to the various branches of his numerous family."¹⁷

The Catholic religion is shown by the novelists as being an active force in the lives of the Mexicans. The priests, good of

15. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, p. 162.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

17. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, pp. 11, 200.

evil, have always been considered authorities by the Mexicans. The Mexicans are, in fact, devoutly attached to Catholicism. In all the novels studied, only one reference is made to a Mexican converted to the Protestant religion, namely, that found in Blood of The Conquerors.¹⁸ An interesting outgrowth of the Mexican-Catholic church is the order of the penitentes, holding to old Indian and Mexican tradition blended with a few others from Christianity. This semi-pagan belief, with its attendant ceremonies, in which brutality and barbarous fanaticism often play a part, offers some of the most striking material used by the novelists. Many of them have in some measure employed it in their fiction, Mr. Fergusson, for example, in Blood of the Conquerors. The following account is a brief history and description of the order as Ramon Delcasar tells it to the American girl, Julia Roth.

"Well, I've seen lots of penitente processions, but the best one I ever saw was a long time ago, when I was a little kid. There are not so many of them now, and they don't do as much as they used to. The church is down on them, you know, and they're afraid. Ten years ago if you tried to look at them, they would shoot at you, but now tourists take pictures of them." . . .

"How did it get started?"

"I don't know exactly," Ramon admitted. "My grandfather told me that they brought it over from Spain centuries ago, and the Indians here had a sort of whipping fraternity, and the two got mixed up, I guess. The church used to tolerate it; it was a regular religious festival. But now it's outlawed. They still have a lot of political power. They all vote the same way. One man that was elected to Congress—they say that the penitente stripes on his back carried him there." . . .

18. Ibid., p. 225.

"Well, I was only about ten years old, and I was riding home from one of our ranches with my father. We were coming through Tijeras canyon. It was March, and there was snow on the ground in patches, and the mountains were cold and bare, and I remember I thought I was going to freeze. Every little while we would get off and set fire to a tumble-weed by the road, and warm our hands and then go on again. . . .

"Anyway, pretty soon I heard a lot of men singing, all together, in deep voices, and the noise echoed around the canyon and sounded awful solemn. And I could hear, too, the slap of the big wide whips coming down on the bare backs, wet with blood, like slapping a man with a wet towel, only louder. I didn't know what it was, but my father did, and he called to me and we spurred our horses right up the mountain, and hid in a clump of cedar there. Then they came around a bend in the road, and I began to cry because they were all covered with blood, and one of them fell down." . . .

"Well, in front there was un carreta del muerto. That means a wagon of death. I don't think you would ever see one any more. It was just an ordinary wagon drawn by six men, naked to the waist and bleeding, with other men walking beside them and beating them with blacksnake whips, just like they were mules. In the wagon they had a big bed of stones, covered with cactus, and a man sitting in the cactus, who was supposed to represent death. And then they had a Virgin Mary, too. Four penitentes just like the others, with nothing on but bloody pants and black bandages around their eyes, carried the image on a litter raised up over their heads, and they had swords fastened to their elbows and stuck between their ribs so that if they let down, the swords would stick into their hearts and kill them. And behind that came the Cristo—the man that represented Jesus, you know, dragging a big cross. Behind him came twenty or thirty more penitentes, the most I ever saw at once, some of them whipping themselves with broad whips made out of amole. One was too weak to whip himself, so two others walked behind him and whipped him. Pretty soon he fell down and they walked over him and stepped on his stomach. . . ."

"But did they crucify the man, the whatever-you-call-him?" Gordon demanded.

"The Cristo. Sure. They crucify one every year. They used to nail him. Now they generally do it with ropes, but that's bad enough, because it makes him swell up and turn blue. . . . Sometimes he dies."¹⁹

Later on in the book, Ramon decides to join the penitentes, to gain political control. Mr. Fergusson relates the horrible details of the initiation into the penitential order. It is a barbarous, ghastly ordeal to endure, but to gain power and wealth Ramon is willing to join.

Ramon went to the Morada, the chapter house of the penitentes, alone and late at night, for all of the whippings and initiations of the order, except those of Holy Week, are carried on in the utmost secrecy. . . .

Now he spoke a rigamarole in Spanish which had been taught him by rote.

"God knocks at his mission's door for His clemency," he called.

From within came a deep-voiced chorus, the first sound he had heard from the house, seeming weirdly to be the voice of the house itself.

"Penance, penance, which seeks salvation!" it chanted.

"Saint Peter will open to me the gate, bathing me with the light, in the name of Mary, with the seal of Jesus," Ramon went on, repeating as he had learned. "I ask this confraternity who gives this house light?"

