Literature in the Louisiana Plantation Home Prior to 1861: A Study in Literary Culture.

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LITERATURE IN THE LOUISIANA PLANTATION HOME PRIOR TO 1861

A STUDY IN LITERARY CULTURE

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
AND
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE
IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ENGLISH

By

Walton Richard Patrick
M. A., Louisiana State University, 1934
1937
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ABSTRACT

Southern ante-bellum plantation life has been the focusing point of an increasingly large body of writing during the past several decades. Much of this writing has done little more than add to confused and exaggerated conceptions already existing regarding various phases of the plantation regime. Specifically, on one aspect of this life, the culture of the members of the plantation class, there has been more tacit acceptance of heresay evidence than factual investigation.

The purpose of this study is to show the nature of the literary culture of the plantation class of ante-bellum Louisiana. This problem is approached from two angles: from the reading interests as reflected by booksellers' advertisements appearing in Louisiana newspapers and periodicals during the period; and from the reading interests as indicated by contents of plantation libraries. From the combined evidence afforded by these two sources, it is possible to draw fairly accurate conclusions regarding the literary culture of the plantation class.

Introduction There is always a close connection between the social and economic life of any class of people and their cultural life. Therefore, it is important to consider the peculiar characteristics of the
society which the plantation system fostered. The dominant ideal of southern life was the large plantation, and thus it was the planters as a class who molded the social and intellectual life of the populace. With one ruling, aristocratic class setting the standard for the whole population, and with outside forces limited to a fairly close contact with England, traditionalism and conservatism naturally became firmly established traits of the southern personality. These led to certain distinct attitudes toward life, such as exaggerated courtesy, refinement in social life, and open-handed hospitality. Because the plantation owner was also a leader in his community, he centered interest on law, politics, and governmental affairs.

The Plantation System in Louisiana

The cultural background of Louisiana is unusually rich and varied. The plantation system as it existed in Louisiana before 1861 did not differ in its essential features from that of other states of the Lower South. One difference has an important bearing on the immediate problem: there was a strong French element in the population of South Louisiana. Evidence of various kinds points to a widespread interest in literature, not only among the plantation class, but also among the yeomanry.
Newspapers and Booksellers

Toward the middle of the century almost every town had at least one newspaper, many of the larger having two or three; some newspapers maintained reading rooms for the convenience of their patrons in connection with their regular establishments. Likewise, almost every town of any size whatever had a bookseller, and many had two or three. The majority of these evidently enjoyed a flourishing business, indicating that large quantities of books were being sold. Naturally the planters, because they composed the wealthiest portion of the population, were the largest buyers.

Plantation Libraries

How many plantation libraries existed in Louisiana during the period under consideration and what their sizes were are questions that cannot be conclusively determined. However, every plantation home had a library of some size, and many of these had more than a thousand volumes. A relatively small number of libraries have been preserved because they perished along with other elements of the old regime. In this study representative collections, partial and complete, from different sections of the state have been used.

Reading Interests As Reflected in Advertisements

In attempting to determine the reading interests of Louisiana during the period under consideration, the advertisements of the various booksellers may be used as fairly accurate barometers. A study of these
advertisements reveals an interest in almost every form of literature. Standard authors, such as Shakespeare and Milton, together with the contemporary popular authors, such as Scott, G. P. R. James, Bulwer, Byron, and Mrs. Hemans predominate. Romantic fiction and poetry seem to have been preferred to other types. History and biography far outnumber the other varieties of non-fiction, though scientific works deserve special mention. Periodicals, both foreign and native, are regularly advertised and probably formed a large part of the reading done by the plantation owners as well as by the general population.

Although the contents of libraries represent individual reading interests, it is revealing that, to a remarkable degree, they closely resemble one another and exhibit the same general nature of reading interests as do the booksellers' advertisements. General literature, chiefly of the English and French romantic school, as found in the advertisements, usually makes up the largest division of each collection. The tendency toward history and biography, indicated in the advertisements is strongly evidenced in these libraries, forming as they do a classification second only to the romantic fiction mentioned. The French collections, of course,
indicate a strong preference for French authors. However, there were many mutual points of contacts between the reading tastes of the two nationalities as seen in translated works. Important among the more specialized types of literature, which also constituted a fair portion of each library, were scientific works, literary annuals and gift books, reference works, travel books, and works of a social nature.

Periodical Literature The popularity of periodical literature only confirms the nature of the literary taste as already evidenced by the predominance of certain types of writings. A fairly large number of the standard British magazines, such as Blackwood's and the Edinburgh, enjoyed a considerable following among the plantation class. The greater part of the American periodicals read by the plantation class were northern publications, and these were mostly of the type represented by Cady's Lady's Book.

Main Currents of Reading Interests: Romanticism An explanation of these findings is seen in the fact that the southern system encouraged a romantic outlook and thus led to a strong preference for romantic fiction and poetry. It must be remembered, however, that the system which grew out of the natural economic and geographic factors of the region encouraged romanticism as a
philosophical pattern which accorded well with a life withdrawn from the harsher aspects of human existence; the evidence permits no distortion of this fact into a theory which intimates that the people of the South fashioned their society on the flimsy, whimsical tenets of a romantic philosophy. In this connection History and Biography the influence of Scott has been clearly exaggerated. No one type of romanticism predominated to the exclusion of all other types. A simple analysis of the type of histories and biographies written during this period explains their appeal on the same grounds as were found for the romantic appeal.

Conclusion The reading of the Louisiana plantation class, and therefore the dominant reading habits of the society as a whole, was not restricted to narrow channels but ranged over many diversified types of literature. This lack of concentration indicates a broad rather than a profound literary culture, a fact in keeping with a society that was at once provincial and cosmopolitan.
INTRODUCTION

During the past several decades the southern ante-bellum plantation has been the focusing point of an increasingly large body of writing. The reason for this interest is two-fold: plantation life because of its unusual character provides abundant material for the fiction writer; and that same unusual character, forming as it did a distinct way of life, yields important sociological, economical, and historical factors to the student of the period. The recent attempts to present and evaluate this material have resulted in a mass of writings which only add to the confusion already existing, for these writings make no serious attempt to correct the popular conception of plantation life which is marked by a superficial romanticism, an exaggeration of certain attractive features of the old life, and an omission of other more serious considerations.

Almost every phase of plantation life has been treated in one fashion or the other—either by debunkers or by eulogizers. But on one aspect of this life, the culture
of the plantation class, there has been more tacit
acceptance of hearsay evidence than factual investigation.
The standard conception is that pre-war southerners read
Scott, Byron, the classics, and very little else. It is
ture that the reading taste in a general way ran along these
lines, but Scott, Byron, and the classics by no means furnish
a true indication of the real nature and broadness of the
literary culture.

The objective of this study is to show the nature and
extent of the reading interests of the Louisiana plantation
class before 1861. Because the most prosperous period of
the plantation in Louisiana was from 1830 to 1860, the
major emphasis necessarily is placed on that period. The
problem is approached, first, from the evidence of the
reading interest as reflected in booksellers' advertisements
in Louisiana newspapers and periodicals during the period;
and second, from the evidence of reading interest presented
by the contents of ante-bellum plantation libraries.

There is always a close connection between the social
and economic life of any class of people and their cultural
life. One is determined by the other. Therefore, an
understanding of the nature and structure of plantation
society as it existed in Louisiana and other southern states is a necessary prelude to a study of the cultural interests of ante-bellum Louisiana.

The plantation with its way of life stands for what is romantically implied in the term, "the good old times." This life is conceived of as being brilliant in social affairs, conservative in thought, provincial in manner, yet, withal, rich in culture, a culture born of luxury—an accruement of slave labor. In fact, the plantation is often taken as a symbol of an idealized golden period of American life, which, in reality, has more existence in fancy than in fact. In many respects, however, the epoch of the southern plantation—especially from about 1800 to the War—presents a life which has no historical parallel.

F. P. Gaines, in tracing the accuracy of the plantation tradition in American thought and literature, has found it wholly reliable in presenting the great plantation ideal as dominant in southern life. "To be a great planter was the ambition of many. The large plantation was the \textit{me plus ultra} of society."\(^1\) Although they were by far in the minority, the planters—particularly the large planters—were the rulers of southern life. As the intellectual leaders in public life, they set the standards for polite

society, and molded public opinion. In brief, they made southern life what it was.

It was to the planter that the general populace looked for guidance and support. "If a policy is advocated," wrote the editor of a Louisiana newspaper in 1848, "which cripples the energies of the planters, and secures to them but scanty profits on their capital and incessant toil, the mechanics suffer, all other classes and professions suffer, the resources of the country's wealth are closed up, and ruin and decay will soon follow. The plantations are the great foundations from which the wealth of this country flows."^3

The popular impression, however, that southern life was composed of three, and only three, sharply differentiated classes—the planters, the slaves, and the poor whites^4—is entirely incorrect. The wealthy planter stood at the top rank of society; the difference between his position and that of the shiftless Florida cracker or the backwoods Tennessee mountaineer was indeed great. But the difference

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^2 Editorial in *Planters' Banner*, XIII, 38 (September 14, 1848)

^3 For instance, consider the following statement: "Socially, the old South, like 'all Gaul,' was divided into three parts—the slaveholding planters, the aristocrats of the social system, few relatively in numbers but mighty in wealth and authority; the negro slaves...; and lastly, non-slaveholding whites, a distinctly third estate."—Hamill, H. M., *The Old South*, Nashville, Tennessee, publication of the Confederate Veteran, 1905. p. 12
between these two extremes was filled up with a large and respectable yeomanry class. Comparatively few of this class owned slaves. They rented or owned their land; they furnished the native supply of skilled white mechanics and tradesmen; some were able to enter professional ranks and a few gained political honors, "but generally it was more difficult for them to be merged with the extreme element of the upper class than with the 'poor whites'." These people were to be reckoned with as a power; they were comparable to the great middle class of England.

Quite naturally among the planters there was a gradation in regard to wealth and importance. The range was from the small planter with fifteen to twenty slaves to the large planter possessing a hundred, two hundred, or even a thousand slaves. These large planters were the aristocrats of southern life.

What, then were the general traits of this restricted class of people? How was their society different from and similar to others of other ages and places? What forces accounted for their attitude toward life?

Because of a common occupation, integrated with a common institution--slavery--the plantation gentry tended

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toward a fixed standard of conduct and thought. This fact naturally resulted in conservatism and provincialism. In the first place, a large percentage of this upper stratum of society was derived from English stock, and in the new country the English tradition was carried on, modified, of course, by time, place, and circumstances. In addition to this many of the plantation gentry kept in fairly constant contact with England. They traveled abroad; they very often sent their sons to the continent to be educated; in many instances, they had direct business dealings with England; and finally, as will be more fully discussed later, they read the current British periodicals. Consequently, this close connection with English customs and manners did much to foster the continuance of the English tradition in the South, and the English tradition has always been a conservative one. Furthermore, the life of the large plantation owner was the ideal of the other classes and the more ambitious yeomanry class sought to emulate the planters in manner, bearing, and habits of life.

Thus the several classes developed no distinct and separate traditions but united in glorifying the kind of life enjoyed by the large planter.

From the outset conditions were favorable for the growth of provincialism in the South. The chief cause for this lies in the fact that the South had no great influx
of alien customs and manners, other than those of conservatime England mentioned above. From the great flood of immigrants that came to the United States between the years of 1783 and 1865, the southern states received a comparatively small percentage. The reasons for this are easily explained. First, the absence of industrial opportunities brought little inducement to the immigrant; second, competition with slave labor yielded only small and unattractive returns; and third, profitable farming required capital which the immigrant did not possess. Hence, the incentive for the poorer classes to come South was not strong, and the character of southern life remained fairly stable, especially after about 1830. Provincialism was a natural result.

This conservative and provincial character of the South gave rise to, or at any rate, accentuated the development of certain distinct mannerisms and attitudes of life which were later termed "Southern." The code of honor, which so often was sanctified upon the duelist's field, an exaggerated courtesy, a chivalrous attitude toward women, polish and refinement in social life, and an open-handed hospitality are among the more common of these. All are

qualities tending toward an accepted and generally recognized standard of life, and they can be explained upon the basis of a way of living.

The plantation, almost an autonomous establishment, was the social unit of southern life. Within his own province the planter was the supreme authority. He was accustomed to leading, to giving orders, and he brought up his son in the same tradition. As a natural consequence the male portion of the plantation gentry developed traits of self assurance, individualism, and superiority. They made their own terms with life, and had no inclination to have these terms dictated to them. This attitude gave rise to an exaggerated sense of honor, with its concomitant phenomenon, the code duello.

It is very probable that the code of honor had much to do with inculcating and promoting the peculiar characteristics of southern courtesy and politeness. If a southern gentleman chose to place the wrong interpretation on a word, gesture, or look, he or his compatriot might be mortally offended. Great care was taken, therefore, to leave no room for doubt; every word, gesture, or look was accompanied by its polite, and sometimes too obvious, explanation. The resulting development of the social code became an almost exaggerated courtesy which occupied an important part of every commercial as well as social transaction.
The conception that has developed regarding social life—luxurious living and a preoccupation with games and sports, and the like—is largely the result of the stringing together of exceptions to the general rule. It is true that "social instincts of the Southerners were intensified by the fewness of opportunities for gratifying them," for, as a general rule, the plantation was situated in an isolated and thinly settled district; communication was not always an easy matter because of distances and poor roads. Life was not lived by the clock, and there was time for visiting, for parties, and for social functions. But it is only in a few limited localities, such as the Tidewater section of Virginia, the rice districts of South Carolina, and the lower Mississippi Valley, that the actual charm of social life even approached that which is popularly pictured as true of the whole South.

The plantation owners as a general rule could not afford the luxurious life often ascribed to them, for "...there were few millionaires among the population, and the mass of wealth was in land or slaves." The average planter was

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6Ingle, op. cit., p. 45
7Gaines, op. cit., p. 144
8Ingle, op. cit., p. 43
none too careful in the handling of his resources, and
many lived near the edge of bankruptcy. Nevertheless there
were a considerable number who could afford to live on a
grand scale. They built fine houses—even mansions—and
filled them with expensive imported fixtures. But the
average plantation did not roll in luxury, nor was life a
gay, joyous and brilliant round of parties. In certain
places at certain times plantation life was unrivalled in
splendor, but "the successful planter worked hard, not merely
in effecting the organization of his resources, but even in
the actual superintendence of work upon the plantation."9

It is unsound to generalize about particular southern
qualities, to assume that those were universally adhered to,
or that life was completely unified in character. For
instance consider the extreme view of one critic:

The life in the South, no matter
from what point of view we approach it
was homogeneous in all, save population;
the history of a church, of a family,
of a plantation, of a parish, of a country,
exhibits the selfsame features that on
one hand gave it richness and on the
other proclaimed its weakness.10

9The South in the Building of the Nation, op. cit., Vol. III,
p. 118

10Moses, Montrose J., The Literature of the South, New
York: Crowell and Company, 1910, p. 93
It is safe to say that southern life was molded or directed by certain standards of life which varied less in the South than elsewhere. But there was no united South in thought, ideals, or manners.

Neither planters, nor slaves, nor overseers ... were cast in one mold—traditions, romances, diatribes and imaginative histories to the contrary notwithstanding. Plantation life and industry had in the last analysis as many facets as there were periods, places and persons involved. The regime nevertheless had a unity palpable always.¹¹

The fact that the South was traditional and conservative has led many critics to label it as unprogressive also. "A cardinal assumption of American historians is that in the States which in 1861 united to form the Confederacy there had been little intellectual activity of any kind, save that demanded by an agrarian economy and its political defense; and what there was, was exclusively devoted to the classics."¹² This easy assumption on the part of historians is not consonant with fact and is probably based on a hasty and superficial "intellectual activity" which might be demanded by an industrial economy and its defense. It is too readily accepted as a general rule that the South was


made up of people living in almost a feudal state who closed their eyes to industrial advancement, clinging to old customs and traditions, and producing no worthwhile literature.

The South, although less mobile than the North, never became static in its civilization. It is true that the planter respected traditions in his manner of living; he did treasure the past; and law and order were prime motives with him. But it is too much to say that he always advanced "with his head turned longingly to the past." It is not paradoxical to suppose that he could have been traditional and intellectually alive at the same time. Mr. Johnson, in his *Scientific Interests in the Old South*, has shown that the colleges and universities of the Old South invariably included in their curricula courses in the natural sciences, that professors of Greek and Latin "openly and bitterly bemoaned the superior popularity of the natural sciences," and that numerous planters pursued scientific studies for their own information or encouraged scientific studies by grants of money.

If the southerner did have a high regard for ancient law and order and for the examples it afforded, he did not

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13 Moses, op. cit., p. 172
bewail a past golden age. If he was able to see himself in relation to the past, he was able to see himself in relation to the future. The Southern ante-bellum man "...dominated the means of life; he was not dominated by it." He had time for leisure and meditation, and it is incorrect to assume that this leisure was totally misapplied.

Before the War the South was comparatively unproductive of literature, lagging far behind the North and producing only a few writers of the first rank. The plantation system, which sponsored an agrarian life and opposed by its nature large industrial centers, was one of the chief drawbacks to the production of literature. For writing to pay as a profession, the author must be near a publishing and marketing center. Outside of Charleston there were no noteworthy publishing centers in the South, and certainly none to compare with Philadelphia, Boston, or New York. There were publishers in Richmond, Baltimore, Mobile, and New Orleans, but none of these could compete with the better northern concerns. It must also be remembered that the reading public of the South was scattered and sparse, for the slaves and poor whites must

15 Tate, Allen, "What is a Traditional Society?" American Review, VII, 4 (September, 1936), p. 386
be discounted, and "...the growth of any literature ... is dependent upon close settlement."¹⁶ The more densely populated North was the logical locale for a publishing business, and southern writers, therefore, had to depend largely upon northern publishers. And the southerner in general became accustomed to looking to the North and to Europe for the greater part of his reading matter.

Men of culture preferred ... the foreign quarterlies, because they cost no more than the home productions, and were infinitely better. When they subscribed to Northern periodicals, they were influenced by the habit of looking to the North for latest news, literary and scientific, because it came first to New York or Boston, and by the existence of close connections between two sections, with weekly lines of steamers touching at all Atlantic ports, the Northern magazines were enabled to appear before the Southern ones in the book stores below the Potomac.¹⁷

Furthermore, the plantation fostered the growth of an aristocratic class that was inclined to regard creative writing as an unpractical and decorative accomplishment. There was a stigma attached to writing as a profession: proof of this can be seen in the fact that nearly everyone who wrote anything except political, religious, or scientific works used a pseudonym. Among the gentlemen of

¹⁶Ingle, op. cit., p. 202

¹⁷Ibid., p. 212
the upper class it was fashionable to do some writing; but they wrote for pastime or for a small circle of friends and without desire for publication. For a gentleman to have entered the professional ranks would have caused him to lose social caste. The attitude toward creative writing was therefore that of the dilettante. To be able to write verse easily, as well as to quote freely, was a necessary social accomplishment, but for one to desire seriously to write was unthinkable.

Aside from the slightly contemptuous attitude toward writing as a profession, there are still other reasons why the South produced little literature before the War. The really important things to the southerners were law, politics, and military matters. The whole fabric of southern life was infused with politics, and oratory was universally cultivated. The ambition of young men generally turned in the direction of political distinction, and law naturally had precedence over other professional fields. The literature of the pre-war South was oral rather than written.18

Such then, in brief, are some of the most outstanding characteristics of ante-bellum plantation life in the South.

18Page, Thomas Nelson, The Old South, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898, pp. 64-67
In many respects the epoch of the southern plantation has no historical parallel. The dominant ideal in southern life was the large plantation. Although the planters, especially the large planters, were in the minority, they dominated socially and intellectually the other populace, setting the standard for polite society and molding public opinion. Because of a common occupation integrated with slavery the plantation aristocracy tended toward a fixed standard of conduct and thought, the result being conservatism and provincialism. In the first place because many of the members of the plantation class kept a direct contact with England, the English tradition was carried on in the South with certain natural modifications, and this tradition has always been a conservative one. In the second place, the character of southern life was less affected by outside forces than that of other sections. This conservative and provincial character of the South fostered the development of certain distinct attitudes toward life. The code of honor, an exaggerated courtesy, a chivalric attitude toward women, polish and refinement in social life, and an open-handed hospitality are the most outstanding of these.

The South was comparatively unproductive of literature before the War. The scarcity of population and the lack of large publishing centers are the two chief reasons for
this. Moreover, the plantation fostered the growth of an aristocratic class which was inclined to regard creative writing as an unpractical and decorative accomplishment and not as a serious enterprise. There is no doubt but that the plantation class could have produced a distinct and creditable literature had it not been for this attitude, and for the fact that the really important things to the Southerner were law, politics, and military matters. Oratory was the distinct contribution of the southerner to national literature.
CHAPTER II

GENERAL ASPECTS OF LITERARY CULTURE

IN ANTE-BELLUM LOUISIANA

No southern state has a cultural background more varied and unusual than Louisiana. A rich land, occupying a strategic position in the Lower Mississippi Valley, the Louisiana Territory was a prize for the possession of which the major European powers eagerly struggled during a long period of time. First the possession of France, then Spain, France again, and finally the United States. Louisiana has a colorful—even romantic—history. When in 1803, through the Louisiana Purchase, the Territory became the property of the States, its population was a mixture of many diverse nationalities: French, Spanish, English, German, Creole, American, and Negro. With the opening of the district to American settlement floods of American settlers came in from the Upper Mississippi Valley, from North and South Carolina and some of the New England states. Through the preponderance of the American element an amalgamation of the diverse elements towards a homogeneous whole began to take place, especially after about 1830, but the distinct influences of different nationalities have not yet been obliterated. Although the German and
Spanish are at present of minor importance, the French element in Louisiana today is still strong.

