

THESIS  
"THE SHORT STORY"

By  
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## THE SHORT STORY

### PURPOSE

In this thesis I intend to show that the short-story is the most popular form of fiction today, and is neglected by the High Schools of Oklahoma; to show that the magazines taught in the High Schools are read in after life; to show what types of fiction are best liked by the young people; and last, but most important, to give a "Supplementary English Text on the Short-Story" that is brief, yet complete enough to be used by teachers in High Schools. In this text, or pamphlet as it might be more properly called, I do not pretend to state facts entirely new, but I have tried to put them in usable form. Many of the facts recorded are those discovered by myself in my wide reading of the short-story; but for some of them I am indebted to other writers as J. Berg Esenwein, formerly of Lippincott's Magazine and also director of Periodical Publishers' Association of America; Glenn Clark, Brander Matthews, Charles Barrett, Evelyn May Albright, Professor of English, Ohio Wesleyan University.

When making a direct quotation from any of these writers, I have tried to let the fact be known. This text I believe will be found helpful to High-School teachers and also to me in my work, and I believe fills a great need.



## Part I

### Short-Stories Read and studied

The short-story is, undoubtedly, the most popular literary form of today. Many writers are devoting time to its consideration, colleges are giving courses for its study, periodicals consist almost entirely of this form of fiction, and people are demanding more and more short stories. Some five magazines of America that consist almost entirely of this form have attained the enormous circulation of five million copies.

Why is this so in America? The American people are so busy that only a few minutes per day are devoted to any kind of reading and so they hardly ever peruse a novel. As they are accustomed to the speedy happenings in the business world, the rapid movement of the short-story pleases them. They have little patience with the slower pace of the novel; they would hesitate to read one of Dickens' long stories. The short-story, however, moves rapidly, is intensely interesting, can be read in a few minutes, and so fits in exactly with the literary needs of the average American.

In a recent survey that I made of the literary tastes of eighty-five Freshmen in this college, almost all of them preferred the short-story to any other type of fiction, and some said emphatically, "I like the short-story best of all."

Now what are the High Schools of Oklahoma doing toward recognizing this taste for the short-story and to not only cultivate it, but to turn its attention to the very best? I find

in a survey of fifty-five (55) high schools (including the preparatory schools of Oklahoma A. & M. College, Oklahoma School for Women, and several catholic Academies of high school rank) that very little is being done.

The following is a list of these high scholls showing which ones devote time to a study of the short-story, and what periodicals were studied:

<u>School</u>	<u>Time Spent</u>	<u>Periodicals</u>
1 Ada	Entire Course	Literary Digest Saturday Evening Post
2 Yale	None	. . . . .
3 Ponca City	"	Independent Literary Digest Outlook
4 A. & M. Prep.	"	None
5 Chickasha	"	"
6 Stillwater	"	"
7 O. C. W.	"	"
8 Jennings	"	"
9 Cloud Chief	"	Literary Digest
10 Devol	"	None
11 Enid	"	"
12 Broken Arrow	"	"
13 Anadarko	Few Days	Literary Digest
14 Murray	None	"
15 Mulhall	Little Time	None
16 Woodward	None	"
17 Garber	"	Literary Digest

<u>School</u>	<u>Time Spent</u>	<u>Periodicals</u>
18 Glenpool	None	Literary Digest
19 Morrison	"	None
20 Bradley	"	None
21 Waurika	"	Literary Digest
22 Lamar	"	"
23 Altus	"	"
24 Hollis	"	"
25 Ardmore	Some Time	Independent Literary Digest World review Atlantic
26 Pawnee	None	None
27 minco	"	"
28 Quniton	"	"
29 Blair	"	Independent Literary Digest
30 Miami	6 weeks	None
31 Chelsea	Some	"
32 Stonewall	None	"
33 Hunter	"	Literary Digest
35 Seminole	Some	Literary Digest independent American Atlantic
36 mangum	Some	Literary Digest
37 waukomis	"	None
38 Nowata	"	"
34 Duncan	None	"
39 Cleveland	Some	"



<u>School</u>	<u>Time spent</u>	<u>Periodicals</u>
40 Prague	None	"
41 Hennessey	"	"
42 Stillwell	"	"
43 Cushing	"	Literary Digest
44 St. Mary's Academy, Okla. City	Great Deal	Hearst's Ladies Home Journal
45 Goodwell	None	None
46 St. John's Academy	Some	Literary Digest
47 Okmulgee	"	American Independent
48 Shawnee	"	Literary Digest
49 Custer City	None	None
50 Hobart	"	"
51 Drumright	Some	New Republic Literary Digest
52 McAlester	12 Weeks	None
53 Murray	None	"
54 Sapulpa	"	Literary Digest
55 Fairview	Some	"

These facts were gathered by means of a questionnaire among the Freshmen of this school who attended those schools last year. I felt that I could gather more dependable facts in this way than by asking the teachers of those schools.