"Jesus," answered the chorus within.

"Who fills it with joy?"

"Mary."

"Who preserves it with faith?"

"Joseph."

The door opened and Ramon entered the chapel room of the Morada. . . .

Still in complete silence Ramon was forced to his knees by two of the men, who quickly stripped him to the waist. Beside him stood a tall powerfully-built Mexican with his right arm bared. In his hand he held a triangular bit of white quartz, cleverly chipped to a cutting edge. This man was the sangredor, whose duty it was to place the seal of the order upon the penitent's back. His office required no little skill, for he had to make three cuts the whole length of the back and three the width, tearing through the skin so as to leave a permanent scar, but not deep enough to injure the muscle. . . .

He felt the hand of the sangredor upon his neck, and gritted his teeth. The man's grip was heavy, hot and

firm. A flash of pain shot up and down his back with lightning speed, as though a red hot poker had been laid upon it. Again and again and again! Six times in twice as many seconds the deft flint ripped his skin, and he fell forward upon his hands, faint and sick, as he felt his own blood welling upon his back and trickling in warm rivulets between his ribs.

But this was not all. To qualify, he knew, he must call for the lash of his own free will.

"For the love of God," he uttered painfully, as he had been taught, "the three meditations of the passion of our Lord."

On his town back a long black snake whip came down, wielded with merciless force. But he felt the full agony of the first blow only. The second seemed faint, and the third sent him plunging downward through a red mist into black nothingness.²⁰

A few days later, Ramon is recuperating from his period of penance. In the following account we learn how the Mexicans treat the wounds they have had inflicted upon themselves.

Gutierrez, a young sheep-herder, held the position of coadjutor of the local penitente chapter, and one of his duties as such was to take the penitent to his house and care for him after the initiation. He had washed Ramon's wounds in a tea made by boiling Romero weed. This was a remedy which the penitentes had used for centuries, and its efficacy was proven by the fact that Ramon's cuts had begun to heal at once, and that he had had very little fever.²¹

Miss Malkus uses the material about the penitentes only slightly, and her account is not nearly so gruesome as that of Mr. Fergusson. She describes a procession, and gives a brief explanation of the history:

"Look!" pointed Juan. "Listen! It is the pito (the flute)!"

On the cold clear air a thin, sweet, flute-like piping arose to them. A little man down in the

20. Ibid., pp. 163, 165-9.

21. Ibid., p. 170.

valley emerged from the house, carrying a book, which he held open before him, and from which he read aloud as he walked along. He was followed by one who played the flute, and behind him came a small procession, not more than five or six men, who wore masks, but who were bare to the waist, wearing nothing but white trunks. The men were striking themselves rhythmically across their backs with great whips, which were wetted from time to time in a bucket of brine carried alongside by another man. In a moment blood began to flow down their backs and the cotton trunks turned red. . . .

The procession was winding along a rocky thorn-strewn trail beneath them, quite near, and following those that smote themselves with the thorny whips came another, bearing upon his back a heavy wooden cross. . . .

"It was very old, this custom," Juan continued. "It came with the first Spaniards; sometimes an Indian had been Penitente, but rarely. Long ago the Pecos Indians, of the ruined pueblo one passed on the Trail to Santa Fe,—did he remember?— had made sacrifices, it was said. But they were Aztec; they worshiped differently."²²

Miss Cather uses this material incidentally in Death

Comes For the Archbishop. The Bishop considers the feasibility of trying to stop this heathenish order, but on all sides he is dissuaded. Senora Carson, wife of Kit Carson, tells Father Latour her opinion of the question:

"I often say to my husband, I hope you will not try to do that. It would only set the people against you. The old people have need of their old customs; and the young ones will go with the times."²³

Many of the country Mexicans in Death Comes For the Archbishop had lost almost all conception of the religion their forefathers had handed down to them. Father Vaillant tells how he feels towards these "lost Mexicans" and expresses a wish to help them:

22. Malkus, Alida, Caravans to Santa Fe, pp. 273-275.

23. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, p. 156.

"To hunt for lost Catholics, Jean! Utterly lost Catholics, down in your new territory, towards Tuscon. There are hundreds of poor families down there who have never seen a priest. I want to go from house to house this time, to every little settlement. They are full of devotion and faith, and it has nothing to feed upon but the most mistaken superstitions. They remember their prayers all wrong. They cannot read, and since there is no one to instruct them, how can they get right? They are like seeds, full of germination but with no moisture. A mere contact is enough to make them a living part of the Church. The more I work with the Mexicans, the more I believe it was people like them our Saviour bore in mind when He said, Unless ye become as little children. He was thinking of people who are not clever in the things of this world, whose minds are not upon gain and worldly advancement. These poor Christians are not thrifty like our country people at home; they have no veneration for property, no sense of material values."²⁴

In Blood of the Conquerors, Mr. Fergusson describes the Mexican death customs. The wealthy uncle of Ramon Delcasar dies, and Ramon is forced to observe the strict Mexican ceremonies.