The plantation system which existed in Louisiana did not differ in its general features from that of other states of the Lower South. Large planters were in the minority, but they dominated public affairs and formed the upper stratum of society. In certain specific features, however, the Louisiana plantation was individual. For instance, a large number of plantation owners were French, some Creole, and a few mulatto. It is necessary for the purposes of this study to consider briefly the development and extent of the plantation system as it existed in Louisiana before the War.

Although there were many plantations—some of considerable size—in Louisiana before 1800, the real period of their development came after that date and lasted until 1860. Aside from Louisiana's being opened to American settlement by the Louisiana Purchase, the factor which gave the greatest impetus to the development of the plantation in Louisiana after 1800 was the rise of steamboating.

\footnote{Melrose Plantation, near Natchitoches, the present home of Mrs. Cammie Garrett Henry, was founded and operated for a number of years by a mulatto. There were other mulatto plantation owners in this district. They spoke French, and evidently were very cultured, but of course, did not have social intercourse to any extent, if at all, with white plantation owners.}
on the Mississippi. "Louisiana plantation life and Mississippi River steamboating are closely allied, developing, succeeding, and declining together."²

The settlement at first was naturally along the waterways where accessibility to the steamboat or flatboat could be had. Along in the twenties and thirties, with the improvements brought about in the production and marketing of sugar and cotton, the plantation began a flourishing growth, and in the richer sections of the State the system became very extensive. "Perhaps the large plantation system was more thorough in the alluvial lands of Louisiana than anywhere else."³ The small farmer was pushed out of these districts toward the northern and western parts of the State. He could not compete with the wealthy plantation owner who had resources to tide himself over to the next season if his crop was ruined by an overflow, and who had the means to drain large areas of land. "In every way conditions were favorable to the development of large plantation systems, even without the institution of slavery."⁴


³The South in the Building of the Nation, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 116

⁴Ibid., p. 117
The period from 1830 to 1860 was the prosperous era of the Louisiana plantation; this was the time when planters thought in large figures and when fortunes were made easily—or lost easily. The earlier plantation houses were rather plain and simple, yet comfortable and suited to the climate. But after 1830 the classical revival widely affected the architecture of plantations and numerous magnificent, even ornate, houses were constructed. The second and third generations of the earlier American plantation families were growing up, and many of them, accustomed to wealth from birth, developed luxurious tastes and lived idle lives. They were of a different order from the first generation.

In the last years before the Civil War there was a decline in taste. The houses were built as show-places, rather than as dwellings; the construction was extravagant, flimsy, and showy. Slaves, no longer under the direct supervision of their masters, were abused by overseers. The plantation system was showing signs of decay before the first far-off thunder of war was heard.

Persac's Chart, made in 1858, shows a network of plantations along the Mississippi from Memphis to New Orleans. It is impossible to indicate accurately the extent of the system in Louisiana, or to give precise data

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5 Saxon, op. cit., p. 149, and passim, pp. 140-150
regarding the number of people living on plantations. However, a rough estimate can be arrived at through a study of the statistics compiled by Bell in his *State Register*.

Of the total white population of 255,491 of the State in 1850, 6,471 are listed in the census report as "planters." There were, in the same year, about 20,670 slave owners in the State who owned slaves in the following ratio: 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number owning one slave</th>
<th>4,797</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; and under</td>
<td>5 6,072</td>
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<td>&quot; &quot; 5 &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
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20,670


According to this, the majority of slave owners was composed of those who possessed less than fifty slaves, and within this group the largest percentage consisted of those who owned less than ten slaves. The slave holders of this group, it is logical to assume, were chiefly professional men and smaller plantation owners. A planter possessing an estate of any considerable size could not have successfully operated it with less than fifty slaves. The number possessing fifty or more slaves in 1850 was 1,042. It is not, therefore, illogical to conclude that there were about 1,000 large plantation owners in Louisiana at this date. This number was not materially increased by 1861.

Just what percentage of the total white population of 255,491 lived on these 1,000 or more larger plantations, and consequently made up the upper stratum of society in Louisiana at this time, can of course be only a matter of conjecture. But if the plantation families averaged four or five persons to the household this would make a total of 4,000 or 5,000 persons out of the total white population. This is indeed a relatively small number, but this restricted group of people dominated the other classes, and it is with their literary taste and culture that this study is concerned.

Naturally it is logical to expect that the cultural interests of individuals will vary according to nationalities.
Previous mention has been made of the fact that plantation owners were both French and English speaking. Therefore, for the purposes of this study it is necessary to designate which districts were settled principally by the French and which by the English. Roughly speaking, according to the nationality of the settlers, Louisiana can be divided into three districts. The West Florida Parishes--the district east of the Mississippi and extending southward to Bayou Manchac--were settled solidly by people of English stock. Some of the settlers were English army officers who had been given land grants when West Florida was an English possession; others migrated from the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee.\footnote{The \textit{South in the Building of the Nation, op. cit.,} Vol. III, p. 112} Naturally, in this district--more especially in the two Felicianas--the English tradition was very strong, stronger, in fact, than anywhere else in the State. The district South of the Red River and extending northwest as far as Natchitoches and south to the Coast was settled predominantly by French speaking people with a considerable mixture of English. The balance of the State--that is, north of the Red River and west of the Mississippi to the State line--was settled chiefly by English speaking people. However,
there were not a great many plantations in this district except those along the banks of the Mississippi and Red Rivers. The majority of the large plantation owners during the period under consideration were English speaking people.

In brief summary, the plantation system in Louisiana did not differ in its essential features from that of other states in the Lower South. The rich alluvial lands of Louisiana especially favored the growth of the large plantation, and the system became very extensive in these sections of the State and along the water-ways. The most prosperous era of the plantation was from 1830 to 1860.

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Evidence of various kinds points everywhere to a generally widespread interest in literature, not only among the plantation class in Louisiana but also among the yeomanry as well. According to Bell's State Register there were, in 1855, forty-eight newspapers published in Louisiana exclusive of those published in New Orleans.9

9In 1810 there were 11 papers published in Louisiana; in 1828, there were only 9, but in 1840, there were 11 dailies, 21 weeklies, 2 semi- and tri-weeklies, and 3 periodicals.—Cf. Compendium of the Seventh Census, op. cit., p. 155. The following is the list according to
Almost every town of any size had at least one newspaper, and some in the center of a rich plantation section, had two or three; and they usually catered directly to the planters' interests, a point which will be more fully discussed later.

Many of these papers were of very poor quality, being little more than advertising sheets, and securing their news by the "clipping" method. Others, however, such as the Planters' Banner of Franklin, the Democratic Advocate of Baton Rouge, and the Concordia Intelligencer of Vidalia, were not unworthy literary vehicles. In addition to news and politics they contained book reviews, essays, comments

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title and place given by Bell for portions of the State exclusive of New Orleans in 1855: Vigilant, Donaldsonville; Pioneer, Napoleonville; Villager, Marksville; Advocate, Baton Rouge; Gazette, Baton Rouge; Comet, Baton Rouge; Capitolian Vis-a-Vis, West Baton Rouge; Bienville Times, Mt. Lebanon; Gazette, Shreveport; Democrat, Shreveport; Southwestern, Shreveport; Herald, Lake Providence; Courier, Opelousas; Herald, Waterproof; Advocate, Trinity; Independent, Harrisonburg; Herald, Minden; Advocate, Homer; Intelligencer, Vidalia; Advertiser, Mansfield; Mirror, Jackson; State Paper, Clinton; Whig, Clinton; Ledger, Bayou Sara; Chronicle, Bayou Sara; Gazette, Plaquemine; Sentinel, Plaquemine; Carrollton Star, Carrollton; The Echo, Vermillionville; Register, Monroe, Banner, Franklin; Chronicle, Natchitoches; Independent, Abbeville; Courier, St. Martinsville; Gazette, Opelousas; Whig, Opelousas; Minerva, Thibodaux; Piny Woodsman, Livingston; Journal, Richmond; North Louisianaian, Bastrop; Echo, Pointe Coupèe; Democrat, Alexandria; Republican, Alexandria; Meachambebe, St. Charles; Messenger, St. James; Advocate, Covington; Inquirer, Farmersville; Coast Journal, Donaldsonville.--Cf., op. cit., p. 127
on literature in general, poetry taken from the popular authors of the day, and quite often they published novels in serial form. It would not be unsound to say they had something to do in influencing the reading taste of the time.

In a fairly large number of these papers—particularly those appearing after 1835—local booksellers, those in New Orleans and elsewhere, regularly advertised their stocks. There were booksellers in all the larger towns of the State and sometimes two or three. According to advertisements appearing in local newspapers, the little town of Franklin alone had four in 1850 or thereabouts, all of whom appeared to be doing a very prosperous business.10 Baton Rouge had two during the same period; Alexandria, Natchez,11 and Opelousas each had from one to three, while in New Orleans there were at least seven large concerns during the forties and fifties.12 Some idea of the service

10 Franklin, in St. Mary's Parish, was in the heart of a rich plantation district. In 1853 the value of property subject to taxation in St. Mary's Parish was greater than that of any other parish in the State. Rapides Parish, with Alexandria as the parish seat, was next. Cf. Bell's State Register, op. cit., pp. 94-95

11 Many Louisiana plantation owners lived in Natchez because of the unhealthy living conditions of the Louisiana low lands. Natchez was a plantation center not only for Mississippi, but for Louisiana as well.

12 The largest of these, judging from advertisements appearing in local newspapers throughout the State, were B. M. Norman, J. B. Steel, and J. C. Morgan.
maintained by one of the largest New Orleans firms can be gathered from the following advertisement:

J. C. Morgan begs respectfully to inform the public that his establishment ... is constantly supplied with all the BEST LITERARY PRODUCTIONS OF THE DAY, and that he is ready to supply all orders with which he may be honored, in strict conformity with instructions, and without mistake or unnecessary delay. Being the regularly authorized Agent for almost every periodical of note published in the United States or in Great Britain, as well as for the leading journals of both countries; and being furnished with all FOREIGN AND AMERICAN WORKS OF MERIT AS SOON AS THEY ISSUE FROM THE PRESS, he can seldom fail of satisfying the reasonable requirements of all who may favor him with their orders. Hence he looks with some degree of confidence, not only for a continuance of that patronage, which, for the last four years he has so liberally enjoyed, but for an increase of it, equal at least to the great additions and increased facilities he has made in his business.

Planters and others residing in the country, and in neighboring states, who, under ordinary circumstances, are for the most part denied ready access to the current literature of the day, can have every work they require promptly forwarded to them, by accompanying their orders with drafts upon or references to their merchants or friends in the city.13

Two features of this advertisement are especially interesting: first, the bookseller is supplied with foreign and American works as soon as they issue from the press; and second, he will fill orders from rural districts of the

13The Planters’ Banner, XI, 28 (July 9, 1846)
State. These features are typical of the majority of the advertisements of the larger New Orleans stores; evidently, they had blanket orders with the larger northern and European publishers, and in turn had a fairly extensive mail order business.

Furthermore, some of the booksellers in the smaller prosperous towns carried on a mail order service also, an example of which can be seen in the following advertisement:

McCORMICK & CO.

Baton Rouge Post Office Literary Depot

Will furnish to order, and mail to any address, any BOOK published in this country or in Europe at CATALOGUE PRICES. They are constantly filling orders for rare and valuable Books, and the reading public have found it a saving of money and trouble to order their books through the above channel.\footnote{The \textit{Weekly Advocate}, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, XIII, 13 (August 16, 1855)}

Booksellers usually made a direct appeal to planters and their interests. For instance, B. M. Norman of New Orleans advertises that he can supply "Planters of Louisiana, and of the neighboring states ... with all the late and most approved Works on Agriculture--also, with all Books and Stationery they may require."\footnote{The \textit{Concordia Intelligencer}, Vidalia, Louisiana, VI, 4 (August 25, 1846)
of the *Planter's Banner* comments on one bookseller as follows:

Mr. J. B. Steel, No. 14 Camp Street, has one of the finest assortments of Books in New Orleans. We advise our planters to give him a call, when they visit the city.\(^{16}\)

Finally, an example of special catering to the planters' interests is seen in the following:

B. M. Norman has established in this city, in connection with his present well-known establishment, an *AGRICULTURAL BOOK STORE*, under the auspices of the scientific practical Planters of La. and Miss.

It is his intention to make it a complete depot for all works on Agricultural subjects, where the Planter can always obtain the most ready information connected with the Great interests of the South.\(^{17}\)

The local booksellers in the small towns throughout the State usually received their stock from New Orleans firms. For instance, this editorial comment appears in the *Planter's Banner*, June 6, 1850:

By referring to our advertising columns it will be seen that the "Franklin Variety Store" has just been supplied with a lot of new and interesting popular works of various descriptions. The ladies will doubtless find that there are many in the list that they will be anxious to read.

\(^{16}\) *Op. cit.*, XI, 2 (January 3, 1846)

\(^{17}\) *Ibid.*, XIII, 16 (April 12, 1848)
A new supply will be furnished the store every month or two from J. C. Morgan's Literary Depot, New Orleans, and they will be new, just from the press, not works that have lain in a book store, for six months or more. The selections will be judicious, and they will be furnished in all cases at New Orleans prices.

However, in many instances, local booksellers acted as agents for northern publishers and received their stock directly from them. W. Rabe of Franklin advertises that he is "...an agent for Grigg, Elliott & Co., Appleton & Co., Carey & Hart and Harper and Brothers; the four most eminent booksellers and publishers of the United States." Innumerable advertisements begin with the phrase, "Just received from Philadelphia," or "Just received from New York," or "The undersigned has received from the North a fine assortment of books."

Not infrequently agents for different northern publishers came through the parishes soliciting subscriptions for the more expensive standard publications. Jared Sparks' Library of American Biography, for example, was sold in such a manner, as evidenced by the following editorial regarding it.

The agent of this valuable standard work is now in this Parish, soliciting subscriptions, and begs leave most respectfully to inform the planters of St. Mary that he will call upon them with a specimen copy.  

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18Ibid., XIII, 36 (August 31, 1848)  
19Ibid., XII, 52 (December 23, 1847)
From the foregoing it can be seen that the planter—or anyone else—could very easily procure books in whatever quantity and variety he desired. He could purchase them from a local dealer or from one in New Orleans; he could order directly from a New Orleans concern, or through a local dealer; and he could order expensive and rare works from any American or European publisher. Moreover, all appearances point to the fact that large quantities of books were being purchased in the State, particularly during the last thirty years of the period under consideration in this study. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain the subsistence of so many booksellers.

Unusually interesting and highly indicative of literary interest, particularly with regard to current periodicals, is the fact that some of the local newspaper editors maintained reading rooms in connection with their regular establishments. In the late forties, there was, for instance, a reading room operated in connection with the Planter's Banner of Franklin, and another in connection with the Democratic Advocate of Baton Rouge. There were no doubt others in the State, although reference to them has not been found. The editor of the Planter's Banner, Robert Wilson, in September, 1847, comments that "the reading room
has now been established upwards of a year; and so far from injuring the circulation of any of the journals to which we are indebted for an exchange, we can assert, from positive knowledge of the fact, that the circulation of those journals, in this section, of the parish, has increased with us in the above time." Earlier in the same year Wilson advertised that "...upwards of fifty different papers and magazines may be seen at this establishment, embracing most of the leading journals and periodicals of the Union." Again he observes, "During our stay in the city we procured a quantity of French, English and American pictorial papers, Magazines, &c., with which we think the subscribers to the Reading Room will be pleased." And, at another time he comments to the effect that,

We have placed in the Reading Room, Cruikshank's famous series of Temperance pictures; Latourette's new and splendid map of Louisiana; a map of the Parish of St. Mary, from Field's surveys; Morse's new North American Atlas; various works of reference; the Planters' Banner for twelve years, in bound volumes; nearly all the leading journals and periodicals of the Union, besides a cabinet of curiosities, Chess tables, &c., &c.

20Ibid., XII, 40 (September 30, 1847)
21Ibid., XII, 27 (July 1, 1847)
22Ibid., XII, 50 (December 9, 1847)
23Ibid., XIII, 12 (March 16, 1848)
Wilson saw the value and usefulness of such a reading room to the public in general, but especially to the planter:

...Whenever there is a failure of the Weekly papers on which the people in the country depend for news, the dailies of New Orleans which are always on file at the Reading Room—and often received in advance of the mail—furnish our citizens with the latest intelligence; besides, during the busy season, our planters can obtain the latest market price and other information from all the principal cities of the Union. The only papers containing the late important news from Mexico, received by last Tuesday's mail, were the Daily Delta and the Daily Picayune of Sunday, received at the Reading Room. On many other occasions we have had important news in advance of the Weekly papers, and even in advance of the mail.

We take advantage of the present opportunity of returning thanks to the public for their patronage, during the present year, and we hope to merit a continuance of their favor.24

And, being an enterprising fellow, he charged an admittance fee, which, considering the variety of material

24 Ibid., XII, 40 (September 30, 1847). Apparently the reading room also served as a kind of natural museum: "The Reading Room is likely to become the depository of quite a collection of curiosities. We beg to solicit from our friends a continuance of favor in furnishing us with specimens. They have been very kind in this respect. We are constantly adding to our collection. This week we have to acknowledge the receipt of a fine specimen of the sea horse, from Mr. Julius M. Johnson... We have also received, on deposit, the autograph of the late John Q. Adams."—Ibid., XIII, 10 (March 2, 1848)
and its value to the planters, was very generous:

Subscription to the Reading Room, only $5 per annum. Transient persons, 50¢ per month. Strangers, one week's free admittance. Subscribers to the Banner, living twelve miles and over, from Franklin admitted free. Mechanics working in the country, admitted free on Sundays. Apprentices, admitted free at all times. School boys admitted free, daily, from one to two o'clock. 26

Evidently, the reading room at Baton Rouge during approximately the same time was also very successful. Its proprietor, R. D. Hatch, the editor of the Advocate, stated his intentions regarding it as follows:

We are determined that our room shall be not only an ornament to our town, and add to its dignity and character abroad, but tend to insculcate a general taste for reading, and prove a source of intellectual profit and utility to our people at home; and this great end attained, we can more confidently look forward to a cultivation of all those higher and nobler attributes of humanity which foster and promote the moral and social relations— the great sum and substance of human happiness. 26

Out of the one at Franklin grew a very interesting development. The editor of the Banner was so encouraged by his success that he opened a circulating library at

25 Ibid., XII, 40 (September 30, 1847)
26 Quoted in Ibid., XII, 15 (April 8, 1847)
the Franklin Exchange. Shortly after he started it in 1847, he had on hand only one hundred works, but he promises that "others will soon be added." Chiefly through the donations of planters, others were added very rapidly. In the Banner for April 15, 1847, the editor says:

Again we have to return thanks for a contribution to the Circulating Library. A planter of this Parish sent us, a few days since, a present of twenty-six half-bound volumes. We have now nearly three hundred different works, for the greater part of which we are indebted to the kindness of friends.

On May 20, 1847, he acknowledges receipt of twenty half-bound volumes from a planter of the Parish, and in July of the same year he says, "Our friends are really very kind. From three planters we have received two hundred and thirty volumes." Later on, in February of the next year he says, "We have had a present from Buena Vista Plantation in this Parish, of twenty-four books for our Circulating Library, for which we return thanks." How many volumes were finally secured for the library or how long it remained in operation cannot be ascertained.

27 Ibid., XII, 8 (February 18, 1847)
28 Ibid., XII, 27 (July 1, 1847)
29 Ibid., XIII, 7 (February 10, 1848)
However, it was certainly operated for at least two years because notices concerning it appear regularly in the Banner throughout 1847 and 1848, and on the basis of a catalogue published at intervals in the Banner during these two years, the library contained upwards of five hundred volumes. Nearly all of these, as has been shown, were contributed by planters, and it is significant that each donation consisted of twenty or thirty volumes. This fact definitely indicates that many planters in this section had large libraries, for, making due allowances for generosity and wealth, it is not logical to assume that a planter would give away at one time a third or half of his library, and these planters would have been doing this had they possessed collections of only seventy-five or a hundred volumes.

30 Planters' Banner, XII, 20 (May 13, 1847); XII, 29 (July 15, 1847); XII, 35 (August 26, 1847); XII, 41 (October 7, 1847); XIII, 2 (January 6, 1848); XIII, 32 (August 3, 1848)

A rate of five cents per week per volume was charged for use of the library. Cf. ibid., XII, 25 (June 17, 1847).

In 1849 Daniel Dennett succeeded Robert Wilson as editor of the Banner, and in an article boosting the town of Franklin he says: "We shall have a reading room on Main Street, containing newspapers from all the states, and all the principal cities of the Union. We shall have connected with this a library of a thousand volumes, and the public will have access to all of these on the most reasonable terms."—XIV, 4 (January 25, 1849). It is entirely possible that this thousand volume collection was the Franklin Circulating Library.
From a catalogue of this library (given in Appendix A) it can be observed that it consisted chiefly of the better known European and American authors of the day, such as Dumas, Dickens, Cooper, George Sand, Frederick Soulie, Disraeli, Melville, Scott, Douglas Jerrold, Bulwer Lytton, Eugène Sue, Captain Marryat, G. P. R. James, and Charles Brockden Brown, together with a large number of authors popular at the time, but at the present justly forgotten, such as Mrs. Gore, Mrs. Ellis, Mary Howitt, Miss Ferrier, C. Lever and Samuel Lover. Since the majority of these books were formerly owned by planters, the collection is a valuable commentary on their reading taste, and a more extended discussion of it will be made later from this viewpoint.