From these facts we see that only seventeen (17) out of fifty-five (55) or only 30% gave any time at all to the study of the short story, and that only five (5) of these or 16 2/3% gave the pupils magazines, i.e., real stories to read. The

"Literary Digest" is used (and is good), but it is not a fiction magazine.

The "some time" in the chart, and which I have included in the 30%, is much too little time to be spent. It probably meant to the students a hint of the short-story, not an actual study of it. Most of these people read their short-stories in magazines, but the teachers did not give them any hint as to what magazines contain the best stories and what stories are best to read. Students generally need guidance in the foundation of good literary taste; and if the teachers do not aid them, who will? Since the short-story appeals to them, we should point their way to the best short-story, the best fiction periodicals, and spend less time on the classics which they take little interest in and seldom read in after life.

I noticed that out of the twenty (20) students who said they had read the "Literary Digest" in High School, about fifteen (15) still read it. Why would it not be natural for them to continue to read the best periodicals in after life if they were shown which were best?

It is interesting to note which type of stories were preferred, and which periodicals are most read.

<u>Periodicals</u>	<u>Number of readers</u>
American	52
Ladies Home Journal	33
Saturday Evening Post	21
Cosmopolitan	12
McCalls	10

<u>Periodicals</u>	<u>number of readers</u>
Pictorial	6
True story	4
Popular Science	4
Woman's Home Journal	4
Country Gentleman	4
Red Book	4
Physical Culture	4
Hearst	3
Good Housekeeping	3
McClure's	2
Atlantic	2
New Republic	2
Scientific American	2
Youth's companion	2
Popular Mechanics	2
Argosy	1
Independent	1
Motion picture	1
Arts and decoration	1
Metropolitan	1
Harper's Bazaar	1
System	1
Review of reviews	1
Delineator	1
vogue	1
House Beautiful	1
yale review	1



From the above facts we can easily see that the magazines containing fiction, chiefly the short-story, are read. And where is Scribner's claimed to be the periodical containing the best short-stories? It does not appear once. I do not, as many english teachers do, criticize the taste for the American. It is full of clean stories of successful men and is read by many educated people. The high places held by The Ladies Home Journal and the Cosmopolitan does not look favorable to the reading tastes of our Freshmen, however.

Since the short-story is read, why not face the facts in the above table? Why not try to improve the choice of fiction used by our young people?

I made a survey of the kind of stories preferred by these Freshmen, and will append the table here. By it we can see what they like and can help them find the best stories of that type.

<u>Type of Story</u>	<u>Votes</u>
Adventure	36
Love	27
Mystery	25
Romance	14
History	12
Science	10
Western	7
Detective	8
Business	3
Human Interest	3
Realistic	2
Invention	1
Sport	1
Imaginative	1
College	1
Religious	1

Part II

"THE SHORT-STORY"

## PREFACE

In this thesis I have tried to give in a condensed way the main points concerning the short-story and to illustrate them as best I could from some of the best short-stories. I have tried to make it a work fitted for use with a class studying the short-story, and I believe that it is simple and yet complete enough for that purpose. I am indebted for some parts of this work, due to the meagerness of our library, to some authors of books on the short-story. To Mr. Esenwein and Miss Albright I secured knowledge concerning the history of the short-story; to Mr. Barrett I am indebted for the use of his classifications. Though I have made my own classification of the short-story, I felt that theirs might be helpful.



## RISE OF THE SHORT-STORY

As far back as we can trace the human race we find that people have been interested in stories, written and unwritten, and this interest is still holding its own.

The story writer is the direct descendant of the storyteller. The child's delight in oral stories rather than in written ones is a recapitulation of the time when stories were told in the huts of the poor and in the palaces of the kings; when wandering minstrels collected stories, added to them and transported them from place to place. Later on these tales were written on tablets and papyrus and thus some of them survive to the present time.

The people of ancient Greece, where these tales flourished, reveled in the glories of warriors, in brave deeds, in the mysteries of the unknown. So we have the *Odyssey*, the *Iliad*, and other examples of the epic which was the dominant story form. These epics collected the tales of the storyteller and strung them on a thread of personality, i.e., made Ulysses, Aeneas, etc. the heroes of tales once told of others. These epics were then told or chanted to the interested listeners, and were later continued in ballad form by the Trouvere and Troubadour of the feudal ages.

Some of the Greek tales dealt with the pleasures of the body and were, therefore, often very vulgar. This type set the example for the later Roman stories of the sexual type. One of them, "Matron of Ephesus" is well known; and, though it

has a good plot, it is merely a sketch. Many of these tales are mere anecdotes and never short-stories in the modern sense.

Beginning with the Egyptian papyrus stories, ranging from 4000 to 1500 B.C., down through the Hebrew, Greek, Oriental, and Roman tales to 500 A.D., and even through the stories of the Dark Ages and the Renaissance we observe the same characteristics. They were progenitors of the short-story; they were devised merely to tell a story; they were specimens of pure narration, but never short-stories.