The day after the news of his uncle's murder reached him, Ramon lay on his bed in his darkened room fully dressed in a new suit of black. . . . But it was a Mexican custom, old and revered, for the family of one recently dead to lie upon its beds in the dark and so to receive the condolences of friends and the consolations of religion. To disregard this custom would have been most unwise for an ambitious young man, and besides, Ramon's mother clung tenaciously to the traditional Mexican ways, and she would not have tolerated any breach of them. At this moment she and her two daughters were likewise lying in their rooms, clad in new black silk and surrounded by other sorrowing females.²⁵

The priest comes to Ramon, and from his attempts to persuade the nephew to pay his uncle's way out of purgatory, we learn the Mexican conception of Hell.

24. Ibid., p. 206.

25. Fergusson, Harvey, Blood of the Conquerors, p. 95.

"It is unthinkable of course that his soul should go to hell—hell, where a thousand demons torture the soul for an eternity. Hell is for those who commit the worst of sins, sins they dare not lay before God for his forgiveness, secret and terrible sins—sins like murder. But few of us go through life untouched by sin. The soul must be purified before it can enter the presence of its maker. . . . Doubtless the soul of your uncle is in purgatory, and to you is given the sweet power to speed that soul on its upward way. . . . "

The strong, cold grip of the priest held Ramon with increasing power. The monotonous, hypnotic voice went on and on, becoming ever more eloquent and confident. Father Lugaria was a man of imagination, and the special home of his imagination was hell. For thirty years he had held despotic sway over the poor Mexicans who made up most of his flock, and had gathered much money for the Church, by painting word-pictures of hell.²⁶

From the preceding quotation we see the hold the unscrupulous Mexican priests had over the people. Two contrasting types of Catholic priests are portrayed in Death Comes For the Archbishop. The kindly, sympathetic, and devout French priests are contrasted with the selfish, evil priests as illustrated by Padre Martinez at Taos. The Padre violates many of the vows that he took when he became a priest, but he has complete control over his people. Father Latour is shocked at the conditions he finds at Padre Martinez's.

To this eloquence the Bishop returned blandly that he had not come to deprive the people of their religion, but that he would be compelled to deprive some of the priests of their parishes if they did not change their way of life.

Father Martinez filled his glass and replied with perfect good humour. "You cannot deprive me of mine, Bishop. Try it! I will organize my own church. You can have your French priest at Taos, and I will have the people!"²⁷

26. Ibid., pp. 100-101.

27. Cather, Willa, Death Comes For the Archbishop, p. 148.

In the novel Remember the Alamo, the priest tried to get the spacious home of the Worth family for the Church. He attempts to draw the Senora Worth away from her family during the time of the trouble between Mexico and the United States. Her husband and sons are away at war, and the priest lays his plans.

Then like a flash a new thought invaded his mind—If the Senor Doctor disappeared forever, why not induce the Senora and her daughters to go into a religious house? There was a great deal of money. The church could use it well. . . .

She understood the underlying motive which prompted the priest to urge upon the Senora the removal of herself and her daughters to the convent. His offer to take charge of the Worth residencia and estate was in her conviction a proposal to rob them of all right in it.²⁸

The author of the novel Remember the Alamo shows the antagonism the Catholic priest felt toward the Americans in San Antonio, and their realization that the Americans would lessen their power.

For the priesthood foresaw that the triumph of the American element meant the triumph of freedom of conscience, and the abolition of their own despotism. To them the struggle was one involving all the privileges of their order; and they urged on the fight with passionate denunciations of the foe, and with magnificent promises of spiritual favors and blessings. In the fortress, the plaza, the houses, the churches, the streets, their fiery words kept society in a ferment.²⁹

During the early decade of the nineteenth century, the Mexicans and Spanish, as well as the Indians, suffered at the hands of the Americans. They were almost all ruined financially by the Americans. They could not adjust themselves to the American's way

28. Barr, Amelia E., Remember the Alamo, pp. 126, 147.

29. *Ibid*, p. 142.

of business, and gradually lost their vast possessions, including both their homes and their land, as we see in this quotation from the novel In Those Days.