The Franklin Circulating Library is not an isolated instance. Exclusive of school and college libraries, there were public libraries of one kind or another in many of the towns throughout the State. For example, in 1847, a Lyceum Library was organized in Baton Rouge.31

31 The composition, nature, and management of this library are set forth in the following:
"The board of directors to whom was committed the management of the Library connected with the Lyceum have made arrangements by which we soon hope to have collected a library worthy of the intelligent community for whose benefit it is established. They have elected George A. Pike Librarian, James Cooper Corresponding Secretary. The Board flatter themselves that their fellow citizens will give aid and countenance to the
All of these general facts, that a large number of booksellers apparently were operating successful establishments, that in some instances newspaper editors maintained reading rooms, that there were at least a small number of libraries—other than school or private—in Louisiana before 1861, point to the same end. There was a widespread interest in literature, and large quantities of books were being sold. It is hardly to be doubted that the planters were the largest buyers, since they composed the wealthiest and most educated portion of the population.

How many plantation libraries existed in Louisiana during the period under consideration and what their approximate sizes were are questions that cannot be answered. The members of the plantation class were educated and wealthy; noble enterprise by handing to the Librarian such volumes as can be spared from their libraries. We have the satisfaction of informing our friends that already some 250 volumes have been placed at our disposal, which we hope in a short time to have on the shelves of the Library. The volumes already given contain all the State Papers of our government from its origin, to the year 1836, and a variety of rich miscellaneous reading. For the information of contributors we will add, a rule was adopted, by which all books given shall revert to the donor in the event of dissolution of the association, or be sold and the proceeds applied to a charitable purpose. The donor's name is to be written or engraved on the book presented."—W. H. Crenshaw, Chairman (Lyceum Library Committee), Baton Rouge Gazette, XXIX, 5 (March 6, 1847)
to say that books were certainly among the other luxuries they bought for their fine homes would be to state a truism. Every plantation must have had a library of some size, and numerous ones had libraries of considerable size. This generalization, although beyond positive proof, is substantiated by various kinds of evidence. Occasional references are made to libraries in probate and succession sales, visitors to plantations sometimes made comments regarding them, and frequent references to libraries are made in inventories and wills. For instance, the Baton Rouge Gazette for May 5, 1827 contains an announcement of the probate sale of the plantation of the "...late Robert Sprigg, Esq." Among other things offered for sale is "...Also, the library of the deceased, containing the New Encyclopedia, in eighty-five volumes, and a number of other valuable works." Judging from the nature of other items of property offered for sale, Robert Sprigg was not so wealthy as the average planter; yet his library contained an Encyclopedia in eighty-five volumes and other works.

Robert Wilson, while on a visit to a sugar plantation at Côte Blanche in 1848, writes back to the editor of the Planters' Banner: "You will hardly believe that away out here on the Attakapas Coast, we are surrounded by all the luxuries and refinements that belong to an old and long
cultivated country; but such is the fact. In the same letter, after commenting on Leonard Wray's *The Practical Sugar Planter*, he says, "there are other works here, the perusal of which has afforded me much pleasure," and he particularly notices Audubon's "splendid ornithology," a large edition of the *Narratives of the U. S. Exploring Expeditions*, and Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*. He promises to make further comments about the library at another time, but this letter does not appear in subsequent issues of the *Banner*.

In an inventory of the Estate of William E. Phillips, Esq., made May 17, 1824, one item reads as follows:

One lot of books containing 130 volumes, together with one book case and desk, estimated at $100.00.

And in an inventory made of the Estate of Charlotte Brown, November 20, 1850, one item reads,

150 volumes of books, estimated at $50.00.

Both of these inventories were of the estates of small planters, each possessing only a small number of

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32 *Planters' Banner*, XIII, 49 (November 30, 1848)

33 *Book of Inventories*, 1824-1829, Court House Records, East Feliciana Parish, Clinton, Louisiana

34 Ibid., for 1848-1850. See also "Inventory of the Estate of Thornton Lawson" in the same volume.
slaves. Yet, both had libraries of over a hundred volumes. The size of the library which might ordinarily be possessed by the wealthy planter is evidenced by an inventory of the estate of Vincent Ternant of New Roads, Louisiana, 1842. A total of four hundred and one volumes is listed. However, Ternant was an exceptionally wealthy planter. He possessed in all more than five hundred slaves, and the total appraisal of his estate in 1842 was almost $200,000.

In addition to such scattered evidence as the foregoing, the large number of partial collections to be found in the State today, together with a few almost intact ones of a fairly large size, further indicates the fact that every plantation had a library. Bibliographies of more than twenty partial collections once in plantation homes and of four complete or almost complete libraries have been secured for this study; and traces of scores of others have been found which point to the former existence of numerous collections.

It is unfortunate that a relatively small number of the libraries out of the total number that once existed have been preserved. However, the reason is obvious: the libraries perished along with other personal

35 See Appendix B. This inventory is in the possession of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Parlange, New Roads, Louisiana
elements of the old régime. The Civil War and reconstruction did not totally bring to an end the plantation system in Louisiana but it completely changed the order, just as it did in all slave states. Families were broken up, and plantation houses were destroyed, abandoned, or sold. The descendants of plantation owners, in describing what happened to the family library, tell essentially the same story: it was destroyed with the house, it was burned, or the books were divided among various heirs.36

As a general rule, books in plantation libraries were expensively bound and beautifully, if ornately, finished. Especially is this true of standard works, such as the Bible, Shakespeare, and Milton. This fact leads to the all important question, Did the planters read the volumes their libraries contained, or where they there for mere show? It is entirely possible that some of the newly rich of the forties and fifties bought costly volumes for ostentatious display, but there were evidently few of this kind, and they were exceptions to the general rule.

36By way of illustration, Mrs. Annis Jenkins Bryan of Natchez, Mississippi, a direct descendant of John Carmichael Jenkins who owned plantations in Louisiana and Mississippi, writes of the Jenkins home "Elgin" in Natchez, Mississippi, that the library was said to have contained three thousand volumes, the truth of which she does not doubt "...as I had eight oat sacks full sent me when the home was dismantled."
There are several explanations of the planters' penchant for expensively bound volumes. In the first place, the cost of a book was not usually a question with the planter: he could afford to buy expensive books. In the second place, it was in keeping with the character of the planter to purchase those things that could be handed down from generation to generation, and he undoubtedly purchased books, also, with this end in view. Therefore, the fact that expensively bound volumes are found in plantation libraries does not imply that the plantation class valued the appearance of a book more than the contents. Moreover, as will be more fully discussed later, the planters often bought large quantities of paper bound books.

In summary of the foregoing discussion, the plantation system in Louisiana was very extensive, enjoying its most prosperous period from 1830 to 1861. Although it is impossible to determine precisely the number of plantation owners in the state during that time, certainly there were not less than a thousand owning very large plantations when the system reached its zenith in the fifties.

The large number of booksellers in Louisiana during
the period, who apparently were conducting profitable establishments, indicates that large quantities of books were being sold. Inasmuch as the members of the plantation class composed the wealthier portion of the populace, they undoubtedly were the largest book-buyers. Evidence of various kinds, such as reading rooms and public libraries, points to a generally widespread interest in literature.

The plantation class, from all evidence, was a reading class, and every plantation home must have contained a library of some size, and many contained large ones. To show the nature of the literature the plantation class read will be the purpose of the next two chapters.
CHAPTER III

THE RANGE AND GENERAL NATURE OF THE READING INTERESTS
AS SEEN IN BOOKSELLERS' ADVERTISEMENTS

At the outset, an obviously fundamental principle can be stated regarding the reading taste of any restricted group of people such as that with which this study is concerned. The reading matter is, naturally enough, the popular works of the day, with certain exceptions and additions engendered by sectional, circumstantial, and class peculiarities. What the Louisiana plantation class read before 1861 corresponds to this general rule. First, they read works universally popular—on the continent, in the North, and in the South. Second, they read works which had more currency in the South than anywhere else: certain works not contemporaneous, but having a special appeal to the southern mind. Third, they read a few works which were popular chiefly in their particular section of the South. The problem, therefore, is to show which of the contemporary authors were most widely read, which non-contemporary authors were found most interesting, and what works were restricted in popularity principally to Louisiana.

This problem is approached from two angles: from the
reading interests as reflected in booksellers' advertisements appearing in newspapers and periodicals during the period; and, from the reading interests as evidenced by the contents of ante-bellum plantation libraries. This chapter and the next following are concerned with these two angles of the problem. The range, scope, and general character of the reading taste as evidenced in advertisements will be first considered. Next, in Chapter IV, classification summaries of the contents of several fairly representative plantation libraries will be given in order to show the nature and the relative proportions of various types of works included, such as historical, theological, philosophical, sociological, reference, classic, and American and foreign literature. Then, from the combined evidence of reading interests afforded by these two sources, it will be possible to draw fairly accurate conclusions regarding the literary taste of the plantation class.

Advertisements perhaps more accurately indicate the popular works of the day than do the contents of private libraries. Acting as a barometer they show the height of general reading interest in any period, while they likewise show in a negative manner those works claiming no popularity. Individual collections, on the other hand, exhibit personal
preferences. Booksellers in Louisiana before 1861 had the same objective as present-day booksellers—to make money.

To state the obvious, they had to sell books in order to accomplish this end. Whether booksellers, by advertising, caused certain books to be read more widely than others, and thereby shaped reading tastes, or bought and advertised those works most in demand by their patrons is a moot point. The result is exactly the same in the final analysis, and, as a matter of fact, both tendencies were in operation, but the latter was the stronger. No bookseller, it may be supposed, consistently purchased and offered for sale works for which the indications of profitable disposal were negative. It is more logical to assume that the opposite is true: he purchased and offered for sale those works which he had good reason to believe he could most readily sell. For this reason, advertisements reflect the general reading interests during any period more accurately than any other evidence. Moreover, since the most profitable customers of the booksellers in Louisiana were unquestionably the members of the plantation class, advertisements indicate their reading tastes as correctly as that of the general public.

The comprehensive range and variety of reading interests exhibited by advertisements is indeed remarkable. Almost
every form of literature, including fiction, philosophy, poetry, science, history, classic, reference, ecclesiastical, social, biographical and travel, is represented and offered for sale in every conceivable form of publication, extending from very cheap to very expensive editions of standard works,\(^1\) from ornamental literary annual and gift books to morally uplifting ladies' books.

For example, the following heading of an advertisement of a large New Orleans firm can be taken as typical.

**STANDARD WORKS**

In Every Department of Literature

J. B. Steel begs leave to invite the attention of his friends and the public generally, to his choice and unique assortment of the most important works that emanate from the English and American Press.

His establishment is distinguished by its large collection of Standard Works in the several departments of Civil and Ecclesiastical History, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Architecture and Engineering, General Biography, Voyages and Travels, Fine Arts, and Classical and General Literature.\(^2\)

\(^1\) For instance, W. Rabe, a bookseller in Franklin, Louisiana, advertises "Splendid family Bibles at all prices from 25¢ to $30."—*Planters' Banner*, XIII, 29 (July 15, 1848)

\(^2\) Ibid., X, 50 (December 6, 1845). The advertisement continues as follows: "Among his recent importations are the works of Bacon, Clarendon, Burnett, Jeremy Taylor, Milton, Barrow, Hooker, Ben Jonson, Massinger and Ford, Beaumong and Fletcher, Shakespeare, Froissart, Monstrelet, Doddridge, Baxter, Owen, Bloomfield, Stripe, Cranmer, Butler, Cave, Berkeley, Adams, Greenhill, Donna, Southey, Hume, Smollett,
Consider, by way of further illustration, the diverse nature of the works in this advertisement of Jackson Warner, a Natchez bookseller.

Splendid Annuals.—Souvenir Gallery; Gems of Beauty; Golden Gift; Garland; Ladies' Gift; Friendship's Offering; Christmas Roses; Moss Rose; Sacred Annual; Flora's Gem; Apples of Gold; Rose of Sharon; Harvest of Gleanings; Amaranth; Floral Keepsake; Gem of the Season; Christmas Blossoms and Juvenile Offerings.

Poems.—Eliza Cook; Mrs. Hemans; Amelia; Montgomery; Tupper; Reid's Poets of America; Byron; Moore; Pope; Cooper; Halleck and others.

Standard Works.—Webster's Quarto Dictionary; Ure's Dictionary; Spier's English and French Dictionary; U. S. Dispensatory; Gunn's Domestic Medicine; Greek and English Lexicon; Dodd's Arithmetic; Outlines of History; Scott's Commentaries; Henry's Commentary on the Bible; Comprehensive Commentary; Harper's Bible; Macaulay's Works; Washington Irving's Works; Leighton's Works; Shakespeare's Works; Bancroft's History of the U. S.; 1776 or War of Independence; Dr. Dick's Works; Lardner's Works; Barrow's Works; Edwards' Works and many others.

Miscellaneous.—Lamartine's Disclosures; Useful Letter Writer; Woman's Worth; Appleton's Tables for the People and Children; Light in the Dwelling; Crock of Gold; Journal of the Pilgrims; World in a Pocket Book; Cheever's Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress; Family Monitor and many others.

Gibbon, Robertson, Locke, Lardner, Leslie, Hurd, Porree, John Scott, Skelton, Sherlocks, Warburton, Chillingworth, Leighton, Simeon, Tiltonson, Hall, Shirley, Davy, Henry, Clarke, Wraxall, Alison, Mitford, Byron, Stackhouse, Bentley, Sharon, Turner, Spencer, Warton, Fuller, Lamb, Hazlitt, Coleridge, Shelley, Bingham, Graves, Beveridge, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, Farquhar and others too numerous to mention."
Children's Books.--A large Stock of the most approved Juvenile works. School books of all kinds.

Domestic Works.--American Cook Book; Virginia House Wife; Cooley's Receipts; Mason's Horse Farrier; Stable Economy, &c.

Bibles and Prayer Books.--A large and varied collection, Plain and Fancy.

The Publications of the Presbyterian Board, Tract Society and American Bible Society are kept.

Of course, in considering the range and variety of reading interests reflected in advertisements, one might possibly find every work published after about 1815 mentioned in at least one advertisement in a Louisiana newspaper or periodical. This would be even more probable after 1850, when there were more booksellers advertising and more newspapers in which to advertise. Regarded from one angle, this fact could lead to the conclusion that the range of reading taste included the major number of all works published. Perhaps every work published was read by one person or another in Louisiana; but the object of the immediate discussion, to show the reading taste as reflected in advertisements, is not to make any attempt to deal with the vague, indefinite outer fringes of the general tendencies; rather, it is to show which works were most widely read by the largest number of people. Those

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3 Concordia Intelligencer, IX, 23 (December 29, 1849)
works—the works for which there was the greatest demand—readily separate themselves from others by reason of greater frequency of advertisement over a longer period of time. Those respects in which the reading taste of the plantation class coincided with or differed from the reading taste of the general populace will be pointed out in a discussion of the contents of plantation libraries. Therefore, disregarding eddies and undercurrents for the time being, the broader currents of reading taste as indicated by advertisements will be considered. For convenience and clarity, separate categories are grouped under appropriate headings.

Popular and Standard Authors

A noteworthy feature regarding the majority of current advertisements is the fact that non-contemporaneous works are regularly advertised along with the popular recent publications. In this respect, the following advertisement of a Baton Rouge bookseller is typical:

McCORMICK & CO.

Baton Rouge Post Office Literary Depot

Have on hand the largest stock of BOOKS ever before offered to the Baton Rouge public, comprising the works of Moore, Scott, Byron, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Cooper, Butler, Goldsmith,
Mrs. Hemans, Spenser, Young, Montgomery, Pollock, Washington Irving, Bancroft, Abbot, Headley, Willis, W. Mackenzie, Melville, J. R. Morrell, Simms, Hawthorne, Bayard Taylor, Read, Mrs. Mary Howitt, Mrs. Withfrill, Dumas, Dickens, Lever, Lover, Ainsworth, Reynolds, Bennett, G. P. R. James, Captain Marryat, Smollett, Julia Kavanaugh, Mrs. Southworth, Mrs. Gore, Mrs. Sinclair
Together with all the popular authors of the day.  

It is significant that Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and Spenser appear with both major and minor contemporary popular authors such as Dumas, Cooper, Felicia Hemans, Mrs. Gore, Mary Howitt, and Mrs. Sinclair. The conclusion drawn from this occurrence is that, while there was a demand for the popular authors of the time, there was also a steady demand for standard authors.

Among the Elizabethans—to begin chronologically with non-contemporary authors—Shakespeare's works are most frequently advertised, in both cheap and elaborate "illuminated" editions. The latter seemingly were preferred. He was a standard author of the day, and in addition to the Bible, a copy of his works, it cannot be doubted, was invariably to be found in every ante-bellum plantation library. Works of other Elizabethan dramatists are occasionally advertised but not with sufficient regularity to indicate a wide-spread popularity. Spenser's works,  

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4The Daily Advocate, III, 264 (October 29, 1855)
however, are often advertised, but the indications are that the works of his eighteenth century followers were more in demand than his.

Of seventeenth century writers, Milton, Bunyan, and Burton stand out by reason of frequent mention. Paradise Lost, Pilgrim's Progress, and The Anatomy of Melancholy assuredly can be grouped with the Bible and Shakespeare as standard works to be found in every library. Francis Bacon's works were often offered for sale, and also scattered references to a few of the Restoration dramatists are found—chiefly to Dryden, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar.

The most popular eighteenth century works were apparently those of Goldsmith, Johnson, Hume, and Young, although Fielding, Sterne, Smollett, Pope and Swift were in some demand. Comparatively speaking, if it be granted that advertisements are a fairly accurate index to general reading taste, eighteenth century writers, with the exception only of the historians and orators such as Burke and Chatham, were not popular in nineteenth century Louisiana. Smollett's History of England, for instance, is more frequently advertised than any of his novels. Therefore, the generalization of one critic, and an opinion often re-echoed by others, that when the Southern Colonist read "...he took up his 'Tristram Shandy,' his 'Clarissa Harlowe,' his Fielding, as though he were still near London, and he had his preference, his literary
prejudices, feasting upon 'the Rambler,' 'the Tatler,'... as well as quoting Pope and Cowper,\textsuperscript{5} does not hold true, at least not in Louisiana.

Previous to 1800, and perhaps for a few years following, Sterne, Smollett, Pope, and Addison may have been regularly read by the "gentleman of the black stock," and these writers, it is true, were read to some extent in the nineteenth century, but they do not dominate the reading taste, and their popularity, in comparison with that of other writers was negligible. In this connection, moreover, there is ground to doubt the prevailing legendary opinion that ante-bellum southerners patterned their style of correspondence after that of Addison. If many persons in Louisiana, members of the plantation class or otherwise, used the Addisonian style in the nineteenth century, they inherited it from their fathers or derived it from Addison's American counterpart, Irving: they apparently did not read Addison first hand to any extent.

Of literature up to the nineteenth century, then, some of the most generally popular standard writings were Shakespeare's works, Burton's \textit{Anatomy of Melancholy}, Milton's poetical works, and Bunyan's \textit{Pilgrim's Progress}. With these

\textsuperscript{5}Moses, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 105
must be listed Plutarch's *Lives*, in English translation, and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, two works of great popularity. The non-contemporary authors and works mentioned above, it must be clearly understood, are only those most frequently advertised. So far as the plantation class specifically is concerned, the group must be extended as will be shown later in discussing the contents of libraries. In spite of the revered place most of the aforementioned works hold in literature today, as they did then, it must be concluded that Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, Burton, and Plutarch formed a fairly heavy reading diet. However, a completely different aspect of the reading taste is revealed by contemporary works most in demand.

Among the novelists read in the ante-bellum South, Scott's tremendous popularity is proverbial. Although his influence upon the southern mind in shaping cultural taste has been too often exaggerated by critics, his wide and continued popularity cannot be gainsaid. His works are regularly and consistently advertised by Louisiana booksellers—in sets, in single issues, in expensive and in cheap editions. Reference to him and to his works occurs more often than to any other single writer. The most flourishing period of his popularity coincides with the most prosperous period of the plantation system in Louisiana, that is, from 1830 to 1860. His popularity reached its zenith in the
forties, but it must be remembered that, in spite of the decline brought about by the War, Scott's popularity in the South continued into the twentieth century. As a matter of fact, it is only within the last two decades that he has been relegated to the background.

Second only to Scott's popularity was that of G. P. R. James, his pupil and follower. For a time James was a resident of the South, living first at Norfolk then at Richmond as British Consul. In addition to being only one remove from Scott as a novelist, this direct contact with the South perhaps aided his popularity. The period of his greatest vogue begins somewhat later than Scott's and extends to the War. but after that time declines more rapidly than Scott's. Almost if not equal to James in popularity was Bulwer, Lord Lytton. Not only are his works regularly advertised by all the booksellers in Louisiana, but comments about him and excerpts from his works are regularly found in even the small Louisiana newspapers. An interesting incidental testimonial of his popularity in the South is seen in the fact that even as late as 1862, when the War separated the South from the primary sources of the greater portion of its literary supply, a firm in Mobile, Alabama, published ten thousand copies of his Strange Story, and wrote him that they were
allowing him ten cents for each copy. Unquestionably, these writers—Scott, G. P. R. James, and Bulwer—were the big three in popularity in Louisiana among all other novelists during the thirty years preceding the Civil War.

Of other British novelists, the popularity of Disraeli, Captain Marryat—the weak counterpart of Cooper in his sea stories—, and William Harrison Ainsworth was only slightly less than the popularity of the three first named. Continuing down the scale with regard to literary merit, two Irish novelists, Charles Lever and Samuel Lover, were, from all indications, extremely popular. Both are very poor novelists—especially the latter who has been called “a second rate Lever and a third rate Moore”; however, Lever’s name was often linked with Bulwer’s and James’s.