Almost all of the old Mexican families had lost their money and land, had fallen to pieces just as their great homes had done--those huge sprawling homesteads with walls four feet thick, built around two and sometimes three courtyards, covering often an acre of ground. There had been one of them every few miles along the valley from Taos to El Paso. With their wide lands about them, their great store-rooms full of meat and grain, their troops of servants and their prolific women, they had seemed as safe and permanent as anything man could build. But the railroad wiped them out. The Mexicans were no good at business and couldn't make money enough to keep them up. The hands of slaves had built them and kept them intact by incessant plastering. When they were deserted their mighty walls melted in the rain like sugar.³⁰

One of the greatest changes the Americans made in the lives of the Mexicans resulted from the disregarding of the early Spanish land grants. Lorenzo Bernal de Vaga, for example, is practically ruined by the Texans in New Mexico. Moreover, the Texans ignored his Spanish land grants and those of the other Mexicans. Mr. Coolidge tells of the difficulties Mexicans experienced in keeping their grants, and of the Texans gaining possession of them from the original owners.

Yet so short had been the time since the Indians had been expelled that the Mexican sheepmen had not moved out onto the plains, and now they were so occupied in defending their ancient holdings that their only thought was to stand off the Texans. Living on for generations in a land of custom and traditions, they had ac-

30. Fergusson, Harvey, In Those Days, p. 240.

quired no legal title to their lands; many did not even realize that their old government had been superseded and the land laws of the Americans were supreme. No one had ever disputed the title to their land, nor to the water-holes where they summer-herded their sheep; and with the inrush of the Texans the whole country was taken up before they even thought of the Land Office.

Along the river and on the old grants, both Spanish and Mexican, they could show a title of sorts; but even there the old records had to be verified in distant lands, for they dated back to the Conquest. Emperors and viceroys with a prodigal hand had given away land by the league. The leagues east and west from the Rio Grande River—forty leagues, measured on horseback and guessed at—so read and so laid these gifts to royal favorites, and to the colonists who settled the unknown wastes. Old land marks were forgotten, rivers had changed and trees had fallen since the grants had been measured and parceled out; and the rough hands of the Texans brushed all hearsay evidence aside as they clamored for the deeds to the land.³¹

In Caravans to Santa Fe, Miss Malkus tells how the Mexicans attempted to keep back the traders who were infringing on their rights, but their efforts were wasted. The Americans continued to come, and at last the Mexicans were forced to trade with them.

Don Anabel himself had from the first resented these intruders bitterly. To him the white men from across the plains were still colonists of the hereditarily hated English. They were thrown into the carcel, hindered in every way, yet still they came! And in the end Don Anabel traded with them, as every one else did. It was to his advantage.³²

The acequias of irrigation canals were very precious to the Mexicans and Indians, who had strict rules in regard to the use of them. James Bragdon, an unscrupulous character in Caravans to Santa Fe, selfishly disregarded these rules and increased the hatred toward Americans.

31. Coolidge, Dane, Lorenzo the Magnificent, p. 103-104.

32. Malkus, Alida, Caravans to Santa Fe, p. 137.

The next day he was watering his new possessions, having shut down the headgate below in the "sakey," and the muddy water had already run over his field when an irate Mexican followed by two others came posthaste through the fields, gesticulating and threatening. Bragdon realized that he was in trouble and made no objection when they opened the ditch below him and went off muttering to shut the water off from his ditch above.

Ceran St. Vrain endeavored to explain to the Yankee that afternoon, that the rules of irrigating in that country were sacred and that only the master of the acequias could say when to open the gates and when not, and where the water was to be distributed. He warned him not to use water until permitted. "But his crops he had bought in the land need it," protested the man, indignantly. That might be, St. Vrain conceded, but they knew best what could be used, and it was possible that Bragdon's place had no right to that water.³²

Thus the Americans are shown as having ruined the happy land the Mexicans had built for themselves in a New Spain. The future for these light-hearted people, as it is depicted by the novelists, is not a very happy one. The Mexicans have been a vivacious race, highly emotional and pleasure-loving, but many of their pleasures have been taken from them. They have been demonstrative and liked the spectacular in whatever they did, either in their church or their bailes—a fact which Miss Cather points out in Death Comes For the Archbishop, in which the qualities of the people and of the country are discussed with great sympathy.

Here, these demonstrations seemed a part of the high colour that was in the landscape and gardens, in the flaming cactus and the gaudily decorated altars,—in the agonized Christs and dolorous Virgins and the very human figures of the saints. He had already learned that with this people religion was necessarily theatrical.³³

32. Ibid., pp. 161-162.

33. Cather, Willa, Death Comes for the Archbishop, p. 142.

What other race but the descendants of the Spanish would indulge in the fanaticism of the penitentes? One almost feels when one reads of it, as if a part of the spirit of the Middle Ages had revived and found a new place again. One turns away from a consideration of the Mexicans with a feeling of sympathy for these gay children of Old Spain who have been deprived of their homes and happy round of pleasure.

Chapter V

HISTORICAL MATERIAL

The historical matter treated in these novels is, curious as it may seem, slight. A few historical novels have been written, as, for example, Remember the Alamo and The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: A Story of the Alamo. A history of the lawless element in the early towns is admirably treated by Mr. Walter N. Burns in his two books to which I have already made reference—The Sage of Billy the Kid and Tombstone. The progress and changes brought by the barbed wire and railroad have been illustrated from the novels Conquest and In Those Days. The two novels show how it was possible for men who came to the early pioneer towns to gain position and respectability by the time they were old men.

The interesting historical material relating to the massacre of the Texans at the Alamo has received less attention during the twentieth century than one should expect. Mrs. Amelia Barr has written the book Remember the Alamo, and Mr. W. O. Stoddard uses the battle as a basis for part of his novel The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: A Story of the Alamo. These novels are not new, however, and their material is not handled in the new manner. Both novelists paint Sam Houston as a meteoric hero, Mrs. Barr using him as a principal in her story.

Mrs. Barr selects San Antonio for the setting of her story,

and gives a brief account of the history of its struggles before the was of the Alamo.

In fact, no city on the American continent has such a bloody record as San Antonio. From its settlement by the warlike monks of 1692, to its final capture by the Americans in 1836, it was well named "the city of the sword". The Comanche and the white man fought around its walls their forty years' battle for supremacy. From 1810 to 1821 its streets were constantly bloody with the fight between the royalists and republicans, and the city and the citadel passed from one party to the other continually. And when it came to the question of freedom and American domination, San Antonio was, as it had ever been, the great Texan battlefield.¹

In the book Remember the Alamo, Santa Anna is an important minor character who is painted as a heartless scoundrel by the author. Throughout the book appears the freedom-loving spirit of the Americans who will not tolerate oppression from the Mexican dictator. The author shows the result when Santa Anna's edict to prevent Americans from carrying arms is read.

"In the Plaza I saw the military band approaching, accompanied by half a dozen officers and a few soldiers. The noise stopped suddenly, and Captain Morcello proclaimed as a bando (edict) of the highest authority an order for all Americans to surrender their arms of every description to the officials and at the places notified." . . .

"The Americans had evidently been expecting this useless bombast, and ere the words were well uttered, they answered them with a yell of defiance. . . . I can tell you this, Maria: all the millions in Mexico can not take their rifles from the ten thousand Americans in Texas, able to carry them."²

1. Barr, Amelia E., Remember the Alamo, p. 228.
2. Ibid., pp. 79-80.

Mrs. Barr continues her story by describing the taking of the Alamo by the Americans. With little preparation and equipment, but with great determination, they win the Mexican stronghold. Dr. Worth, the hero of Mrs. Barr's novel, relates the happenings of the war to his wife.

"Under the Mexican republican flag of eighteen twenty-four; but indeed, Maria, I do not think we had one in the camp. We were destitute of all the trappings of war—we had no uniforms, no music, no flags, no positive military discipline. But we had one heart and mind, and one object in view; and this four days' fight has shown what men can do, who are moved by a single, grand idea."³

Colonel James Bowie and the other men who died so bravely at the Alamo, are pictured by Mrs. Barr as talking over the battle that was to come with Santa Anna. Bowie makes this rousing speech to the men:

And the calm, gentlemanly Bowie was suddenly transformed into a flashing, vehement, furious avenger. He laid his knife and pistols on the table, his steel-blue eyes scintillated as if they were lightning; his handsome mouth, his long, white hands, his whole person radiated wrath and expressed the utmost lengths of invincible courage and insatiable hatred. . . .

"We have none of us lived very well," said Bowie, "but we can die well. I say as an American, that Texas is ours by right of natural locality, and by right of treaty; and, as I live, I will do my best to make it American by right of conquest! Comrades, I do not want a prettier quarrel to die in"—and looking with a brave, unflinching gaze around the grim fortress—"I do not want a better monument than the Alamo!"⁴

The march of Santa Anna and his army into San Antonio is described. In typical Mexican fashion, they enter with ostentation and display of gay colors.