Among the major British novelists, there appears to have been a considerable demand for the works of Dickens; his popularity approached but did not equal that of any of the above. Toward the close of the period there was also a demand for Thackeray’s works.

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6 Ingle, op. cit., p. 218


8 For example, an advertisement in the Planters’ Banner, XV, 50 (December 19, 1850), says, in part “...the fashionable will drop in to hear of Bulwer, James and Lever’s ‘last.’”
The most popular French novelists of the day, to judge from advertisements, were Dumas, Hugo, Eugène Sue, George Sand, de Staël, Frédéric Soulié, and Count Alfred de Vigny, while many others are frequently mentioned. That there was a large French element in the population of Louisiana at the time may in part account for the demand for French works, but, inasmuch as the ones most frequently advertised are romantic, prevailing romantic taste more widely explains it. Their appeal was by no means limited to French speaking people, for their works are usually advertised in English translation.

Ironically enough, Eugène Sue, one of the poorest representatives of French romanticism, and certainly the poorest writer of those listed was by far the most popular French writer. In the forties, the sale in Louisiana of The Wandering Jew must have exceeded for a time the sale of any of Scott's, James', or Bulwer's works. The columns of even the smallest local newspapers teem with references to it, and it was probably one of the most talked of books of that time. Next to Sue's works, those of Dumas were most popular.

American novelists of the time make a rather poor showing in popularity in comparison with European novelists. Of course, the fact that until the thirties and forties
America had comparatively few novelists accounts in part for this condition. However, Cooper's popularity, after about 1835, was almost as great as Scott's. Simms perhaps comes next to Cooper in popularity, and C. B. Brown next to him. Apparently in the fifties, Melville's works, especially *Typee* and *Omoo*, had a considerable vogue. Hawthorne's works received almost no attention. Washington Irving, whether he be classified as a fiction writer, essayist, or historian, was extremely popular.

Finally must be mentioned a group of novelists, British and American, who were evidently very popular, and who have less claim to a place in literature than any named thus far. They deservedly can be called "forgotten writers," although the names of a few are still more or less familiar. The worst portion of the group were women writers of moral tales and domestic romances, the majority of them flourishing in the years just preceding the War. Caroline Lee Hentz, Marion Harland (Mrs. Terhune), Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, Mrs. Charles Gore, John Galt, Mary Howitt and Miss Susan E. Ferrier were the most popular of this group. Titles of works alone give an indication of the nature of the productions

9 The popularity of this writer began much earlier than that of the majority of the others named.
of these writers. One can expect the moral and sentimental
to predominate in works bearing such titles as Husbands
and Homes; The Deserted Wife; Sybil Brotherton, or
Temptation; Marriage; The Inheritance; and Vashti; or,
Until Death Do Us Part.

Apart from this order of novelists, but nevertheless
an almost forgotten writer, is Joseph Holt Ingraham. He
was a writer of melodramatic and sensational blood
curdlers until, toward the close of his life, he entered
the church and thereafter devoted his talents to biblical
fiction. He was extremely popular in Louisiana, where he
lived and wrote for a period, but like the above writers,
represents the thinnest phases of novel literature.

Chiefly, the popular poetry of the day, like the
greater portion of the fiction, was romantic, and varied in
quality from good to very bad. Byron among poets, as Scott
among novelists, held first place in popularity. Not only
were his poems read, but also every work pertaining to him
was eagerly sought after. It is somewhat strange that his
immediate British contemporaries of the romantic school
(that is, of major rank), Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and
Coleridge, had little or no popularity in Louisiana; never­
theless, such is the case, for their works are rarely
advertised. Next to Byron in popularity was Thomas Moore;
and two lesser poets, Hannah More and Felicia Hemans, had
great popularity, especially the latter. The French romanticist Lamartine was popular, and of Americans, Poe and Longfellow appear to have been the most popular.

History, together with its adjunct, biography, was very popular in Louisiana, as it was generally throughout the Old South. The works of historians and biographers are advertised as frequently as the works of the most popular novelists; in fact, out of every four or five works listed on any Louisiana bookseller's advertisement, one or more is almost certain to be a history, biography, or memoir. The works of the American historian, William H. Prescott, were the most popular in Louisiana, and the works of George Bancroft were only slightly less popular. Charles Rollin's *Ancient History* had a standard popularity. Other historians and histories that can be put on the most popular list are Charles Botta's *History of the War of Independence;* J. H. M. D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation;* Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* Macaulay's *History of England;* Thiers' *History of the French Revolution,* Hume and Smollett's *History of England;* Moore's *History of Ireland,* and T. S. Arthur and W. H. Carpenter's various state histories. Also, the local historian, Charles Gayarré was very popular in Louisiana toward the close of the period, and *The History of the Valley of the Mississippi.*
by Monette, a Mississippian, was currently popular. This brief list of the most popular historians gives no true indication of the large number constantly advertised. That history had a tremendous appeal to the southern mind is unquestionable.

Based upon the conclusive love which the southerner had for history, it is of course natural to expect the most popular biographies to be those of prominent historical figures. Napoleon and Washington together formed the pièce de résistance. Undoubtedly almost every work written on Napoleon at the time had a good sale, and some biographies of him, as that by John Abbott, could be placed on the best seller lists. Of a dozen or more frequently advertised biographies of Washington those written by William Wirt, John Marshall, Weems, and Irving were best liked, and Headley's Washington and His Generals had great popularity. Other biographies widely advertised were those of General Taylor, Francis Marion, and Sam Houston. Works concerning military leaders and statesmen had precedence over others. Specifically, two works highly advertised were the Memoirs of S. S. Prentiss and Wirt's The Life and Character of Patrick Henry.

The popularity of memoirs and diaries can be accredited in part to feminine taste, although their appeal was not limited to feminine readers. The mere inclusion of the
word "memoir" or "diary" in the title of the work was seemingly enough to insure its ready sale. A few such works are *The Memoirs of Mrs. Susan Huntington*, *The Memoirs of the Countess of Blessington*, *Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV*, and *The Diary of Lady Willoughby*. The list could be extended indefinitely.

In connection with the popularity of history and biography it is natural to expect a pronounced interest in works dealing with matters of government, law, and politics. The works of Washington and Jefferson, and such works as Thomas Hart Benton's *Thirty Years' View* and Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.

Finally, among various miscellaneous works, travel books of every description had a wide appeal, as evidenced by the fact that they are advertised with great regularity. However, no particular authors or works stand out above others, the probable explanation for this occurrence being that readers were more interested in various countries than in the merits of certain authors and works. An especially large number of travel books concerning Africa were advertised: this interest was probably inspired by curiosity regarding the slave country.

To summarize briefly the foregoing, advertisements show that the works of a fairly large number of non-contemporary
authors, such as Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, and Burton, were in regular demand, evidently having a standard popularity. The contemporary productions of the nineteenth century romantic school—British, French, and American—were extremely popular, and the taste indiscriminately included the worst representatives of romanticism as well as the best. The authors whose works had the greatest following were Scott, Byron, G. P. R. James, Bulwer, Disraeli, Cooper, Dumas, Lamartine, Vigny, Samuel Lover, Eugène Sue, Charles Lever, and Maria Edgeworth. Finally, history, biography, political works, and travel books had a constant popularity.

**Literary Annuals and Gift Books**

Louisiana, together with other southern states, shared in the national and international mania for literary annuals and gift books. As a particularly revealing aspect of literary taste, they merit special consideration.

The gift book vogue was precipitated in America with the publication in 1825 of the *Atlantic Souvenir* by Carey and Lea of Philadelphia; other publishers were quick to enter the field with similar works and the number appearing around the holiday season continued to increase yearly
until there were as many as thirty in 1850. Their popularity waned only with the Civil War.¹⁰

The intended purposes of gift books were usually implied in their titles: The Token of Friendship, a Gift for the Holidays; The Snow-Drop, a Gift for a Friend; The Silver Cup of Sparkling Drops from Many Fountains, for the Friends of Temperance; The Amaranth, a Token of Remembrance. At first, containing choice collections of verse and prose, embellished and printed in a fashion suitable for making a beautiful gift, these works were designed chiefly for entertainment. But with their growth in popularity their appeal was capitalized upon for ulterior motives, and many became vehicles for temperance, abolition, or religious teachings. "American gift book literature is not easily described, so varied were the purposes of certain volumes, so casual the impulses of the majority. About the only sweeping conclusion possible is that all were highly moral and polite."¹¹ Consequently, only super-refined, pure and elevating literature was included in gift books. Few contained humor, and neither inside nor outside was there connected with them anything


¹¹Ibid., p. 24
to corrupt the morals of the young and innocent. Witness, in this connection, DeBow's comment regarding the exterior appearance of *The Floral Year*: "...the binding of the book is singularly chaste and elegant; and altogether we know of no volume which the New Year has produced that could better be presented as a souvenir of friendship or love."\(^{12}\)

Naturally, gift book literature, selected as it was to accord with a generic moral purpose, hardly if ever was of any but a very poor quality. Some of the annuals, it is true, contained at one time or the other, stories, essays, and poems from the leading authors of the day, such as Longfellow, Bryant, Emerson, N. P. Willis, J. R. Lowell, and W. G. Simms, but these were the exceptions. "Gift books were meant to reassure, to soothe, to conventionalize according to a cultural pattern. Felicia Hemans was the ideal singer, Mrs. Sigourney her American counterpart."\(^{13}\)

The books were usually expensively bound and illustrated with elaborate steel, wood or copper engravings, and very often verses were produced to correspond to the illustrations rather than vice versa. The poor literary

\(^{12}\) *DeBow's Review*, III, 2 (February, 1847), p. 184

\(^{13}\) Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 30
merit of the average gift book was only accentuated by the fine clothes it wore. Gift books definitely epitomized "feminine" taste, and anything vigorous or original ran counter to their sweet, gentle, feminine nature.

The majority of all annuals and gifts on the market from about 1830 to 1860 are advertised in Louisiana newspapers and periodicals. Certain ones, however, by reason of more frequent mention, stand out above others. The chief of these are The Rose of Sharon; Friendship's Offering; The Amaranth; Flora's Gem; Christmas Blossoms; and Snow Drops.

The "flower" variety of gift book seems to have been especially popular, as, for instance, The Flower Garden; The Floral Keepsake; Flowers Personified; and the Floral Year. A fuller description of the last-named will illustrate the type in general. The complete title is The Floral Year, Embellished with Bouquets of Flowers Drawn and Colored from Nature. The "language and moral of each flower" is illustrated with a poem, and the bouquets are "beautifully grouped and colored." The volume was somewhat unusual in that it was the work of only one author, Mrs. Anna Peyre Dennies, who for a time lived in New Orleans. One critic described the poems as having "...all of woman's gentleness, her susceptibility to
beauty, her melting tenderness and her undying affections."14
This alone should be sufficiently revealing of the quality
of poetry it contained. Others of the same type were
apparently very popular.

Gift books once read were not forgotten or destroyed:
they were usually kept lying in a conspicuous place and
returned to again and again. They aided in creating and
maintaining a reading taste for the most superficial,
conventionalized, and thinnest variety of romanticism.

Standard Sets: Cabinet and Family
Libraries, Encyclopaedias, and other Reference Works

Judging from the frequency and repetitiousness of
advertisements, many volume sets of all kinds were evidently
very popular—or necessary, as the case may be. Large
elaborate editions of standard and popular authors seem to
have been preferred over the smaller, plainer ones. The
works of Scott, for example, are advertised to appear in
"24 parts...printed in beautiful style...on fine white
paper, with illustrations."15 The works of Shakespeare and

15 Ibid., XIV, 1 (January, 1853), p. 87
Milton are advertised in "splendid" and "illuminated" editions, while more copious "complete works" sets of accepted writers apparently were everywhere in demand.

There are an especially large number of many-volume cabinet and family libraries offered for sale—publications designed to be more or less complete libraries within themselves. Among the more current of these was Parley's Cabinet Library. Samuel G. Goodrich, whose name is associated with so many various literary productions of the forties and fifties was its editor. The work, containing five hundred different subjects, and illustrated by five hundred engravings, was designed "...to exhibit, in a popular form, select biographies, ancient and modern; the wonders and curiosities of history, nature, science, and philosophy, with the practical duties of life."  

16Democratic Advocate, XII, 28 (November 30, 1854): p. 223.
A more exact idea of the variety and superficial nature of the material contained in the set can be secured from the following titles of the individual volumes: 1, Lives of Famous Men of Modern Times; 2, Lives of Famous Men of Ancient Times; 3, Curiosities of Human Nature; or, The Lives of Eccentric and Wonderful Persons; 4, Lives of Benefactors; including Patriots, Inventors, Discoverers, &c.; 5, Lives of Famous American Indians; 6, Lives of Celebrated Women; 7, Lights and Shadows of American History; 8, Lights and Shadows of European History; 9, Lights and Shadows of Asiatic History; 11, History of the American Indians; 12, Manners, Customs, and Antiquities of the American Indians; 15, A Glance at the Sciences, Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, &c.; 14, Wonders of
Another set frequently advertised of this same general type, but much larger, is the Cabinet Cyclopaedia of which the Reverend Dionysius Lardner was the chief editor. The series, begun in 1829 and completed in 1844, comprised in all 153 volumes, divided as follows: history, 67 volumes; biography, 31 volumes; natural philosophy, 15 volumes; natural history, 15 volumes; and useful arts, 7 volumes. Among the authors of these volumes were Sir Walter Scott, Sir James Mackintosh, Sir John Herschel, Sir N. Harris Nicholas, Robert Southey, Thomas Moore, G. P. R. James, and James Montgomery.  

Out of all the separate divisions, the first, bearing the title "The Cabinet of History" appears to have been the most popular in Louisiana. This fact is not surprising, for southerners, not only in Louisiana, but in other states as well, were omnivorous readers of history—a point to be more fully discussed later in this study. There is little doubt that this work is superior to Goodrich's Cabinet History.

Geology; 15, Anecdotes of the Animal Kingdom; 16, A Glance at Philosophy, Mental, Moral and Social; 17, Book of Literature, Ancient and Modern with Specimens; 18, Enterprise, Industry, and Art of Man; 19, Manners and Customs of All Nations; 20, The World and Its Inhabitants. Cf. Ibid., p. 223

Others belonging to this category to which numerous references are found are Harper's Family Library; The Library of Entertaining Knowledge; and the Library of Useful Knowledge.

Unusually popular as a set was Jared Sparks's Library of American Biography. The first series, published at Boston, 1834-1838, consisted of twenty-six lives in ten volumes; the second series, published between 1844 and 1847, contained thirty-four lives in fifteen volumes, and in subsequent editions, the number of lives was increased to sixty in twenty-five volumes. Only eight biographies of the total number included were written by Sparks, although he was the editor of the entire set. The tremendous popularity of the work in the United States is attested to by the fact that the sale of all the volumes to 1853 was estimated to be 100,000.\textsuperscript{18} As has been previously mentioned, agents for the work visited the parishes in Louisiana soliciting subscriptions from the planters,\textsuperscript{19} and the editor of the Planters' Banner of St. Mary's Parish comments to the effect that the work is "justly celebrated as one

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Ibid.}, II, p. 2192

\textsuperscript{19} Cf. Chapter II, p. 31
of the best" and is "...worthy of a place in every library." And there were, from all indications, few plantation libraries in Louisiana that did not contain it.

In addition to such library sets, encyclopaedias, cyclopaedias, miscellanies, dictionaries, and other reference works are regularly advertised. The Encyclopaedia Americana, The National Cyclopaedia of Useful Knowledge, Chambers' Encyclopaedia of English Literature, and Chambers' Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge are among the more common of this category.

One or more works of this type, it is safe to say, was a stock constituent of any plantation library. Chambers' Encyclopaedia of English Literature, an anthology of English literature with critical and biographical notes, and Chambers' Miscellany of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge were extremely popular in the late forties and during the fifties. Regarding the first of these works, J. D. B. DeBow comments in his Review:

Chambers never published a poor or useless work. Most of their publications are of such a popular, suggestive and informing stamp as to be, what this is emphatically, libraries in themselves. As a volume of reference, it will assist the most finished scholar in his research for some particular passage; while the man of business can find

20Planters' Banner, XII, 52 (December 23, 1854)
in it a fund of information on subjects wherein ignorance is peculiarly awkward and annoying. If we were the father of a family, rich or poor, next to the full works of the great names of English literature, we would choose this valuable Cyclopaedia of those illustrious many, whose minds have labored so nobly in framing the thoughts and molding the sentences of our bold and free Saxon tongue.

The second of these works, comprising thirty volumes, is a miscellany of literature, biography, philosophy, natural science, and the like. "The tendency of all the sketches," DeBow comments, "is moral and instructive," and in spite of the fact that one of the volumes contains a false picture of the "horrors" of negro slavery in the southern states, DeBow says "...the work is one of the most popular, useful, and interesting productions of the day, and as such should commend itself to the widest circulation."

Among the smaller reference works, dictionaries of all varieties are continually advertised: every subject of sufficient breadth had its dictionary. The more current ones, however, were Ure's Dictionary of Arts and Manufactures.

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22 *Ibid.*, IV, 1 (September 18, 1847), p. 141
23 *Ibid.*, VI, 6 (December, 1848), p. 458
McCulloch's Dictionary of Commerce and Navigation and Geographical Dictionary and Charles Anthon's various classical dictionaries, and of course, the dictionaries of Webster and Johnson. In this connection, also, should be mentioned the manifest popularity of Grabbe's English Synonyms: it is one of the most frequently advertised standard works.

Despite the preference for works in particular fields, as has already been indicated and which will again be referred to in Chapter IV, the wide range of reading interests indicates diversity rather than concentration in any one field. This fact leads to the conclusion that the average member of the plantation class read more widely in all fields than profoundly in one. Large sets of works, such as the foregoing, which presented in a readily available manner a wide range of material on numerous subjects, or presented the choice and unusual from any one field, are in agreement with this general reading tendency. Many works on the order of the Parley Cabinet Library and a large number of encyclopaedias had for their purpose, as advertisements concerning them frequently state, the presentation, in an entertaining and popular manner, of facts on general, technical, and professional subjects with which a well educated person was generally expected to be conversant. That works designed to such an end fitted well into the plantation class's scheme of life cannot be doubted.
Conversation was a fine art with many, and much of the power to converse well comes from the possession of a relatively large amount of general information over a wide range of subjects. Source books of the nature described above were unquestionably an aid in this respect. This is not to imply, however, that the members of the plantation class were superficial, dilettante readers. Some no doubt were, but not the majority. There are other—and perhaps more logical—reasons which explain their seeming predilection for large sets of standard works, notable among which is the fact that the scarcity of primary and secondary schools and the ordinarily poor quality of instruction in those available, compelled many planters to have their children's early education conducted in their homes under the direction of tutors. Not a few planters preferred this method. Naturally, for this purpose the more popular kinds of reference works were needed. Then, too, because the plantation was usually somewhat isolated, the planter was denied ready access to a larger library should he desire special information on any particular subject. His library, therefore, had to be sufficiently broad in its entirety to serve him for all practical purposes.
Scientific and Specialized Literature

Mr. T. J. Johnson, in a recent study, *Scientific Interests in the Old South*, has established through extensive and careful investigation, the thesis that there was a pronounced and active interest in science in the pre-war South. The large number of scientific works regularly advertised by Louisiana booksellers further evidences the general truth of this thesis insofar as Louisiana is concerned. A surprising variety of scientific works was advertised, the range being from studies of a popular nature, designed to present general information on a branch of science, to specialized works, designed to meet practical, everyday requirements.

That there would be a keen interest in works on agriculture, is of course a natural thing to expect, when directly or indirectly agriculture was the chief source of income for the greatest number of people. DeBow states the matter well when he says, "To be without a library of Agriculture is for the planter to be without implements of his profession..."24 The demand for agricultural works increased after about 1835 when the plantation system became more extensive and the competition keener: planters had to

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seek more efficient and profitable ways of production. To this end they had of necessity to maintain a familiarity with the standard and current works on agriculture. Some of the larger booksellers in Louisiana, as has been previously mentioned, operated in connection with their establishments departments devoted to agricultural works exclusively. There was, also, a large number of periodicals dedicated wholly, or almost wholly, to the practical agricultural interests of the planters, two of the most important of which were Skinner's Farmers' Library and DeBow's Review—the latter being published in New Orleans. Standard works pertaining to every phase of agriculture were continually offered for sale.

Also, that there would be a fairly large demand for medical works, especially on the part of the plantation class, is understandable. The usual somewhat isolated, or very isolated, location of the plantation necessitated a household knowledge of medicine. The preservation of the health and proper care of the slaves of course accentuated this need. Whether they were prompted by mercenary or humanitarian motives, the majority of planters, it cannot be doubted, kept careful vigilance over the physical conditions of their slaves. There was always danger of a contagious disease being spread among the slaves, and since the better slaves represented an investment of from
five hundred to three thousand dollars and up, a planter would have been unwise not to have cared for their health. Some of the more wealthy planters were able to maintain a regular physician, but the larger number were not. A knowledge of preventive measures and of proper treatment for minor diseases was therefore a matter of first importance to the planter. Standard medical works were regularly advertised.

Aside from a pronounced interest in science from a practical viewpoint, that is, as applied to agriculture, to the care of slaves, or to such things as cooking and flower gardening, there was evidently an interest in science from a more theoretical and intellectual viewpoint—a desire to know about the mysteries of the universe. It is a very common occurrence to find scientific works listed together in advertisements with the lighter more popular literature of the day. To cite some specific examples by way of illustration, a bookseller in Baton Rouge, along with Abbott's *Napoleon*, Bancroft's *History of the United States*, Mrs. Wilson's *Inez* and Scott's *Moredun*, advertises *Genera of the Planets of the United States*, *Physical Geography of the Sea*, and *Botany of the Southern States*.25 Another bookseller advertises "medical and

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surgical works; Moreau's *Midwifery*; *Anatomical Plates*; Goddard on the Teeth, etc...." with Byron's and Moore's works, and "splendidly bound annuals." These are only two of numerous such advertisements that could be cited. It is interesting that an unusually large number of phrenological works were advertised; apparently they had great popularity.