3. Ibid., p. 200

4. Ibid., p. 288-289.

Santa Anna and his staff-officers were in front. They passed too rapidly for individual notice, but it was a grand moving picture of handsome men in scarlet and gold—of graceful mangas and waving plumes, and bright-colored velvet capes; of high-mettled horses, and richly-adorned Mexican saddles, aqueras of black fur, and silver stirrups; of thousands of common soldiers, in a fine uniform of red and blue; with antique brazen helmets gleaming in the sun, and long lances, adorned with tri-colored streamers. They went past like a vivid, wonderful dream—like the vision of an army of mediaeval knights.⁵

Mrs. Barr next writes of the battle at the Alamo. The horrors of the treatment the Americans receive from the merciless Mexicans are described. A witness to the fall of the Alamo relates the cruelty of Santa Anna toward the last few helpless survivors.

"Castrillon could not kill these heroes. He asked their lives of Santa Anna, who stood with a scowling, savage face in this last citadel of his foes. For answer, he turned to the men around him, and said, with a malignant emphasis: 'Fire!' It was the last volley. Of the defenders of the Alamo, not one is left."⁶

The author gives another account near the end of Remember the Alamo showing how relentless and inhuman the Mexicans were towards their prisoners of war. They apparently had no sense of honor in warfare.

"Entirely encircled by them, yet still fighting and pressing onward, we defended ourselves until our ammunition gave out. Then we accepted the terms of capitulation offered by Urrea, and were marched back to Goliad as prisoners of war. Santa Anna ordered us all to be shot."

5. Ibid., p. 301.

6. Ibid., p. 327-328.

"But you were prisoners of war?"

"Urrea laughed at the articles, and said his only intention in them was to prevent the loss of Mexican blood. . . .

"On the eighth day after the surrender, a lovely Sunday morning, we were marched out of the fort on the pretense of sending us to Louisiana, according to the articles of surrender, and we were in high spirits at the prospect.

"But I noticed that we were surrounded by a double row of soldiers, and that made me suspicious. In a few moments, Fannin was marched into the centre, and told to sit down on a low stool. He felt that his hour had come. . . . The Mexican colonel raised his sword, the drums beat, and the slaughter began. Fifty men at a time were shot; and those whom the guns missed or crippled, were dispatched with the bayonet or lance."⁷

The Texans today still celebrate San Jacinto day to commemorate the gaining of their independence. Dr. Worth recounts to his family and friends after the battle the challenge Sherman gave the men, and their response at this encounter.

"And when Sherman shouted the battle-cry: 'Remember the Alamo! Goliad and the Alamo!' it was taken up by the whole seven hundred, and such a shout of vengeance mortal ears never heard before. The air was full of it, and it appeared to be echoed and repeated by innumerable voices.

"With this shout on our lips, we advanced to within sixty paces of the Mexican lines, and then a storm of bullets went flying over our heads. One ball, however, shattered Houston's ankle, and another struck his horse in the breast. But both man and horse were of the finest metal, and they pressed on regardless of their wounds. We did not answer the volley until we poured our lead into their very bosoms. No time for reloading then. We clubbed our rifles till they broke, flung them away and fired our pistols in the eyes of the enemy; then, nothing else remaining, took our bowie-knives from our belts and cut our way through the walls of living flesh."⁸

7. Ibid., pp. 345-346.

8. Ibid., pp. 375-376.

After Texas gained her independence, Americans poured into the state. Mrs. Barr writes of the increase in the numbers of the Americans, and of the change they brought.

Americans were coming by hundreds and by thousands; and those Mexicans who could not make up their minds to become Texans, and to assimilate with the new elements sure to predominate, were quietly breaking up their homes and transferring their interests across the Rio Grande.

They were not missed, even for a day. Some American was ready to step into their place, and the pushing, progressive spirit of the race was soon evident in the hearty way with which they set to work, not only to repair what war had destroyed, but to inaugurate those movements which are always among their first necessities. Ministers, physicians, teachers, mechanics of all kinds, were soon at work; churches were built, Bibles were publicly sold, or given away; schools were advertised; the city was changing its tone as easily as a woman changes the fashion of her dress. Santa Anna had said truly enough to Houston, that the Texans had no flag to fight under; but the young Republic very soon flung her ensign out among those of the gray nations of the world. It floated above the twice glorious Alamo; a bright blue standard, with one white star in the centre.⁹

In The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: A Story of the Alamo,

W. O. Stoddard uses Bowie as the hero. Stoddard's account of the fall of the Alamo is not nearly so detailed as Mrs. Barr's. In this passage he tells of the impending disaster about to fall on the Texans. On all sides there were trouble and dangers brewing.

He hardly knew, at that moment, how dark a cloud seemed to be hanging over Texas in those closing days of the winter of 1835-1836. All things had been going wrong. There were quarrels among the leaders, and even Houston had lost, apparently, a great deal of his popularity.

9. Ibid., pp. 408-409.

It seemed to be of little use. The Indians were busy on the borders. Reports of the feeling in the Congress of the United States were discouraging. All the while, moreover, every arrival from the south of the Rio Grande told me of the extensive preparations which the Mexican president was making for an invasion. He was said to have gathered a force that would prove overwhelming, and he declared death to all rebels.¹⁰

Besides the material on military and political affairs, several of the novels contain chapters dealing with social and religious history. Much about the manners and customs of early times may be learned from the novelists. Miss Cather, for example, tells us about the modes of travel in the unsettled Southwest of pioneer days, the way meals were served, the relation of servants and master, their fashion of dress, and their marriage ceremonies. Mr. Bandelier, laying his story farther in the past, pictures the every day life of the Pueblo Indians; their methods of building their houses, their communication with distant tribes, their method of governing themselves, their war customs, and their burial customs. Mr. La Farge, perhaps, better than any of the group, leaves a series of convincing accounts of every day life among the Indians. He describes their holiday sports, the etiquette observed at their dances, their crafts of weaving and silver making, the diet of the Navajos, and the conventions adhered to in the life of the hogahn.

In the work of other novelists, one learns about the life among the aristocratic Spanish settlers, the Americans in the newly founded towns, the Texas ranchers, the traders with their caravans,

10. Stoddard, W. O., The Lost Gold of the Montezumas: A Story of the Alamo, p. 220.

and the Mexicans on their large ranches. Miss Malkus pictures the mode of life of the Spanish settlers in Santa Fe, their dances, their dinners, and their bickerings with the traders. Mr. Coolidge describes the life of the Mexican ranchers, their generous spirit of hospitality, their care-free existence, and their gay bailes and fiestas.

Of still greater interest, possibly, is the information on the religious ideas and ideals of the time and on religious history. The material found is varied in theme and treats of widely separated periods of time. The degrees of influence of the various sects are shown incidentally by the authors.

There are four different kinds of religion described in these novels of the Southwest. The Catholic church with its elaborate ritual has made the strongest appeal to the people who live in this vivid country. The Spanish brought over their Catholic religion, and converted a number of Indians. Two types of Catholic priests are depicted in the novels. In Death Comes For the Archbishop, Miss Cather draws a contrast between the devout French priests and the unscrupulous Mexican priests. However, not all of the Mexican priests are portrayed as being evil. Miss Cather describes the priests of the outlying districts as kindly and religious men.

An interesting outgrowth of the Catholic church is the order of the penitentes; a complete and detailed account of this order is found in The Blood of the Conquerors.

The Protestant faith has exerted very little influence on these people. The only book which mentions to any extent a conflict between the Catholics and Protestants is the book written by Mrs. Barr. She does show the hatred the Catholic priests feel for the heretics, and their constant and energetic attempt to keep the Mexicans from their influence.

The old pagan beliefs have proved dear to the Indian's heart and he has been loath to relinquish them entirely. The various Indian tribes built up mythologies of their own, believing in personifications of natural phenomena—just as other primitive peoples have done who have lived so close to nature. They had dances to celebrate the various seasons of the year. Corn was the center of many of their beliefs, as it was their principal means of livelihood. Because of their love for ritual and pageantry, the Catholic church has had the greatest attraction for the Indian. However, as I pointed out in Chapter III, even though the Indian accepts the Catholic religion, he has a tendency to retain elements of his old religion and intermingle the two.

If the novelists have not made full use of the political and military happenings that have marked the history of the Southwest, they at least have shown the possibility of them as fictional episodes, as well as left a rather full record of the social and religious background. They have described the Indian and Mexican customs in detail especially. The religious ideas of the Indians have proved to be the most interesting to the novelists, although even this material

has not been treated exhaustively. It may be, as a result of the new interest in the Southwest, more books dealing with this almost neglected material will be written.

CONCLUSIONS

From the preceding chapters it is clear that to the numerous writers of fiction the material offered by life and nature in the Southwest has proved highly attractive. They have ranged over the whole area, picturing the landscape, recording the strong impressions the desert and mountain and plain have made upon them, recounting the experiences of the various people who have made this region their home.