On the shelves of the majority of ante-bellum plantation libraries, by the side of the works of Byron, Scott, Bulwer, Moore, and the like, were to be found various scientific works. Therefore, from all indications, the reading taste was by no means restricted to standard works, romantic novels, histories, biographies, and gift books, but included scientific works as well.

**Periodical Literature**

Periodical literature formed a substantial portion of the reading matter of the plantation class as it likewise did of the general populace of Louisiana during the period under consideration. The forty years preceding the War saw a tremendous expansion in the number of American periodical publications. Many had mushroom growths; others

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26 *Planters' Banner*, XIII, 3 (January 14, 1847)
enjoyed long and successful lives. Southern periodicals in the main were not so successful as northern ones, and southern editors, with some justice, complained of the South's patronage of northern publications. But the evidence points to the fact that southern periodicals did not receive bad treatment in the way of support when this support was merited. However, there was a comparatively small number of southern magazines to compete with northern ones. Furthermore, many British periodicals were popular, especially among the members of the plantation class, with their interest in England, its literature, law, and politics. Since periodical literature will be treated in a more extended fashion in a subsequent chapter, no more will be done here than to indicate briefly which British, northern, and southern periodicals were most popular in Louisiana.

Of British periodicals the four great quarterly reviews—the Edinburgh, the London, the Westminster, and the North British—were highly advertised in Louisiana, and evidently had not a small body of subscribers. However, Blackwood's Magazine was perhaps more popular than any of the reviews. These five periodicals were the most popular in Louisiana, although many others such as the London Literary Gazette, and Punch are regularly advertised.
Godey's Lady's Book was the most popular northern publication during the period. Other northern magazines of this type, but having comparatively short lives, also were popular in Louisiana during their period of flourishing. The chief of these were The Columbian Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine, the Ladies' Companion, Arthur's Ladies' Magazine, Peterson's Ladies' National Magazine and the Union Magazine, edited by Mrs. C. M. Kirkland. Among the northern periodicals of the better type the Knickerbocker Magazine, numbered among whose contributors were Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, was seemingly fairly popular. Others that should be mentioned are the North American Miscellany, the Democratic Review, Graham's Magazine, the New York Mirror, the American Agriculturist, Skinner's Farmers' Library and Flow, Loom, and Anvil.

The number of southern periodicals during the period having a fair list of subscribers is indeed small. The most outstanding were the Southern Literary Messenger, the short-lived Southern Quarterly Review, and DeBow's Review.

The range of reading interests as reflected in booksellers' advertisements is broad and variegated, encompassing numerous different types of literature. The
most pronounced general tendencies, however, readily stand out and fall into divisions. There was a considerable demand for certain non-contemporary authors, chief among whom were Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, Burton, Young, Hume, and Goldsmith. The contemporary fiction and poetry of the romantic school, British, French, and American, was popular; and the position individual writers occupied in popularity was not determined by their literary merits. Some of the worst representatives of romanticism were more popular than better representatives. The most popular, including poets and fiction writers, were Scott, Byron, Bulwer, G. P. R. James, Eugène Sue, Thomas Moore, Hannah More, Cooper, Simms, Dumas, Dickens, Lamartine, Maria Edgeworth, Caroline Lee Hentz, Joseph Holt Ingraham, Mrs. Hemans, Samuel Lover, and Charles Lever.

Literary annuals and gift books had a vogue in Louisiana, and represent one of the most superficial phases of reading interest. There was a pronounced interest in histories, biographies, and works pertaining to politics and government. Travel literature was very popular: people in Louisiana seemingly had an avid interest in reading about far off places. The range of reading interest also included scientific works, both of a practical nature and of a theoretical nature. Finally, periodicals, British, northern, and southern, formed an important part of the reading matter.
CHAPTER IV

READING TASTE AS EVIDENCED BY CONTENTS OF LIBRARIES

Naturally, the contents of any library represent individual reading interests: it would be unusual to find two or more libraries the contents of which would harmonize with each other in every detail. Moreover, some of the Louisiana plantation owners had specialized educations, such as law or medicine; consequently, a certain portion of the libraries of this number, as it is natural to expect, reflect professional interests. It is again necessary to state, however, that this study is concerned, not with the peculiarities of individual reading interests, but with the more pronounced and general reading habits of the majority of the members of the plantation class. The peculiar make-up of plantation society prompted and maintained in that class certain common interests in thought, action, and outlook on life in general. To a limited degree, regardless of individual variations, these common interests resulted, as in other matters, in a predilection for the same types of literature. Therefore, it is logical to expect plantation libraries to agree with each other in the general nature of their contents, if not, to any extent, in specific titles of works.
The purpose of this chapter, as formerly stated, is to exhibit the nature of the reading taste of the plantation class as evidenced by actual contents of libraries. This problem presents unusual difficulties. Plantation libraries not destroyed during the War or in the years immediately following have been for the most part broken up and the contents scattered. In the main, therefore, it has been necessary to deal with fragmentary collections preserved from former libraries. Evidence of the original size of each library is presented in the fragment itself: frequently, two or three scattered volumes are all that remain from the large sets which the planters ordinarily bought. Moreover, a certain portion of any library—that consisting of the cheaper, paper bound volumes—was naturally very perishable; and many books by reason of their popularity suffered from too much handling. Consequently, the evidence afforded by extant ante-bellum libraries is at best very incomplete, and it must be understood that the collections dealt with in the following discussion are intended only to lend corroborative support to other testimonials of reading taste, not as final evidence in themselves. However, it is more than a mere coincidence that the contents even of fragmentary collections resemble each other to a remarkable degree. This fact—
and the truth of it will be demonstrated in the following discussion—presupposes the existence of two other facts: first, the libraries to which the partial collections formerly belonged resembled each other to the same degree; and, second, the partial collections are fair cross-sections of those former libraries.

Specimen collections of both English and French speaking plantation families are analyzed in the following discussion to illustrate these facts. As far as possible, representative collections from different sections of the State have been used. The method of analysis is an arbitrary one. The works in each collection are classified according to nine categories of writing: literature, history and biography, philosophy, theology, science, social, reference, textbooks and miscellaneous. Literature, under which is included fiction, poetry, essays, drama, and similar types of writing, is further divided into three classes: American, foreign, and classic. History and biography, because of their close relationship, are grouped together. The miscellaneous division includes gift books, travel books, and other works of a varied nature. The other divisions are self-explanatory. In order to show the relative proportions of these different works, classification summaries of individual collections are given according to this scheme, showing the number of
volumes in each category and the relative approximate percentage. Collections of English speaking plantation families are first considered.

English Collections

I. The T. A. S. Doniphan Collection.¹

The planter who owned this collection, T. A. S. Doniphan, lived near Sicily Island, small settlement in Catahoula Parish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification Summary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Classic Literature</td>
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<td>History and Biography</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

History and biography comprise the greatest percentage of

¹Bibliography given in Appendix C
the total number of volumes. Titles of interest among this group are the following: Abbott's History of Napoleon Bounaparte; Botta's History of the War for Independence (in translation); Thomas Moore's History of Ireland; Prescott's Conquest of Peru; William Gilmore Simms's Life of Francis Marion; Voltaire's History of Charles XII, King of Sweden; Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; and Lardner's Cabinet of History, a large set.

The amount of foreign literature is only slightly less than that of history and biography. Among the writers represented are Campbell, Goldsmith, Macpherson, Milton, Pope, Scott, Southey, Sterne, Hemans, and Swift. Writings of a social nature, under which are grouped works pertaining to government, law, and politics, hold the place of next importance. Tocqueville's Democracy in America; Estes's A Defense of Negro Slavery; Goodrich's Manners and Customs of Nations; Sparks' edition of The Political Writings of George Washington; and the Speeches of Chatham, Burke, and Erskine are representative titles of the works in this division.

Miscellaneous writings make up the fourth largest group. Some illustrative titles are the following: Olin's Travels in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Land;
Stephens' *Incidents in Yucatan; Elements of Mythology*; and *The Wreath and Christmas Blossoms*—two gift books. Outside of theology, which constitutes sixteen volumes of the total 214, other classes of works represent small percentages. It is interesting to note in this connection the small proportion of American literature in comparison with foreign literature, American literature being represented by only six volumes, while foreign literature is represented by forty-eight volumes. This collection contained also thirteen different periodicals, among which were the *American Farmer; the Analectic Magazine; Blackwood's Magazine; Southern Literary Messenger; Southern Quarterly Review; and the United States Magazine and Democratic Review*.

II. The Smith Collection.²

The collection herewith considered, a portion of the original larger library, belonged to J. W. Smith, who formerly lived at Asphodel Plantation in West Feliciana Parish. Since Smith added to the collection started by his father, the works are indicative of the reading taste of two generations.

By a very small margin over history and biography,

²Bibliography given in Appendix D
foreign literature constitutes the largest division.

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<tr>
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</table>

Authors represented are Milton, Shakespeare, Burns, Byron, Chaucer, Cowper, Mrs. Hemans, Pope, Dr. Johnson, Lamb, Macpherson, Young, Hannah More, Montgomery, Thomas Moore, G. P. R. James, Scott, Spenser, Smollett, Sterne, Swift, and Henry Kirke White. There are two different editions of both Shakespeare and Scott. Among histories and biographies there are D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*; Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*; Grimshaw's *History of the United States*; the *Life of General Francis Marion* by Harry and

The relative amount of American literature in this collection is greater than that in the Doniphan. Irving, Willis, and Simms are the chief representatives.

Among the more significant titles of works in other classifications are the following: Brewer's *A Guide to the Scientific Knowledge of Things Familiar; Pilgrimages to English Shrines; The Writings of Thomas Jefferson; Nelson's *The Cause and Cure of Infidelity; Encyclopaedia Americana; The Library of Standard Letters; The Dew Drop; Friendship's Offering; and The Honeysuckle. (The last three are gift books.) By title there are seven periodicals, the preference being decidedly for the "ladies" magazines, among which are Arthur's Ladies Magazine; Godey's Lady's Book; The Ladies' National Magazine; Sartain's Union Magazine; and The Southern Ladies' Book.

III. The Kilbourne Collection

This partial collection is from East Feliciana Parish.
and still remains in its original setting, the ante-bellum Kilbourne home.3

<table>
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The classification summary reveals again the predominance of foreign literature and of history and biography over other types of writing represented. Addison, Boswell, Byron, Campbell, Defoe, Edgeworth, Fielding, Goldsmith, Dr. Johnson, Milton, Scott, Shakespeare, Smollett, Eugene Sue and Thackeray are among the foreign writers represented.

3Bibliography given in Appendix E
Among histories and biographies are Bancroft's *History of the United States*; D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*; Headley's *Washington and His Generals*; Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico*; Hume's *History of England*; and Irving's *Life of Washington.* Other titles, representing other divisions, are as follows: Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*; Chambers' *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*; Madame LeVert's *Souvenirs of Travel*; Nelson's *The Cause and Cure of Infidelity*; Bayard Taylor's *A Visit to India, China, and Japan in 1853*; Toqueville's *Democracy in America*; *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy Lands*; the *New American Cyclopaedia*, and *The Amaranth* (a gift book).

IV. The Scott Collection.4

This collection is from *The Shades*, the plantation home, since 1808, of the Scott family in West Feliciana Parish. Although it is only a very small fragment of a former large library, it is given here as a further illustration of the plantation class's taste for foreign literature, history, and biography.

4Bibliography given in Appendix F
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Significant works in general are the following:

V. The Henshaw Collection.  

This collection is from Iberia Parish, and is a fragment of the former library of A. B. Henshaw.

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<td>13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Significant works are the following: Froissart's Chronicles; Junius's Letters; Plutarch's Lives; Judson's Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence; Chateaubriand's Travels in Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and Palestine; Poetical Works of Cowper; Gibbon's Decline and Fall; Miles's History of Chivalry; and History of the Crusades; Thiers' History of the French Revolution; Works of Swift; Dramatic Works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh.

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5 This bibliography was secured through the courtesy of Mr. Rufus A. McIlhenny of Avery Island. The collection is now in the home of Mrs. McIlhenny.
and Fargher; Rollin's Ancient History; The Works of Poe;
The Writings of George Washington, edited by Sparks;
Poetical Works of Milton; Prescott's Ferdinand and Isabella;

VI. The Butler Collection.6

The preceding five collections have been either small
or fragmentary. The Butler collection, however, is almost

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Literature</td>
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<td>Classic Literature</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1115</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6This collection was recently purchased by the Hill Memorial Library of Louisiana State University. It was formerly
the property of Judge Thomas Butler (1785-1847) of West Feliciana Parish.
intact, representing the reading taste of a plantation family for several generations. For this reason the comparison of it with the smaller collections is most interesting and revealing.

Foreign literature predominates by a large majority in this collection. It is not unusual that there are more works by Scott than there are by any other individual author, nor is it unusual that the collection contains more than one set. The major number of the works were published in Philadelphia, with one or two from Boston and New York. There are eleven volumes of Bulwer, six of G. P. R. James, and six of Thackeray. (This is an unusually large representation for Thackeray. Three of the volumes, however, are from Appleton's Library of the Best Authors and two are from The Collection of British Authors.) Of course, Milton, Shakespeare, Byron, Dickens and Disraeli are found, and there are several of the works of Madame de Staël, Charles Paul de Kock, Jane Austen and Fanny Burney. Cervantes' Don Quixote is also found. In American literature, Cooper, Irving, N. P. Willis, Joseph Holt Ingraham, Thomas C. Haliburton,

7 Byron's attraction was seldom confined to his works alone. In this particular collection, for example, are Thomas Medwin's Journal of the Conversations of Lord Byron (paper binding); John Kennedy's Conversations on Religion with Lord Byron; and Thomas Moore's Letters and Journals of Lord Byron with Notices of his Life.
and Franklin are outstanding, with Cooper rivaling Scott in regard to the number of volumes.

That the destruction wrought by war, by death, and by time itself affected in a strong degree the major number of plantation libraries has already been made evident. The comparative absence of the cheaper editions and especially the paper bound editions is understandable. Naturally they, if for no other reason than their appearance or lack of durability, would be the first to perish. One of the most interesting features of this collection therefore is its large proportion of the popular foreign and American authors of the day. There are in addition to the better known of the popular authors, those authors scarcely recognized today. A comparison of this collection with the Franklin Circulating Library reveals the place occupied by such men as Bulwer, Disraeli, G. P. R. James, Captain Marryat, and Joseph Holt Ingraham. It also throws considerable light on the little known authors in the sense that not only are a number of the same authors represented but particular individual titles likewise appear in both collections.8

The major number of the following selections from the Butler collection are in the Franklin Circulating Library (Appendix A.); all were highly advertised:

The Ghost Hunter and His Family, by the O'Hara Family (by Banim)
Canvassing ..., by the O'Hara Family (by Banim)
Works of a social nature make up the second largest category in the collection. The reason for this is the fact that there is included an unusually large number of works pertaining to government, law, and politics. Representative titles are the following: The Speeches of Henry Clay; The Works of Edmund Burke; Benton's Thirty Years' View; Matthew Hutes's A Defence of Negro Slavery.

Backford, William, Vathek
Blessington, Marguerite (Countess of), Confessions of an Elderly Lady and Gentleman
Brown, Thomas, The Fudge Family in Paris
Bradford, Annie Chambers, Nelly Brackin
Bury, Charlotte, The Divorced
Flirtation: A Story of the Heart (by Lady Charlotte Bury)
Garay, Alice, The Adopted Daughter
Carleton, W. H., Neal Malone, and Other Tales of Ireland
Daede, Lady, Recollections of a Chapteon
The Deuced
Diggsworth, Maria, Early Lessons
-----------------------------, Reasmond: A Sequel to Early Lessons
----------, Vivian: and Ealice de Coulange, Tales
Ellis, Mrs., Chapters on Wives
Ellis, Mrs. Sarah (Strickney), The Women of England, their Social Duties and Domestic Habits
(Ellis, Mrs.) Strickney, Sarah, Pictures of Private Life
The Inheritance (by Miss Ferrier)
Calt, John, ed. Continuation of the Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV.
-----------------------------, Lawrie Todd
Cere, Mrs., Self
-------------, Pin-Money: A Novel
-------------, The Dowager
Greenwood, Grace, Hans and Mislooks of a Tour in Europe
Herbert, Henry William, The Warwick Woodlands, or Things as they were ten years ago; by Frank Forrester
Howitt, Mary, Wood Leighten
Jameson, Mrs., A Commonplace Book of Thought
-----------------------------, Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical, and Historical
England and America: A Comparison of the Social and Political State of Both Nations; Daniel Webster's Speeches and Forensic Arguments; Letters from Washington on the Constitution and Laws with Sketches of Some of the Prominent Characters of the United States: Celebrated Speeches of Chatham, Burke, and Erskine; and Jean Baptiste Say's A Treatise on Political Economy, or Production, Distribution, and Consumption of Wealth.

The fact that the collection is an intact accumulation accounts for the large number of textbooks. Education was carried on in the home, and particularly for the younger children. The dates of publication on these textbooks fall within the period 1800-1860, the larger portion of them coming within the earlier years. Not only are there texts in all the common fields of knowledge; there are numerous others which make up a category all their own. One cannot too tightly close his eyes to the lessons in

Lever, Charles, The Fortunes of Glenore
Lover, Samuel, Legends and Stories of Ireland
Morgan, Sydney (Owenson) Lady, The Book of the Boudoir
Morgan, The O'Briens and the O'Flaherty's
Reuben Apsley, by the author of Brambletye House
Blue-Stocking Hall (by W. P. Scorgill)
Tom Cringle's Log (by Michael Scott)
Scott, Michael, The Cruise of the Midge
Shelley, Mary W., The Fortunes of Perkin Warbeck.
Shelley, Mary W., Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus
Shelley, Mary W., The Fortunes of Perkin Warbeck
Shelley, Mary W., Frankenstein; or the Modern Prometheus
Sigourney, Mrs. L. H., Lucy Howard's Journal
Richmond; or, Scenes in the Life of a Bow Street Officer
Trollope, Mrs., Domestic Manners of the Americans
Wetherell, Elizabeth (pseudn.), Queechy (Susan Warner)
The Children Who Loved Instruction; Joel Howes' Lectures to Young Men on the Formation of Character; Pretty Lessons in Verse for Good Children, and Lyman Cobb's Juvenile Reader Containing Interesting, Moral, and Instructive Lessons. It is an assured fact that the children of the Butler family were thoroughly catechized. There are scattered catechisms on various subjects, but none to compare in impressiveness with Pinnock's, published by G. and W. B. Whittaker in London.

These catechisms were published within the years 1821-1830, and the editions range from the first to the thirty-first. These in the Butler collection are as follows: Catechism of Agriculture; Catechism of Algebra; Catechism of Ancient History; Catechism of Architecture; Catechism of Arithmetic; Catechism of British Biography; Catechism of British Geography; Catechism of British Law; Catechism of Chemistry; Catechism of Chronology (being an easy introduction to the study of history); Catechism of Conchology; Catechism of Drawing; Catechism of Electricity; Catechism of General Knowledge; Catechism of Geography; Catechism of Geometry and the First Principles of Trigonometry; Catechism of the History of America; Catechism of the History and Antiquities of the Jews; Catechism of the History of England...; Catechism of the History of France; Catechism of the History of Greece, Its Geography, and Antiquities; Catechism of the History of Rome; Catechism of the History of Scotland; Catechism of Mechanics; Catechism of Medicine; or, Golden Rules for the Preservation of Health; Catechism of Mental Philosophy; Catechism of Modern History; Catechism of Music; Catechism of Natural History: or the Animal Kingdom Displayed; Catechism of Navigation; Catechism of Ornithology; Catechism of Perspective; Catechism of the Principles of English Grammar; Catechism of Trade and Commerce; Catechism of Universal History Containing a Summary account of the Various Empires, Kingdoms, and States; Catechism on the practice of Painting in Oil; and in relief of catechism there is W. Pinnock's One Thousand Miscellaneous Questions on Geography, Astronomy, and History, London, Whittaker and Company, 1830.
Although the family was English speaking and lived in that particular section of Louisiana so strongly influenced by English tradition and customs, there were several German, Italian, and Spanish grammars in the collection. French, however, had a place of particular importance. In all there are twelve of A. Bolmar's works, prominent in which are his editions of Perrin's Fables and Fénélon's *The Adventures of Telemachus, Son of Ulysses.* Others represented are Ollendorf, Dufief, and Henri Duval.

As aforementioned, there are texts in all the major fields. In the main the emphasis is placed first on history, next on the English language including texts on oratory, third on general knowledge in the various fields, and in foreign languages, on French.

Although the history and biography category is fourth in rank, the difference between this classification and the two preceding is so small as to be negligible. In this collection, the following, among the works of many lesser known historians of course, are outstanding: Thiers' *History of the French Revolution;* Macaulay's *History of England;* Thomas Moore's *History of Ireland;* Hume's *History of England;* Bancroft's *History of the United States;* Marshall's *History of Kentucky;* Grimshaw's *History
of the United States; and Charles A. Goodrich's History of the United States.¹⁰

The theory has already been advanced that the Louisiana planter was more interested in the subject of a biography than in the author. In the Butler collection, for example, there are works on Napoleon by Scott, Bausset, Cases, Maitland, O'Meara, and Antomarchi. All are not biographies in the strict sense of the word; however, they indicate his current appeal, and outside of Scott, it is hardly to be believed that any of these works attracted attention because of interest in the author.¹¹

The biographical works in general in this collection reveal a particular interest in well known characters,

¹⁰ Reflecting the wide range of interest in history are such works as William Gobbett's History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland; W. F. F. Napier's History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France; Charles Gutzlaff's A Sketch of Chinese History; and James Fletcher's The History of Poland from Harper's Family Library. Too, there are such works as Henry Neele's The Romance of History and Joseph Banvard's Romance of American History.