The novelists have been neglectful of no particular period of the region's history. They have pictured life among the aborigines, and they have, also, described the Southwest as it is today. Mr. Bandelier, perhaps, has done the most distinguished work in the older period. His Delight Makers (1890) represents scenes from the life of the primitive Pueblos as he imagined they existed in pre-historic days, and although the events are imaginary, the book is based on careful study of all the archaeological data available. Miss Cather, too, has written of the ruins left by the primitive Pueblos in Song of the Lark (1915) and The Professor's House (1925). A later period, which might for the sake of convenience be called the middle period, is the theme of ten books, the settings for which range from those of the early days of the nineteenth century to those of the close of the century. Death Comes For the Archbishop (1928) is about the earlier part of the century. Remember the Alamo (1909) and The Lost

Gold of the Montezumas (1835) treat of the period before the middle of the century, as the fall of the Alamo, around which the two stories center, occurred in 1835. Under the Sun (1926), Conquest (1930), 'Dobe Walls (1929) Caravans to Santa Fe (1928) and Lorenzo the Magnificent (1924) represent the middle years of the century. Tombstone (1927) and The Saga of Billy the Kid (1925) cover the last period of the century in the "eighties". Finally there are several novels dealing with the twentieth century—The Blood of the Conquerors (1921), Laughing Boy (1929), Windsinger (1930), and The Dragon Fly of Zuni (1928). In Those Days (1929) covers a length of time from the "days of the wagon" to the "gas age".

Not only is there a wide range in the periods of time represented, but also in the choice of subject matter stressed. On the whole, the Indians have proved to be the most attractive kind of material the region has afforded. Three of the books are on the Navajos, four on the Pueblos, and in almost all of the others the Indians enter. The Indian as a primitive savage, the Indian as a foe of the white man, the Indian as a victim of the later American settlers, the Indian as a picturesque and pathetic reminder of older civilizations—all these enter strongly into the fiction. There are the bold, ruthless outlaws, the vigorous, ambitious rangers, the haughty Spanish landed gentry, the lowly Mexican of mixed Spanish descent, the American soldiers, the travelers and adventurers in the region. And besides the material provided by the human beings of the Southwest, there is, as already mentioned, the striking spectacle of

natural forces which impresses itself indelibly on the minds of the novelists, and which is reflected in scene after scene in the fiction.

Turning from the material and fiction to the authors themselves, one discovers several enlightening facts. In the first place, it is apparent that the widespread interest in the Southwest is of comparatively recent date. Except for Mr. Bandelier and several other authors not treated in this study, the novelists writing on the region belong to recent times and even to the twentieth century. The earlier writers did not handle their material so effectively as the modern writers, and wrote their books in a stilted manner. However, Mr. Bandelier's book stands out from the rest of the novels as being an authentic storehouse of Indian legends and information fictionized. The twentieth century author has been more impressed by the grandeur and the exotic quality of much of the life of the Southwest. Although there are points of similarity between a few of the writers, the fiction of recent date is not of even quality. Laughing Boy and Windsinger, for example, have appeared within the last year or two, and yet how different they are in fundamental worth. Laughing Boy is definitely superior in the purity and suitability of its prose and in the dramatic arrangement of material. There is a quiet tragedy in Windsinger's never-ending quest for the song of the gods. The book is not so virile, however, as Laughing Boy, and lacks its simplicity and reality. Windsinger never fully materializes as a living character, but always remains a strange and shadowy figure. Mr. La

Farge makes effective use of short, terse sentences in relating the conversation and thoughts of his characters. Both novelists are masters of their field, but Mr. La Farge handles his narrative with greater artistry than does Miss Gillmor.

A consideration of the writers about the Southwest as a group shows that they constitute no school. They have in common only an interest in the region and a feeling for its beauty and significance. A few words about several of them seem appropriate here. Included among those of importance who have given the largest amount of information concerning the Southwest are Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Fergusson. They have written extensively of the types of peoples, the Indian, the Spanish and the American, of their contacts with each other and with the natural forces. Those who have furnished the most detailed account of historical background are Mr. Bandelier, Miss Cather, Mr. Vestal, Miss Malkus, and Mr. Fergusson. The religious history, accounts of changes in customs and manner of living brought by the settlers, their struggles, and the development of the country are related by these authors. Those who excel in the artistry of the presentation of their material are Miss Cather and Mr. La Farge. They both write with great mastery of their subject. Miss Cather writes with more ability than any of the others, and reveals the genuine fascination that the land has for her. She handles her material with sympathy and understanding, and, above all others, catches the real spirit of this exotic country and its people. It may be said that her books contain many instances of "purple patches" that attract

the attention of her readers. The highest mark in this phase of American literature has been reached by Miss Cather.

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