¹¹ Sir Walter Scott, The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte; L. T. J. deBausset, Private Memoirs of the Court of Napoleon; Count de las Cases, Journal of the Private Life and Conversation of the Emperor Napoleon at Saint Helena; F. Antomarchi, Derniers Moments de Napoleon; F. L. Maitland, Narrative of the Surrender of Bonaparte and of his Residence on H. M. S. Bellerophon; and Barry O'Meara, Napoleon in Exile; or a Voice from Saint Helena. It is interesting to note that the volumes by Antomarchi and Maitland have paper bindings.
outstanding among which are Thomas Moore's Letters and Journals of Lord Byron with Notices of his Life, The Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Memoirs of the Life of Right Honorable Richard Brinsley Sheridan; J. G. Lockhart's Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott; Lord King's The Life of John Locke; George Croly's Life and Times of His Late Majesty George the Fourth; Daniel Mallory's The Life and Speeches of Honorable Henry Clay, and Calvin Colton's The Life and Times of Henry Clay. Memoirs include those of Aaron Burr, Thomas Hood, the Reverend Sydney Smith, Samuel Foot, Marie Antoinette, Dumas, and numerous others.

The miscellaneous group in this collection is rather large, comprising 130 volumes of the total 1113. But of this number, however, there are approximately fifty travel books. Revealing a cosmopolitan interest, the titles cover almost every land. Among the more representative are Humboldt's Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent; Adolphus Slade's Records of Travels in Turkey, Greece...; Edmund Temple's Travels in Various Parts of Peru; Reginald Heber's Narrative of a Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-85; Dixon Denham's Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in
North and Central Africa; B. M. Norman's Rambles by Land and Water, or Notes of Travel in Cuba and Mexico; Solomon Bell's Tales of Travels in Central Africa; Madden's Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, and Palestine in 1824-1827; J. W. Spalding's Japan and Around the World; and The Modern Traveler: a Popular Description of Various Countries of the Globe (a five volume set). The interest in travel was not confined to foreign countries alone.

There was a particular interest in early America and in the West. In this particular collection are George Tibbleton's Travels in America; Charles Lyell's Travels in North America in the Years 1841-42; Bernhard's Travels Through North America During the Years 1825 and 1826, and Solomon Bell's Tales of Travels West of the Mississippi River. Despite the common popularity of travel books, as of gift books, it is interesting to note that the interest in travel was not necessarily superficial. Whereas giftbooks were always ornately bound and "beautifully" executed, it is revealing to observe that in this collection there were seven paper bound travel books.12

12L. Simond's Switzerland; or a Journal of a Tour and Residence in that country...1817-19; John Scott's Visit to Paris in 1814 and Paris Revisited, in 1815, by Way of Brussels...; Letters from the South Written During an Excursion in the Summer of 1818; Fasil Hall's Account of a Voyage to the West Coast of Corea; F. B. Head's Rough Notes Taken During Some Rapid Journeys Across the Pampas and Among the Andes; and Alexander Von Humboldt's Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent.
VII. The Franklin Circulating Library.\textsuperscript{13}

The circulating library in operation at Franklin, Louisiana, St. Mary's Parish, during 1847-1848, formerly has been discussed.\textsuperscript{14}

Inasmuch as the major portion of its contents was donated by planters, this library will be briefly considered here as representing one phase of the reading taste of the plantation gentry. The library was composed almost wholly of the works of popular novelists of the day—British, French, and American. G. P. R. James, Dickens, Disraeli, Bulwer, Ainsworth, Lever, Lover, Captain Marryat and Jerrold are represented among the British authors, while Dumas, Soulié, Vigny, Sue, de Staël, and George Sand are prominent among the French. There are, comparatively, a large number of Eugène Sue's works included, which accords with his popularity as already evidenced in advertisements. Chief American writers represented are Cooper, Melville, C. B. Brown, Joseph Holt Ingraham, and J. C. Neal. There is a large number of little-known authors

\textsuperscript{13} Catalogue of Library given in Appendix A

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. Chapter II, p. 35 ff.
included, such as Mary Howitt, T. S. Surr, Miss Pardoe, Mrs. Gore, J. S. Robb, H. W. Herbert, Miss Ferrier, Mrs. Hofland, Miss Bremer, T. C. Gratton, Mrs. Marsh, and Miss E. Pickering.

It is logical that the planters would have donated works such as these, rather than histories, biographies, and more expensive sets. These authors indicate the nature of the lighter reading interests of the plantation class.

French Collections

The majority of the plantation class in Louisiana during the period under consideration was of English descent. Therefore, the chief emphasis in this study is placed upon their literary culture. There was, however, a considerable body of French speaking plantation families whose reading taste was decidedly in accord with their nationality. By way of comparison with English collections, and for the purpose of illustrating the French reading taste as well, several French collections will be herewith considered.

I. The Ternant Library.

Vincent Ternant was the former owner of what is now

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15 Vincent Ternant was the first husband of Madame Parlange, mother of Judge Charles Parlange of the Federal Court.
the Parlange Plantation, Pointe Coupée Parish, New Roads, Louisiana. Information pertaining to his library was secured from an inventory which was made after his death, in 1842. The works in his library were listed, with the exception of thirty-five volumes, by specific titles. In all, his library contained over four hundred volumes. However, in the classification summary given, it has been necessary to omit a certain number of works from consideration because of illegible handwriting in the inventory. In spite of this fact, the inventory of this library is practically complete and therefore affords a good illustration of the reading taste of a French speaking plantation owner. All the works, with perhaps one or two exceptions, were in French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Volumes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>French Literature</td>
<td>170</td>
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<tr>
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<td>History and Biography</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>378</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Naturally, French literature predominated; almost half
of the total number is in this category. The best French authors are represented, a large number belonging to the romantic school. Hugo, de Staël, St. Pierre, Boileau, Malherbe, Rousseau, Béranger, Lamartine, Molière, Fontaine, Voltaire, Lebrun, Vigny, and Beaumarchais are among the more prominent ones. Among classic authors there were Virgil and Plutarch.

Of British literature the library contained Scott's works (48 volumes), Byron's works, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, and Young's *Night Thoughts*; American literature is represented by the works of Cooper (in 15 volumes), while of German authors, Goethe and Schiller are included.

History and biography together constitute the next largest classification. A twenty-two volume history of France, a biography of Napoleon, and a sixteen-volume history of philosophy make up the largest number of the works in this classification. The chief work classified here is the ever present Tocqueville's *De La Démocratie en Amérique*.

II. The Prudhomme Library.16

This library, as is the case with the Butler, is one of the few plantation libraries that has been preserved

16Bibliography secured through the courtesy of Mrs. J. Alphonse Prudhomme, Bermuda, Louisiana.
almost intact. The larger part of it was purchased before 1850 by Phanor Prudhomme, although he inherited, and added to, the library of his father. Very few works were added after the War, and the collection is the present property of immediate descendants of Phanor Prudhomme, and remains at "Prudhomme" in Natchitoches Parish, Bermuda, Louisiana.

Naturally French literature predominates, totaling 378 volumes out of 856. The chief authors represented are the following: Bausset, Boileau, Chateaubriand, de Staël, Dumas, Fénélon, Fontaine, Lamartine, Lamennais, Lebrun, Lesage, Molière, Montesquieu, Rousseau (complete works, two different editions), St. Pierre, Sand, Soulié, and Voltaire (complete works, two different editions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Volumes</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French Literature</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic Literature</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Literature</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Biography</td>
<td>68</td>
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<td>53</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Very few British authors are represented, even in classifications other than general literature. Scott, Goldsmith, and Thackeray are the chief ones included. Cooper (in French translation), Irving, and Franklin represent American writers.

As in the Butler collection, there are numerous textbooks: grammars, geographies, and many morally instructive works, such as Lessons in Elocution, or A Selection of Pieces in Prose and Verse for the Improvement of Youth.

The majority of the history and biography included is concerned with the French Revolution and the life of Napoleon. The proportion of scientific works, it can be observed from the classification summary, is relatively high. There are various works on agriculture, on medicine, on botany, and on science in general.

Among reference works, there is the famous Encyclopædia of Diderot. The proportion of theological works is, as the case with science, relatively high. A large number of commentaries on the Bible and many works pertaining to saints are included. In the miscellaneous division there are numerous travel books and a few works dealing with military tactics.

III. The Beconel Collection.

This collection, a fragmentary one, was formerly in a plantation home in St. John Parish. It is the present
Beaumarchais, Boileau, Bossuet, Chateaubriand, DeMusset, Dumas, Fenelon, Fontaine, Gauthier, Hugo, Lamartine, Lamennais, Racine, Rousseau, St. Pierre (Paul et Virginie), Sand, and Voltaire are among the chief French writers represented. The works of Byron, both in French and English, Scott's Ivanhoe, Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe (in French), Moore's Irish Melodies, and Milton's Paradise Lost (in French) are included among the British works. Two copies of Irving's Sketch Book constitute the total representation of American literature.
Among histories and biographies, the current interest in Napoleon evidenced even by this partial collection is displayed by two works: Norvin's Histoire de Napoléon and deSégur's Histoire de Napoleon et de la Grande Armée. Among other works in this collection are Rollin's Ancient History (in French), Ray's Histoire de Chevalrie, Anquetil's Histoire de France, Scheffer's Histoire des États-Unis de L'Amérique, and Goldsmith's History of Rome. Other works of interest are Hallam's View of the State of Europe, Don Quixote, Crabb's English Synonyms, Goethe's Faust, the works of Descartes, and Homer's Iliad and Odyssey.

Summary and Conclusions

The contents of plantation libraries reveal essentially the same general nature of reading interests as do book-sellers' advertisements. Certainly there are no radical differences apparent. The reading tendencies most strongly indicated by advertisements are likewise the ones most strongly evidenced by actual contents of libraries. (The reference here is only to the English collections.) That is to say, first, the amount of foreign literature advertised—chiefly British and French of the romantic
school, with standard authors such as Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, Plutarch, and Cervantes added—is greater than that of any other classification. The amount of such literature found in the plantation collections is usually greater than any other type. In French collections, but for more natural causes, the same fact holds true with regard to French literature. Moreover, the authors and works most frequently advertised by booksellers are the ones most frequently found in plantation libraries.

Second, history and biography are regularly advertised. In all English collections analyzed in the foregoing, the relative proportion of works in this classification is high, holding first, second, or third place in the total number of volumes represented. (Textbooks are discounted.) In French collections, the percentage is somewhat lower, but in all cases, history and biography constitute a considerable number of volumes. In accordance with the evidence afforded by advertisements the most popular biographies were those of military leaders and statesmen, such as Napoleon, Washington, Francis Marion, and General Taylor. Out of this particular field, the lives of Byron and Scott were probably more popular than any other works.

Third, advertisements reflect a keen interest in works dealing with government, politics, and other questions of
a social nature. In all collections there is a high percentage of such works found; in English collections they usually occupy third or fourth place in the total number of volumes. Speeches, letters, and papers of presidents or of statesmen in general, are usually found in abundance.

Beyond these three larger and more important divisions the reading tendencies become less distinct; there is considerable variation in the individual collections. However, the reading tendencies in regard to less important works continue to accord with the tendencies observable in advertisements. Travel books were highly advertised, and in no collection considered, English or French, was there a total absence of such works. On the contrary, a large number is found. Gift books, scientific works, and reference works were regularly advertised and these works, in varying proportions, are found in all collections. Periodicals of one kind or another are found in the majority of the collections considered, and there is no doubt that all originally contained periodicals; it is understandable that periodicals, together with the paper bound works, would be among the first portion of the library destroyed. In each instance where periodicals are extant in plantation collections they are in bound volumes. (It was the custom
with many planters to have their periodicals bound as soon as each volume was complete.)

Two other features are interesting regarding the contents of plantation libraries in general: the usual low percentage of American literature and the low percentage of classical literature. The plantation class evidently preferred European literature to American literature. However, in respect to histories and biographies, as many American works as European were probably read. The low percentage of Greek and Latin classics, even in translation, contradicts the current theory of the South's intense devotion to classical literature. This statement, it is true, is made on the evidence afforded by a relatively small number of plantation collections, but it is logical to suppose that, had there originally been a large number of classical works in these few collections, a greater proportion would have survived along with other types of literature—at least in one collection.

The general nature of reading taste evidenced by contents of libraries therefore conforms in the main with the nature of the reading taste reflected by booksellers' advertisements. That the contents of these individual collections resemble each other to a marked degree indicates a general reading interest in the same kind of
literature on the part of the plantation class. Moreover, despite the differences resulting from nationalities, there were mutual points of contact between the taste of French and English speaking plantation families, as indicated by the English works in French translation in the libraries of the one and French works in English translation in the libraries of the other.

Then, on the evidence both of advertisements and of actual contents of libraries, the main lines of the reading interest of the Louisiana plantation class were the following: Non-contemporary authors whose works had a standard popularity, chief among which were Shakespeare's works, Milton's works, Plutarch's Lives, Cervantes' Don Quixote, and to a slightly lesser extent, Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, Young's Night Thoughts, Macpherson's Ossian, Goldsmith's works, Sterne's works, Smollett's works, and Pope's works; nineteenth century novelists and poets, Scott, Byron, Bulwer, G. F. R. James, Mrs. Hemans, Thomas Moore, Hannah More, Dumas, Cooper, Maria Edgeworth, Hugo, Eugène Sue, Dickens, Disraeli, Lamartine, Simms, Samuel Lover, Charles Lever, Burns, Kirke White, Willis, Caroline Lee Hentz, Joseph Holt Ingraham, Madame de Staël, George Sand, Vigny, and Captain Marryat; history and biography—chief among historians were Prescott, Bancroft,
Gibbon, Hume, Smollett, Thiers and Rollins, and most popular among biographies were those of military leaders and statesmen; politics and government; scientific works—on agriculture, medicine, and science in general; gift books and literary annuals; travel books; periodical literature.
CHAPTER V

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

The second quarter of the nineteenth century has often been justly termed a "golden age" of American periodicals. "In the years immediately following 1825 there was an extraordinary outburst of magazine activity which paralleled the expansion in many other lines of development...; and though some later periods were to be far more golden, these years did bring forth a flowering of periodical publications which seemed stupendous at the time and is still notable."1

This era saw the rise of the famous Godey's Lady's Book, with its galaxy of imitators, Graham's Magazine, numerous more or less notable quarterlys, a host of "dollar" and "penny" magazines, and various specialized journals. In 1828 General Morris wrote: "These United States are fertile in most things, but in periodicals they are extremely luxuriant. They spring up as fast as mushrooms, in every corner, and like all rapid vegetation, bear the seeds of early decay within them."2 He estimated


2New York Mirror, VI, November 15, 1828. quoted in ibid., p. 341
the average age of periodicals to be six months. 3

The South shared in the general movement, but it was far behind the North in establishing magazines, and southern publishers in the main failed to conduct their enterprise with the business acumen of northern publishers. "The motives behind the founding of most ante-bellum Southern magazines were, first, the desire to take away the Northern and British reproach of cultural inferiority and, second, the ambition to develop and give expression to an independent Southern culture." 4 Between the years 1825-1860 many creditable publications were launched, such as the Literary Messenger, the Southern Quarterly Review, and DeBow's Review, but on the whole southern periodicals were not so successful as northern ones. The same difficulties attendant upon the production of literature in general—scarcity of population and lack of large literary centers—were attendant upon magazine successes. The average life of a southern periodical was usually much shorter than that of a northern one, and no southern publication ever attained as great a circulation as Godey's, or any of the other more successful northern publications.

In the early period of their development, both

3Ibid., p. 341

northern and southern periodicals were modeled rather closely after eighteenth and early nineteenth century British periodicals, but as a result of the demands for light reading, they soon diverged from British models—especially northern ones—and became distinctly American. While northern editors railed against British importations, southern editors continually bewailed the South's patronage of northern periodicals and lack of support of its own. Southern editors "...commonly tried to shame their constituencies into support by adducing Northern periodical successes." The famous and often quoted editorial comment in the first issue of the Southern Literary Messenger,

... hundreds of similar publications thrive and prosper north of the Potomac... Shall not one be supported in the whole South?

became a chorus in which sooner or later all southern editors joined. That many boasted their publications as "equal to" any of the North's suggests that southern editors were laboring under a feeling of inferiority in comparison with the North. "We have heretofore noticed," wrote a Louisiana editor in 1849, "that excellent Southern family newspaper, the 'Southern Literary Gazette,' which

5Mott, op. cit., p. 380

6Southern Literary Messenger, I (August, 1834)
should take the place of the Northern papers at the Southern fireside," and he continues as follows:

We have now before us "The Schoolfellow" issued by the same enterprising publisher at Athens, Ga., at one dollar a year. We do trust that this effort to emancipate the South from its bondage to the North may be practically encouraged. "The Schoolfellow" is an elegant duodecimo of thirty-two pages, ... and equal if not superior to anything we have seen from the hands of the Northern publishers.7

The prospectus of the Zodiac, a short-lived literary journal founded at New Orleans in 1850, states that the periodical "...is equal to any of the Northern papers of the same class, and is published at as low a price."8 DeBow, the energetic editor of the Review bearing his name, constantly reiterates the South's shameful neglect of its own enterprises. "Indeed," he says, rather indignantly, "the subscription list to the Review is almost as large in New York as in New Orleans."9 One is somewhat inclined to believe that southern editors complained too much, holding up too often as the chief commendation of their publications the fact that they were southern, and therefore deserved the patronage of the South. One critic has found the motto on the title page of the Literary

7Planter's Banner, XIV, 28 (July 12, 1849)
8Ibid., XV, 7 (February 21, 1859)
9DeBow's Review, XIV, 6 (June, 1853), p. 632
"au gré de nos désirs bien plus qu'au gré des vents" (as we will, not as the wind)--to be significant of a general tendency in southern literature. Disregarding their private taste, New York publishers gave their readers what they demanded. "They were in search of success; and they knew that they could not secure it by beating the air imploring support on the grounds that their magazine was sectional. Their methods were business ones." The difference between business methods and the lack of business methods goes far in explaining the South's comparative deficiency in the production of periodicals equal in number and merit to those of the North.

Whatever the real justice of southern complaints, it cannot be doubted that periodicals, whether British, northern, or southern, had relative degrees of support in the South. Periodical literature, as has been previously pointed out, formed a substantial portion of the reading matter of the plantation class in Louisiana during the period under consideration. The longest lived and most successful periodicals were naturally those whose editors, making their appeal to the greatest number of readers, closely watched the changing currents of reading interest and shaped their editorial policies accordingly. The most

10 Ingle, op. cit., p. 214, passim
prominent periodicals—in the sense of having the largest circulations—of any period are therefore fair indicators of the general reading tendencies, both reflecting and shaping literary taste. Consequently, those preferred by the members of the plantation class need be taken into consideration.

That British periodicals would have been popular with the plantation readers is understandable. Their connections with England were strong; and it has already been shown that they seemed to prefer European literature to their own. Southern editors complained little of the South's patronage of foreign periodicals, although they were bitter in their protestations against the South's support of northern ones.

The most popular British periodicals, among those of better quality, were Blackwood's Monthly Magazine, the Edinburgh, the Westminster, the London Quarterly, and the North British reviews. Ordinarily these were not secured through direct subscriptions to the English publishers, but were supplied through the re-publication agency of Leonard Scott and Company of New York. Blackwood's was the most popular of the five, and it is significant that it was lighter in tone than the others. In 1848 Leonard Scott and Company advertise that "...a late arrangement with British publishers of Blackwood's Magazine secures to us early sheets of that work, by which we shall be able to
place the entire number in the hands of the subscribers
before any portion of it can be reprinted in American
journals. 11

The *Edinburgh Review*, with which were connected
Jeffrey, Brougham, and Sidney Smith, was a peer among British
periodicals during the first half of the nineteenth
century, especially in the matter of critical reviews,
sitting in final judgment of all writers.12 The *London
Quarterly* was similar to the *Edinburgh Review*. In
addition to being literary vehicles, all were organs of
England's various political parties. *Blackwood's* and the
*London Quarterly* were Tory; the *Edinburgh Review*, Whig;
and the *Westminster Review*, radical. The *North British
Review*, however, was more of a religious character. Leonard
Scott and Company regularly advertised their reprints of
these periodicals in Louisiana newspapers, offering all
five in club subscription with premiums, for ten dollars
per year.13

To find such commendation of them on the part of a
southern editor shows in general in what respect they were
held:

11 *Planters' Banner*, XIII, 18 (April 27, 1848)
12 *Cambridge History of English Literature*, 15 volumes, edd.
A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller. New York: Putnam's
Sons, 1909. Vol. XII, p. 140
13 *cf.*, for instance, *Planters' Banner*, XIII (April 27, 1848)
It is generally known—or ought to be, that Messrs. Leonard Scott and Co. republish the four sterling British Reviews and Blackwood's Magazine, and furnish them to the American people, all for less than the cost of one of them in England. Every gentleman, who pretends to any reading at all, should have them. TEN DOLLARS will secure them all regularly by mail, and now is the best time for subscribers to begin. What we say for the "Review" is not in way of ordinary puff, for a gratis number now and then, but because in this country, if there is an enterprise worthy of encouragement this is it. One number of either of the Reviews, is worth more to us than a thousand puffs, and we speak of them, with fear and trembling lest we should be charged with giving them a vulgar and common puff.

Their circulation in Louisiana, especially among the plantation class, was evidently fairly large.

There is no question regarding which of the northern periodicals was most popular in Louisiana: *Godey's Lady's Book,* certainly after 1835, held first place in the number of subscribers as it did throughout the South and the North in general. The character of this publication, which had a prosperous existence for over three quarters of a century, is too well known to need any extended discussion; but as a type example of many popular "ladies" magazines, its nature must be briefly described. Designed to appeal to feminine taste, *Godey's* was a publication

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14 *Weekly Morning Comet,* IV, 27 (September 14, 1856)
bearing some likeness to gift-books. It contained each month stories that were over-run with sentimentality and morality. "They frequently begin with an explicit statement of the moral, stop every few paragraphs to reiterate it, and then end with a page of edifying disquisition. The characters are often so pious and good that we hate them heartily." 15

In addition to poetry on the same order as the fiction, each issue contained light essays, biographical sketches of famous women, bits of history and travel, and short articles on music and art. Departments of receipts, of fancywork, of health and beauty, besides book reviews and the "Editor's Table" were regularly carried on. Articles on current problems were not admitted, since they were not in keeping with the interest of "female" readers. The magazine's best period was between 1837 and 1850, when many of the popular writers of the day were contributing to it. The largest number of its most constant contributors were women. Miss Leslie, Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Anna Stephens, Mrs. E. F. Ellet, Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz, and Mrs. Frances S. Osgood made up the most important group of authoresses, while George P. Morris, William Gilmore Simms, T. S. Arthur, Bayard Taylor, and Nathaniel Parker

15Mott, op. cit., p. 588
Willis were among Godey’s authors.16

Literary critics of the time were not unaware of the poor literary quality of Godey’s, but in spite of their imprecations, it continued its phenomenal career, yearly increasing in circulation and yearly extending its sphere of influence. Louisiana newspaper editors frequently praise it highly. "We have received from the publisher, J. A. Godey," one wrote, "the January number (1855) of his Lady’s Book. This number commences the fiftieth volume of the magazine; and if we may judge of what the volume will be by the number before us ... we say unhesitatingly it cannot be equaled." Another editor comments as follows:

As a companion for the ladies it is unequalled by any similar periodical in the Union: in it they have a fair share of the choice light reading, by some of the best writers of the day, music, the latest fashions, the most approved patterns for various articles of female attire, embroidery work, lace patterns, &c., and a variety of excellent engravings which alone are worth more than the $3 annual subscription.18

Although its appeal was primarily to feminine taste, the readers of Godey’s, it must not be assumed, were by any

16cf., Ibid., pp. 587-589

17Democratic Advocate, XII, 31 (December 21, 1854)

18Planters’ Banner, XVI, 49 (December 20, 1851)
means restricted to women.

The variety and number of northern periodicals advertised in Louisiana newspapers and found in ante-bellum libraries is so great that it is impossible to state precisely which, beyond Godey's, had the largest patronage. The fact that stands out most is that there was a tremendous number, which in part shows that southern editors were justified in their complaints of the South's patronage of northern magazines. Many others of the same general type as Godey's—some few perhaps better, but the majority worse—were popular during the period of their flourishing. Graham's American Monthly Magazine of Literature and Art had a good circulation—probably next to Godey's. Its quality varied during the different years of its existence, but on the whole, it was better than Godey's. "A typical number of Graham's during the forties contained three or four short stories, a light essay on manners, a biographical sketch, a literary article, a considerable amount of poetry—narrative, lyrical and didactic—an out-door sketch by 'Frank Forester,' a travel article, fine arts and book-review departments, and one or two art plates by well-known engravers."¹⁹ Bryant, Longfellow, Cooper, and Paulding were among its contributors.

¹⁹Mott, op. cit., p. 547
The Columbian Lady's and Gentleman's Magazine, modeled after Graham's, was popular during its short existence, as well as Snowden's Ladies' Companion, and Sartain's Union Magazine of Literature and Art and Arthur's Ladies' Magazine. Other northern magazines having varying degrees of popularity in Louisiana during the period were the Knickerbocker Magazine, the United States Magazine and Democratic Review, Littel's Living Age (an eclectic magazine), the Union Magazine and Silliman's Journal of Science and Art. The majority of the better agricultural magazines were northern. The American Agriculturist; Plow, Loom, and Anvil; and Skinner's Farmers' Library were the most important. DeBow speaks high praise of the Farmers' Library:

We have on several occasions differed from Mr. Skinner's views on the subject not intimately connected with agriculture, but within that pale he is altogether safe from the shafts whatever. The Farmers' Library has a liberal support at the South, and we cordially wish it to increase, entertaining as we do, the most kindly feelings toward the enterprise.20

and somewhat later he writes,

We have the January number, and repeat again what we have said before, it is the best agricultural work in the Union, deserving all encouragement.21

20 DeBow's Review, III, 1 (January, 1847), p. 90
21 Ibid., III, 3 (March, 1847), p. 277
Among southern periodicals the Southern Literary Messenger apparently had a fair popularity in Louisiana. Inasmuch as it was the professed organ of southern culture and for a time in the thirties the best magazine not only in the South, but in America, it deserved more support. Next to the Messenger was the Southern Quarterly Review which was begun in 1842 in New Orleans but moved to Charleston. It was recommended to the patronage in the South on the grounds of its purpose "... to assert the intellectual equality of our section, while at the same time it will free the mind of our people from that state of literary throwdown and dependency under which they have long labored." Entertainment was seldom the aim of any of its writers, and the majority of its articles are copious and heavy. It was discontinued in 1857. Other southern periodicals that should be mentioned are Niles' Weekly Register, (1811-49), DeBow's Review, a commercial journal devoted chiefly to the interests of the planters, and the Southern Ladies' Book, which later became the Magnolia.

Aside from a very small number of the better type periodicals, such as Blackwood's, the Edinburgh Review.

22 Democratic Advocate, XII, 28 (November 30, 1854), p. 223
23 Cf., Mott, op. cit., p. 721
and the Southern Literary Messenger, the mass of popular periodicals read by the plantation class does not represent a high level of reading taste. Godey's, filled with "moral" and sentimental tales, together with others of its type, epitomizes the tradition of morality and feminine sweetness, for which there seems to have been a pronounced fondness.
CHAPTER VI

THE MAIN CURRENTS OF READING INTERESTS

Part One: Romanticism

In fiction and poetry the members of the Louisiana plantation class, as has been shown, did the greatest amount of their reading in the works of a romantic nature. The most popular poets and novelists of the day were Scott, Byron, Bulwer, G. F. R. James, Thomas Moore, Hannah More, Felicia Hemans, Cooper, Dumas, Eugène Sue, Maria Edgeworth, Lever, Dumas, Joseph Holt Ingraham, and Disraeli. All of the varying grades of romantic literature between the two extremes of good and bad are represented by one or another popular author.

On what grounds can this decided literary taste for romanticism be interpreted? First, of course, there is an obvious connection with the general wave of romanticism which swept over America in the first part of the nineteenth century, and in this respect the taste of the plantation class is merely in accord with national taste. Social and economic conditions, after 1800, in every way favored the rise of romanticism. This period was one of optimistic expansion in all fields of activity.

During the thirty-odd years between the Peace of Paris and the end of the War
of 1813 ... older America was dying. The America that succeeded was a shifting, restless world, youthfully optimistic, eager to better itself, bent upon finding easier roads to wealth than the plodding path of natural increase. It conceived of human nature as acquisitive, and accounting acquisitiveness a cardinal virtue, it set out to inquire what opportunities awaited it in the unexploited resources of the continent. The cautious ways of earlier generations were become as much out of date as last year's almanac. ... Money was to be made by the enterprising, and the multitude of the enterprising was augmenting with the expansion of the settlements. ... It was our first great period of exploitation, and from it emerged, as naturally as the cock from the mother egg, the spirit of romance, gross and tawdry in vulgar minds, dainty and refined in the more cultivated. But always romance.  

The southern plantation was one of the most attractive enterprises during this period of expansion. Conditions in Louisiana after about 1811 especially encouraged the development of the plantation system, and the settlers who founded plantations in this section were ambitious and optimistic: not a few made large fortunes quickly and easily. It is thus natural that their literary taste would be romantic; nothing hindered the national romantic spirit from spreading throughout the South, and all conditions favored its acceptance. From one aspect, therefore,

the pronounced love of romanticism among the members of the Louisiana plantation class was simply coincidental with the national taste for romanticism.

However, the taste for romanticism was more lasting in Louisiana, and throughout the South in general, than in the North and West. By 1850, and certainly by 1860, realism has begun to pervade northern thinking. Yet, in Louisiana during this same period, the popularity of Scott, Byron, Bulwer, James, and the like remained unabated. Consequently, in addition to the fact that the Louisiana plantation class shared in the national taste for romanticism, there must be more profound reasons to account for its immense attraction. These reasons can be found in the peculiar nature of the plantation society. Critics usually explain the make-up of southern life as a result of romanticism. A simple analysis of the economic and social conditions inherent in southern life will indicate that the reverse is true. Southern life as exemplified in the plantation was especially adapted to the growth of romantic taste in literature. Certain ingrained factors made this true.

First, there was nothing in the essential nature of plantation life to contradict romantic thought, or to create a distrust in the visionary and imaginary. Life was easy and ordered, based as it was on the agrarian idea.
The hard realities of life, the necessity of making a living, of wringing a livelihood from an unwilling world composed of other individuals equally as desperate, which was part and parcel of all classes of industrial life, was far removed from the easy-going system of plantation economics. Each class was fixed and assured of its part in the scheme; and there was a feeling of permanency and security throughout the whole fabric of the system.

The workers were never troubled by uncertain means of subsistence. The young were free from care, the old and infirm were adequately provided for. Living conditions were commonly pleasant, and the personal relations between master and slave were kindly and loyal. When every argument against slavery had been urged it still remained true that the patriarchal tie that existed on the plantation was more humane than the cash-nexus of capitalism.²

There were few paupers in the South, and there were no masses of under-paid half-starved workers. Moreover, there was no conflict of interest among the planters. Although there was competition, it was not the cut-throat competition of northern capitalism. Allowing for a few Simon Legrees, the Louisiana planter—and this probably holds true for other southern states—ruled his little self-sufficient province wisely and humanely, and did not indulge in an

²Ibid., p. 101
unrelenting pursuit of wealth through the ruthless exploitation of human labor. In its more idealistic phases, plantation life was withdrawn from the harsher aspects of human existence.

The plantation class, therefore, was not brought into contact with those conditions which tend to inculcate a cynical view of life and make for realistic thinking. Consequently, romanticism, unopposed by any pessimistic or depressing factors, found a fertile field in which to grow.

From the foregoing it is evident that the southern system encouraged a romantic outlook, and it cannot be denied that romanticism penetrated into the very core of southern life, shaping and molding its ideals. It must be remembered, however, that the system which grew out of the natural economic and geographic factors of the region encouraged romanticism as a philosophical pattern which accorded well with a pleasant, easy-going life; the evidence permits no distortion of this fact into a theory which intimates that the people of the South fashioned their society on the flimsy, whimsical tenets of a superficial type of romantic philosophy.

Directly in connection with this, it might be well to discuss "the Sir Walter disease," first diagnosed by Mark Twain and since accepted and elaborated by numerous less notable commentators on the South. Those who hold this
theory trace every defect of ante-bellum southern society to the reading of romantic literature, and all sins are laid at the feet of one writer—Sir Walter Scott! Of course, Scott was foremost in popularity among other romanticists, and his influence was possibly greater than that of any other writer, but it is inconceivable that he exerted the tremendous, all powerful influence accredited to him. Scott, according to Mark Twain, set "...the world in love with dreams and phantoms; with decayed and degraded systems of government; with the sillinesses and emptinesses, sham grandeurs, sham gauds, and sham chivalric of a brainless and worthless long-vanished society. He did measureless harm; more real and lasting harm, perhaps, than any other individual that ever wrote."  

Then departing from this generalization he becomes more specific:

But for the Sir Walter disease, the character of the Southerner...would be wholly modern, in place of modern and medieval mixed, and the South would be fully a generation further advanced than it is. It was Sir Walter that made every gentleman in the South a major or a colonel, or a general or a judge, before the war; and it was he, also, that made these gentlemen value these bogus decorations.

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For it was he that created rank and caste down there, also reverence for rank and caste, and pride and pleasure in them. 4

With all due respect to Mark Twain, plantation society from the first, by virtue of constituting the moneyed and educated class, was marked to be the aristocratic ruling body. There would have been rank and caste, and reverence for them, had Scott never lived. However, it is possible that these qualities were intensified by the influence of Scott. But Mark Twain does not stop with this; he even conjectures that Scott was chiefly responsible for the Civil War.

Sir Walter had so large a hand in making Southern character, as it existed before the war, that he is in great measure responsible for the war. It seems a little harsh toward a dead man to say that we never should have had any war but for Sir Walter; and yet something of a plausible argument might, perhaps, be made in support of that wild proposition. The Southerner of the American Revolution owned slaves; so did the Southerner of the Civil War; but the former resembles the latter as an Englishman resembles a Frenchman. The change of character can be traced more easily to Sir Walter's influence than to that of any other thing or person. 5

Subsequent writers have continued, with generalizations as broad as those of Mark Twain, to spread the conception of Scott's harmful effects upon the South. For instance,

4Ibid., pp. 375-376
5Ibid., pp. 376
H. J. Eskenrode in a recent article, "Sir Walter Scott and the South," says, "Beyond doubt Scott gave the South its social ideal, and the South of 1860 might be not inaptly nicknamed Sir Walter Scottland." And he continues to say in effect that Scott caused the South by an effort of the imagination to return to medievalism, to throw itself out of harmony with the world by which it was surrounded into "...no known century," living in a "kingdom of the imagination which had no time," and caused the planters to turn their backs "squarely on modern tendencies." He concludes that

The American nation would be farther along on the road to the solution of the great problems of human life, if the Southern planters had not lost faith in democracy and sought inspiration in the unsubstantial visions of Sir Walter Scott.

Another writer, W. E. Dodd follows somewhat the same vein as Eskenrode:

The Last Minstrel and the Lady of the Lake stirred Southern men to think of themselves as proud knights ready to do or die for some romantic idea; and the long list of novels from Waverley to The Fair Maid of Perth seemed to reflect anew the old ideals of fine lords and fair ladies whom Southerners now set themselves to imitate.

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7 Ibid., p. 601 ff.
8 The Cotton Kingdom, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921, p. 62.
Less fantastic and more in accord with reason are the statements of Edward Ingle, the author of *Southern Sidelights*, who goes no farther than to say "Scott deeply affected, not only the earlier Southern literature, but also Southern life...," and V. L. Farrington who stops on saying, "English romanticism as exemplified in the work of Scott and Tom Moore was the single foreign influence that spread amongst the plantations."

The fallacy of all these opinions--they can hardly be called more than opinions--is the fact that they leave out of consideration the range and varied nature of reading in the South and the influence upon it of other literary idols. The popularity of Byron, G. P. R. James, Bulwer, Thomas Moore, Mrs. Hemans and Hannah More was only slightly less than Scott's while Disraeli, Lever, Lever, Aisworth, Sue, Dickens, Simms, Dumas, Sand and Maria Edgeworth had a large following. If Scott, as Mark Twain says, created rank and caste in the South, if he

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stirred Southern men to think of themselves as proud
knights ready to do or die for some romantic ideal, as
Dodd says, then these other writers, some of whose
works differ widely in nature from Scott's evidently made.
little or no impact. Clearly Scott's influence has been
exaggerated, and the harmful effects attributed to it
are entirely out of proportion to fact. The members of
the plantation class did not take the Scott type of
romanticism unreservedly to their bosoms, accepting it
uncritically, and shaping their lives thereby. Testimony
to the truth of this is seen in the fact that the
satirical Don Quixote had a steady and constant popularity.
Had southerners been so completely engrossed in the Scott
viewpoint, could they have tolerated an antithetical one?
Moreover, when the works of Dickens and Thackeray began
to appear in the forties, they had a considerable follow-
ing among the plantation class. This type of romanticism—
if it can be called romanticism—is almost in direct
opposition in its appeal to that of the chivalry-loving
Scott. Thackeray in his social satire of the landed
aristocracy includes only that basis for romanticism which
is inherent in human nature, and rather attacks the "dreams
and phantoms," the "sillinesses and emptinesses, sham
grandeur, sham gauds," which were supposed to be revered
century in the South. Even more strongly and bitterly does Dickens
attack hypocrisies and shams. This only briefly indicates the limitless contradictions which are found in each type of romanticism popular during the period. The crime stories of William Harrison Ainsworth and Bulwer-Lytton, the moral-sentimental stories of Edgeworth and Mrs. Hentz, the melodramas of Eugene Sue and Joseph Holt Ingraham were all popular; yet they possess in common only the fact that they are all in the romantic tradition. Certainly they do not embody the chivalric idea, which is the symptom of "the Sir Walter disease." Could a section so completely afflicted with this disease have accepted and read these works in fairly large numbers? The truth of the matter is that the plantation class read indiscriminately all types of romanticism and although Scott was somewhat influential in shaping literary taste and ideals of life, he did not have a specialized appeal. He merely fitted into the general taste for romanticism.

The romantic merit, or lack of merit, of a writer apparently had no correlation with his popularity; a large number of the writers represent some of the worst phases of romanticism. This fact is readily seen when authors of almost equal popularity are grouped in pairs: Scott and Maria Edgeworth; Byron and Felicia Hemans; Cooper and Joseph
Holt Ingraham; Dumas and Eugène Sue. On one hand is represented romanticism of a very poor kind, that in which humanitarian sympathy has become moral and didactic, in which passionate emotion has become sentimental and melodramatic—in short, that in which a transition has been made from real feeling to superficial feeling. In part it was the tradition of sweetness and morality: Mrs. Felicia Hemans can be taken as a type example.

One critic in a preface to a gilt-edged edition of her poetical works says, "after allowing all proper deductions . . . it may be gratefully acknowledged that Mrs. Hemans takes a very honorable rank among poetesses; and that there is in her writings much which both appeals, and deserves to appeal, to many gentle, sweet, pious, and refined souls, in virtue of its thorough possession of the same excellent gifts." Although it is impossible to agree with this critic in placing Mrs. Hemans "in a very honorable rank," it can be agreed that "sweet, pious, and refined" is the terminology which most aptly describes the character of her poetry. One or two excerpts from her writing will evince the truth of this.

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"My child, my child, thou leavest me! I shall hear
The gentle voice no more that blest mine ear
With its first utterance: I shall miss the sound
Of thy light step amidst the flowers round,
And thy soft-breathing hymn at twilight's close,
And thy 'Good-night' at parting for repose.
Under the vine-leaves I shall sit alone,
And the low breeze will have a mournful tone
Amidst their tendrils, while I think of thee,
My child! and thou, along the moonlit sea,
With a soft sadness haply in thy glance,
Shalt watch thine own, thy pleasant land of France,
Fading to air. Yet blessings with thee go!
Love guard thee, gentlest! and the exile's woe
From thy young heart be far! And sorrow not
For me, sweet daughter! in my lonely lot,
God be with me. Now, farewell! farewell!
Thou that hast been what words may never tell
Unto thy mother's bosom, since the days
When thou wert pillowed there, and wont to raise
In sudden laughter thence thy loving eye
That still sought mine: these moments are gone by—
Thou too must go, my flower! Yet with thee dwell
The peace of God! One, one more gaze: farewell!"

Mrs. Hemans is only one of a group of poets and poetesses making appeal through the qualities of piety, sweetness, and refinement.

Many of the most popular novels were likewise those over-run with moral instruction, sentimentality, and melodrama. The works of Eugène Sue, Joseph Holt Ingraham, Maria Edgeworth, Caroline Lee Hentz, and to a certain extent, Bulwer and Disraeli, are type illustrations.

It has been seen therefore that romanticism was

13 Ibid., p. 195
predominantly popular with the plantation class. There are two factors which explain this popularity. The period was one of national expansion, marked by optimism and favorable to the growth of romanticism. In this respect the taste of the plantation class was merely coincidental with national taste. This single explanation would be sufficient were it not for the fact that the South did not follow the national trend toward realism, but held on to romanticism until the War. It is necessary to look to the essential structure of southern society for a further explanation. And there it is found: plantation life was easy-going and economically stable; and nothing fostered a cynical view of life. Therefore, romanticism was peculiarly adapted to this kind of life, and being opposed by no contradictory elements it remained sufficient.

No one type of romanticism predominated to the exclusion of all other types: in spite of current theories, the influence of Scott has been clearly over-emphasized, because other and dissimilar types of romantic writing were very popular. The current romantic output is represented almost in its entirety, and includes in addition to the historical type the sentimental, moral, and melodramatic types of romanticism. Therefore, it was the essence of romanticism that appealed to the plantation class rather than any one
specific type. The under current of the romantic movement was in accord with that of the life of the South: herein lies the explanation.

Part Two: History and Biography

The strong preference of the members of the plantation class for romantic fiction and poetry is equaled only by their preference for history and biography in the non-fiction field. The importance of this fact is not fully realized until a comparison between the volume of fiction and non-fiction reveals an almost equal distribution. It seems somewhat paradoxical that a reading class with a pronounced taste for light literature should, at the same time, have an equally pronounced taste for non-fiction. It would be difficult to commend the literary culture of a class of people whose reading interests were confined to the varying types of romanticism. The fact that historical and biographical works were in as constant demand as light literature casts an entirely different light on the matter.

Why was the plantation class so devoted to history and biography? Did the southerners, as one critic tells us, read history not for the sake of knowing it, "...but simply for the sake of contemplating it and seeing in it an image
of themselves. Such an explanation of the appeal of history and biography is obviously superficial. It is again necessary to look to the peculiar make-up of plantation society for real explanations. The fact that plantation society was thoroughly traditional has been pointed out previously. Traditionalism naturally implies a high respect for things of the past. The plantation class revered family names, family possessions, and the ways of forefathers. There was among this class a direct and immediate consciousness of the past. A love for history accords with these traits. A still further explanation, which also is in keeping with the nature of plantation society, is seen in the following description of the type of history and biography written before the Civil War:

Books were written about men and events with the idea of pleasing the reader, stimulating his admiration for his country or for exceptional men, or satisfying a commendable desire for information. Such histories had to be well written and had an advantage if they contained what our grandfathers called "elevated sentiment." They always had a point of view, and generally made the reader like or dislike one side or the other of some controversy. These books were naturally in constant demand among a

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14 Tate, Allen, "Remarks on Southern Religion," I'll Take My Stand, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930, p. 172
people who were still in the habit of viewing everything in a matter-of-fact way, and to whom but one political party was right and but one kind of man was great.15

It is not hard to identify the type of reader herein described: a man who possessed "admiration for ... exceptional men," who demanded in his books "elevated sentiment," who was "still in the habit of viewing everything in a matter-of-fact way and to whom but one political party was right and but one kind of man was great." He is the southern ante-bellum planter. The planter, above everything else, respected that which was definite and stable; he demanded a clear, straight-forward expression of political alignments. An interesting proof of this is seen in the fact that ante-bellum newspapers, even the small weeklies, almost invariably were outspoken in their political affiliations. It was demanded and expected of them by the planters. Therefore, histories which "always had a point of view" were suited to appeal to the planters' taste.

Biography, closely connected with history, had an appeal on slightly different grounds. The plantation

class was the ruling class: it was the planter who made, or dictated the making of, all laws, and who took the lead in public affairs. That an aristocratic group, from which came such great leaders as Calhoun and Clay, would have had an interest in the lives of great men is understandable. The fact that biographies of Napoleon and Washington were more popular than those of other men reveals the avid interest in great statesmen and military leaders. However, as is the case with history, the type of biography written during the time further explains its appeal. Prior to the Civil War the scientific trend had not entered biographical writing; biographies were written with a strong personal bias, ordinarily being more in the nature of eulogies than anything else. Not a few were marked by piety and "elevated sentiment," and biographies of this kind are in keeping with the polite, morally instructive literature so popular with the plantation class. That they were often valued because they fulfilled a moral purpose is evident from the following excerpt from an anonymous review of Kennedy's Memoirs of William Wirt:

It has been remarked that biography is the most profitable reading that can engage the attention of a young man. It certainly has many advantages for him over any other branch of literature, and if judiciously managed, will have a more happy effect in
shaping his destiny. It chides his indolence, spurs his industry, and rebukes his waste of time and neglect of golden opportunities for improvement. It shows him what a firm resolve and a steady perseverance can accomplish, discloses to him the process by which the man rises from weakness to strength, from insignificance to eminence, kindles in him the spirit of emulation natural to every young man not of a plodding disposition, and teaches him that the brilliant achievements of genius, so incisive of applause, are the results of self-denial and the severest toil. It furthermore gives him the advantage of the experience of others (so much needed by the young and so often dearly bought) which will enable him to profit by their example, as well by avoiding their errors as by imitating their virtues.

The example of Mr. Wirt is pregnant with instruction and encouragement to every young man of spirit, whatever his rank or fortune, and to the young lawyer, it presents a model worthy of the closest illustration.¹⁶

One of the most popular biographies in Louisiana during this period was Weems's *Life of Washington*. The pious and moral nature of this work is too well known to need any comment here; it serves, however, as a type illustration.

The explanation, then, of the plantation class's decided interest in historical and biographical works, as is the case with romanticism, is found in the make-up of plantation society. The love of history accorded with the high respect with which this traditional society

¹⁶*Planters' Banner*, XVI, 2 (January 16, 1851)
regarded all things relating to the past. The interest in biography was inspired by admiration for great men and their deeds.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

From the evidence presented in the foregoing chapters, it is apparent that the reading of the Louisiana plantation class was not restricted to narrow channels but, on the contrary, ranged over many diversified types of writing. In the field of general literature both non-contemporary and contemporary works were in demand. The most widely read works belonging to the first classification were those of Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, Sterne, Smollett, Young, Macpherson, Goldsmith, and Cervantes. These authors represent one of the more solid and conservative phases of the literary culture of the plantation class. However, the popularity of these writers is slight in comparison with that of the nineteenth century school of romantic writers, who reveal a much lighter variety of reading taste. Scott, Byron, Bulwer, G. P. R. James, Thomas Moore, Eugène Sue, Mrs. Hemans, Hannah More, Cooper, Simms, Dumas, and Maria Edgeworth had the greatest following, while a host of insignificant writers, such as Joseph Holt Ingraham, Caroline Lee Hentz, Mrs. Charles Gore, Samuel Lover, and Charles Lever, had a large following. All the varying grades of romantic literature between the two extremes of
good and bad are represented by one or another popular author.

The decided preference for romantic fiction and poetry was equaled in the non-fiction field by a preference for history and biography. In all collections of English speaking plantation owners used in this study, the relative amount of historical and biographical works is high, holding first, second, or third place in the total number of volumes included. Although the percentage is somewhat lower in French collections, a considerable amount of history and biography is invariably found. The histories of Prescott, Bancroft, Hume, Rollin, Smollett, Gibbon, and Grimshaw were prime favorites. The most popular biographies were those of military leaders and statesmen, such as Napoleon and Washington.

Closely linked with the pronounced interest in history and biography was an unusually keen interest in works dealing with government, politics, and social questions. Speeches, letters, and papers of presidents or of statesmen in general, were widely read.

Beyond these larger and more important divisions the reading interests become more diffuse, but nevertheless included many other types of writing, such as theological works, scientific works, gift books and literary annuals, travel books, periodical literature,
reference works, and classic literature—in a relatively small proportion.

In spite of the marked preferences in the large fields of general literature, history, and biography, the reading of the plantation class was characterized by broadness and diversity of interests. This lack of concentration indicates a broad rather than a profound literary culture, a fact in keeping with the society that was at once provincial and cosmopolitan in character. Gaines is justified in his comment that "much of the power of personality which marked Southern leadership was based on the confidence that comes from wide, if not profound, knowledge and the readiness with which that knowledge could be made available."¹

Insofar as Louisiana specifically is concerned there are at least two current conceptions regarding the culture of the plantation class which are in need of readjustment. The first of these is the wide-spread belief that the Old South did a large amount of reading of the Greek and Latin classics. The current opinion is fairly well summed up in the following statement of one writer:

One feature of scholarship that was peculiar to the Old South was the general

¹Gaines, op. cit., p. 156
thorough devotion to, and mastery of, the Classics.\textsuperscript{2}

This is a rather groundless generalization and belongs in the romantic tradition of thinking connected with the Old South. Although many exceptional men of the South were distinguished by classical learning, so were exceptional men of other sections of the country during the same period. It is gravely to be doubted that the average member of the upper class of the pre-war South was either devoted to, or a master of the classics; it can be stated positively that this is true of the plantation class of ante-bellum Louisiana.

The influence of Sir Walter Scott on southern life and character is a second conception in need of correction. Although Scott was widely read, and was perhaps as influential as any other writer of the time, the prevailing belief of his harmful effects on the South—at least so far as Louisiana is concerned—is out of proportion to fact. The Scott type of romanticism did not have a specialized appeal: it merely accorded with the general taste for romanticism. Other and dissimilar types of romanticism were read widely by the Louisiana plantation class. There are many other popular conceptions of

\textsuperscript{2}Hamill, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 44
the South, and of Louisiana in particular, which these findings do not support, but it is not in the province of this study to attempt a correction of these; rather some general estimate of the literary culture of the ante-bellum class is intended.

Although the planters' reading included superficial types of literature, popular among all classes of society, his interests went beyond this and found those which suited his kind of thought and system. Devoted to an agrarian philosophy, to tradition and fixed standards of conduct, accustomed to an active and healthy life, and leader of a community which valued and achieved economic and social harmony, the southern planter was forced to acquire a range of interests which covered many fields.

The whole pattern of his literary culture corresponds to the characteristics fostered by this simple yet complex kind of life, necessitating broad knowledge of world affairs. His interest in literature was not that of a specialist, as evidenced by his lack of critical discrimination, but rather that of one who reads for enjoyment and information. The mere fact that literature counted so much in a life full of diverse interests indicates his ability to see life in its entirety rather than from an isolated and narrow point of view.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

PARTIAL CATALOGUE OF BOOKS
IN THE FRANKLIN CIRCULATING LIBRARY

This catalogue was published in consecutive parts in the Planters' Banner, St. Mary's Parish, Franklin, Louisiana, during 1847-1848. The announcement of the opening of the Library appears in the Banner, Vol. XII, No. 8, February 18, 1847. The six following issues, i.e. Nos. 9-14 inclusive, are not extant. Presumably, the first portions of the catalogue were published in the lost issues, since it begins in the issue for April 8, 1847 (XII, 8), with title number 239 and goes through number 379. Subsequent original portions appear as follows: Nos. 380-383, July 15, 1847; Nos. 389-390, August 26, 1847; Nos. 391-397, October 7, 1847; Nos. 398-446, January 6, 1848; and Nos. 447-465, July 20, 1848. A few obvious printer's errors have been corrected. The fact that many of the works listed consisted of more than one volume may account in part for the repetition of certain titles.

239. Diana of Meridow, or the Lady of Monsureen, by A. Dumas
240. Rupert Sinclair, or The Faithless Wife (Samuel Warren)
241. Love and Money by Mary Howitt
242. Captain Paul by A. Dumas
243. Onslow, A Tale of the South
244. George Barnwell, a novel (T. S. Surr)
245. The Battle of Live, a love story, by Dickens
246. Confessions of a Pretty Woman by Miss Pardoe
247. The Mysteries of London (Paul Feval)
248. The Castilian by the author of Gomer Arias (T. de Trueba)
249. The Devil's Wedding Ring by A. Dumas

250. The Mayor of Windgap by the O'Hara Family
     (John Banim)

251. Eben Erakine, or the Traveller, by the author of
     Laurie Todd (John Galt)

252. The Duke of Monmouth by the author of The Collegians
     (Gerald Griffin)

253. The King's Secret by the author of The Lost Heir
     (T. Power)

254. Allan Breek by the author of Country Curate
     (G. R. Gleig)

255. The Invisible Gentleman by the author of The Robber
     (G. P. R. James)

256. The Refugee in America, a novel by Mrs. Trollope

257. The Exclusives, a novel

258. Jack Brag by the author of Sayings and Doings
     (Theodore Hook)

259. Sailors and Saints by the author of the Naval
     Sketch Book (W. N. Glasscock)

260. Blue Stocking Hall, a novel (W. P. Scorgill)

261. Burton, or the Sieges, by the author of Lafitte
     (J. H. Ingraham)

262. Fortesque by James S. Knowles

263. Daniel Dennissen and the Cumberland Statesman by
     Mrs. Hofland

264. Wieland, or The Transformation, by C. B. Brown

265. Arthur Mervyn by C. B. Brown

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1On April 8, 1847 (XII, 5) the title corresponding to
No. 249 is Clara Gazul by Miss Harriet Wilson, but on
May 13, 1847 (XII, 20), No. 249 is changed to the title
given above and remains in subsequent issues.
266. Edgar Huntley by C. B. Brown
267. Jane Talbot by C. B. Brown
268. The Repealers by the Countess of Blessington
269. The Tuileries by the author of Romances of Real Life (Mrs. Charles Gore)
270. Elvira, the Nabob's Wife by Mrs. Monkland
271. Births, Deaths and Marriages by the author of Sayings and Doings (Theodore Hook)
272. The Forsaken by the author of The Deformed
273. Nights at Mess (James White)
274. Richmond, or Scenes in the Life of a Bow Street Officer (T. S. Surr)
275. Almack's Revisited, or Herbert Milton (C. White)
276. Life in India, or The English at Calcutta
277. Nan Darrell by the author of The Heiress (Ellen Pickering)
278. The O'Briens and O'Flahertys by Lady Morgan
279. The Knight of Gwynne by Lever
280. Tancred by D'Israeli
281. George, or The Planter &c. by Dumas
282. The Victim of Intrigue by J. W. Taylor
283. Flirtation, a Story of the Heart by Lady Bury
284. The Dowerless by Madame Reybould
285. The Miller of Martigne by H. W. Herbert
286. Streaks of Squatter Life by J. S. Robb
287. 26 Years of an Actor's Life by Wemyss (sic.)
288. Typee by Herman Melville
289. The Women of England by Mrs. Ellis
290. The Wives of England by same (sic.)
291. The Mothers of England by same
292. Pictures of Private Life by same
293. A Voice from the Vintage by same
294. Home, or The Iron Rule, by Sarah Strickney
295. Story of a Royal Favorite by Mrs. Gore
296. Cousin Nicholas, a tale
297. Printz Hall, by the author of Blackbeard
298. Merchant's Daughter by the author of The Heiress (Ellen Pickering)
299. Cheveley by Lady Bulwer
300. The Disowned by Bulwer
301. Royston Gower by Thomas Miller
302. Solomon Seesaw by J. P. Robertson
303. The Desultory Man by the author of Darnley (G. P. R. James)
304. Autobiography of Jack Ketch (Charles Whitehead)
305. The Black Watch (A. Picken)
306. Omoo by the author of Typee (Herman Melville)
307. Agnes de Mansfeldt by T. C. Grattan
308. King's Own by Marryat
309. Diary Illustrative of the Times of George IV (Lady Charlotte Bury)
310. Athens, Its Rise and Fall by Bulwer
311. Venetia by D'Israeli
312. Stanley, or The Recollections of a Man &c.
313. Corse de Leon by James
314. Ernest Maltravers by Bulwer
315. The Doomed
316. Shakespeare and His Friends (Lander)
317. Life of Mrs. Siddons by Thomas Campbell
318. The Deerslayer by Cooper
319. Cecil, or The Adventures of a Coxcomb (Mrs. Gore)
320. Conti the Discarded by Chorley
321. Tales of Fashion and Reality (C. F. and H. M. Beauclerk)
322. Diary of a Desennuyée (Mrs. Gore)
323. Leila by Bulwer
324. Richelieu, a play, by Bulwer
325. Winter Evening Tales by Hogg
326. Diary of Lady Willoughby
327. The Roman Traitor by H. W. Herbert
328. Russell, a novel, by James
329. Cinq-Mars by Count Alfred de Vigny
330. Marriage by Miss Ferrier
331. Tales of Woman's Trials by Mrs. Hall
332. The Inheritance by Miss Ferrier
333. Matilda by E. Sue
334. Temptation by E. Sue
335. The Battle of the Factions by Carleton
336. Sam Slick in England (Judge Haliburton)
337. Blanche Livingston by Mrs. Hofland
338. Adventures of Simon Suggs (Johnson Hooper)
339. Mansfield Park by Miss Austen
340. Woman's Reward by Mrs. Norton
341. Trial of Myers for the Murder of Hoyt
342. The Expectant by Miss Pickering
343. Travels in the West by Faraham
344. Fremont's Expedition in 1842
345. The O'Donoghue by J. Lever
346. Amaury by A. Dumas
347. St. James by Ainsworth
348. Arabella Stuart by James
349. The Brothers, a tale of the Fronde (H. W. Herbert)
350. President's Daughters by Miss Bremer
351. The Mysteries of Paris by E. Sue
352. A Chance Medley by T. C. Gratton
353. Gaetarini Fleming by D'Israeli
354. Nevil's of Carletstown by Lever
355. The Smuggler by James
356. The Commander of Malta by E. Sue
357. Emilia Wyndham (Mrs. Marsh)
358. Adventures in Mexico by Sealsfield
359. Gerolstein by E. Sue
360. Count of Monte Christo (A. Dumas)
361. The Botanic Garden by Dr. Darwin
362. The Collegians, a novel (Gerald Griffin)
363. The Mystery of the Heath by F. Soulis

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364. Rory O'More, a romance, by S. Lever
365. The Youth of Shakespeare, a novel (Lander)
366. Charcoal Sketches by Joseph C. Neal
367. Lord Roldan, a romance, by Allen Cunningham
368. The Creole, from the German of Zschokke
369. The Woman of the World (Mrs. Core)
370. The Groves of Blarney by Mrs. Hall
371. The Ransomed Bride by E. F. Weld
372. David Hunt and Malina Gray by Mrs. Steppens
373. Gononel de Surville by E. Sue, translated by Thomas Pooley, Esq.
374. Consuelo from the French of G. Sand
375. Isabel of Bavaria by A. Dumas
376. Martin the Foundling by E. Sue
377. St. Giles and St. James by D. Jerrold
378. The Maid of the Valley by A. J. Herr
379. The Author's Daughter by Mary Howitt
380. The Female Minister
381. Russell by James
382. Martin Chuzzlewit by Dickens
383. Chevalier D'Harmental by Dumas
384. Lucretia by Bulwer
385. The Heiress by Miss E. Pickering
386. Arrah Neil by James
387. Lautredumont by E. Sue
388. The Crime of the Borgias by A. Dumas
389. Margaret Graham by James
390. The Castle of Ehrenstein by James
391. The Black Prophet by W. Carlton
392. The Greatest Plague of Life
393. St. Giles and St. James by Douglas Jerrold
394. A Simple Story by Mrs. Inchbald
395. The Countess of Rudolstadt, a sequel to Consuelo (G. Sand)
396. The Journeyman Joiner by George Sand
397. Joseph Rushbrooke by Captain Marryat
398. Ardent Troughton by Captain Marryat
399. Sketches of the War with Mexico by Captain Henry
400. The Quadroon by the author of Lafitte (J. H. Ingraham)
401. Cecelia, or Woman's Love, by A. Dumas
402. Norman's Bridge by the author of Emilia Wyndham (Mrs. Marsh)
403. The Wayside Cross by Captain Milman
404. Monima, or The Beautiful French Girl (H. Haydn)
405. Margaret Graham by James
406. The Cruise of the Midge by the author of Tom Cringle's Log (Michael Scott)
407. Sybil Lennard by Mrs. Grey
408. The Insnared by Lady Charlotte Bury
409. The Countess of Morion by H. W. Herbert
410. Wood Leighton by Mary Howitt
411. The Knight of Gwynne by C. Lever
412. The Greatest Plague of Life
413. Life of John A. Murrel
414. Cousin Hinten by Miss E. Pickering
415. Sir Henry Morgan, the Buccaneer, by E. Howard
416. The Crater, or Vulcan's Peak, by Cooper
417. The Next of Kin by Mrs. Gore
418. Ingleborough Hall by H. W. Herbert
419. A Tale of the Catholic Church (R. J. Cleveland)
420. Valahreuse, from the French of Sandeau
421. Kitty's Relations and Other Sketches by Miss Leslie
422. Benjamin the Jew of Granada by E. Maturin
423. Captain O'Donovan's Adventures in Mexico
424. The Duke and Cousin by Mrs. Grey
425. Wagner, the Wahr Wolf by G. W. M. Reynolds
426. Pastourel by Frederick Soulie
427. The Pirate's Cove by Donald O'Bannon
428. Rody the Rover by W. Carleton
429. The Greatest Plague of Life
430. St. Giles and St. James by Douglas Jerrold
431. The Wayside Cross by Captain E. A. Milman
432. The Convict by G. P. R. James
433. Monima, or the Beautiful French Girl (H. Haydn)
434. Legends of Mexico by G. Lippard
435. The Chain of Destiny by the author of The Orange Girl of Venice
436. Clinton Bradshaw by the author of Howard Pinkney (F. W. Thomas)
437. The Unfortunate Maid by Captain O'Shaugnessey
438. Marmeduke Herbert by the Countess of Blessington
439. Norman's Bridge by the author of Emilia Wyndham (Mrs. Marsh)
440. Walter Wolfe by Thomas Dunn English
441. The Crime of the Borgias by A. Dumas
442. Christopher Tadpole by Albert Smith
443. The Wayside Cross by Captain E. A. Milman
444. Deerbook, a novel, by Harriet Martineau
445. The Devil's Pool by George Sand
446. The Parricide by the author of Life in London (F. M. Reynolds)
447. Ormond, and Clara Howard, by C. Brockden Brown
448. James the Second by Ainsworth
449. Wallace by C. Alexander
450. The Prairie Bird by E. A. Murray
451. The Sin of Mons. Antoine by G. Sand
452. Brien O'Lim by the author of Wild Sports of the West (W. H. Maxwell)
453. Sir Theodore Broughton by James
454. Jane Eyre by Currer Bell
455. Midsummer Eve by Mrs. S. G. Hall
456. The Last of the Fairies by James
457. Wuthering Heights by Currer Bell
458. Old Hicks the Guide by C. W. Webber
459. Now and Then by Samuel Warren
460. Ten Thousand a Year (Samuel Warren)
461. Esther de Medina (G. W. M. Reynolds)
462. Domby and Son by Dickens
463. Sir Theodore Broughton by James
464. Jane Eyre by Currer Bell
465. The Children of the New Forrest by Marryat
**APPENDIX B**

**LIBRARY OF VINCENT TERNANT**

*(Extract from the Inventory of the Estate of Vincent Ternant)*

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LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis Report

Name of Candidate: W. R. Patrick

Major Field: English

Title of Thesis: Literature in the Louisiana Plantation Home Prior to 1861: A Study in Literary Culture

APPROVED: 7/26/37

Earl L. Bradley
Major Professor and Chairman

D. J. Lessard
Acting Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date: July 19, 1937