The modern short-story also draws from sacred writings to some extent. The Bible contains some of the purest specimens of narration to be found anywhere, ancient or modern. The modern short-story does not approach the simple beauty of "The Prodigal son" or "Ruth", which narratives written so long ago are set up as models and standards today.

In the short romances of the Middle Ages the form of a pastoral romance with episodes, complications, and a fairy tale ending was used. In the twelfth century Walter Map, an Anglo-Norman, wrote in Latin two short-stories as well constructed as any of modern times--"De Societate Sadii et Galonis", and "De Sceva et Ollone Mercatorilus". This discovery of the short-story form had no literary influence, it was not followed up, and its day was thereby delayed for many centuries. The romance of mediæval times was not changed by it, and remained as it had been. In his "Pardoner's Tale" Chaucer anticipates the modern short-story, and there were a few other instances of the true short-story form, but in the main the mediæval



short romance showed no advance in narrative form.

The stories in the "Decameron" of Boccaccio approach the short-story in form. Although they are loosely constructed some have the main incidents occurring in a short space of time, some have clever incident and a few have a distinct climax. Five out of the hundred might be counted as short-stories.

So we see that the Middle Ages had the short-story but did not recognize it. Up to the nineteenth century its form was occasionally hit upon, but it was not a distinct literary type.

The Frenchman, Charles Nodier (1783-1844), occasionally used this form and is called the master of Hawthorne, but he had little influence on the development of the modern short-story. Merimee is sometimes called the pioneer in the short-story, but his typical tales are too long and his compactness consists in condensing a novel. Balzac influenced the development of the short-story in France, but his own stories failed in intensity. Musset had no grasp of form and Gautier, in general had no compactness and was too garrulous. The latter's exception was "La morte Amoreue" which was published in the year after Poe's "Berenice" and is strikingly like it.

To America and France, therefore, belongs the honor of having produced the short-story, and they fixed its form independently. After it was started, it became the chief fiction form of both.

Still the short-story seems to be typically American. Before 1835, the date of Poe's "Berenice", was a period of ro-



mances and sketches, such as those of Hawthorne and Irving. Material was not lacking to the Americans, but the ture means of expressing America were lacking--the short-story form. Irving was not a writer of the short-story, but of sketches. He had been trained in the influence of the English essay of Addison, which in no way suggests the form of the short-story. His tales lack unity of tone, unity of form, and unity of time; they have no emphasis on any one incident, no development of a climax.

Take, for instance, Irving's "Rip Van Winkle". The tale extends over a period of more than twenty years, whereas to be a short-story it should have begun at the point where Rip re-appeared and should have brought in the previous events after that. It stresses no main incident. The fact that Mrs. Rip scolded, that Rip was indolent, that he and Wolf started hunting are given a much emphasis as the most important event, Rip's having slept for twenty years. No climax is developed for Rip wakes up, goes to the village, finds everything changed, and finally settles down to a peaceful life. There is no climax, only a well rounded-out ending.

Hawthorne sometimes had the unities of form, of time, of place, of incident, but he seemed not to prefer or to recognize this form when he used it. He tended toward description and the essays, and seemed not to feel the greatness of the short-story form. As he was naturally discursive, the novel rather than the short-story gave him an outlet.

In the "Ambitious Guest", in "The Birthmark", etc., Haw-

thorne created short-stories. In the former, for example, we have unity of place (the cabin on the hillside), of time (one stormy night), of incident (the slide), of character (the ambitious guest). It had a definite climax (the slide) which was deftly developed and aimed for at the beginning. Consider another of Hawthorne's stories, "David Swan". This one has unity of place (the roadside), of time (one day), of character (David). But of climax it has none, it is just a series of incidents, no one of which is emphasized more than the others. So this is not a short-story.

Poe was the man needed and born to develop the short-story form, to realize its possibilities, and to establish it as a new literary form. He was interested in structure, not in character or the interpretation of real life. He secured emotional effects by construction; every name, every object, every incident had to contribute to this effect. Everything in a story must have harmony, and he secured this by suppressing every unnecessary thing. He did away with the long introduction used by Hawthorne as he considered it an unnecessary hindrance to the directness of the narrative. If you will notice you will see that his greatest stories--"Ligeia", "The Cask of Amontillado", "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Fall of the House of Usher", etc.--have no introduction at all. We will notice their beginnings later on. By telling his stories in the first person Poe secured directness; by arranging his incidents progressively he attained a strong climax. Poe established the form of the short-story and none have excelled him. De Maupassant and other



French writers have written masterpieces, but the form had been established for them by Poe.

The short-story was also influenced by the drama which is as old as the tale. The drama casts out as unnecessary all non-essentials and when the story-teller learned from the dramatist how to do this same thing, the short-story was born.

It is sometimes said that the novel is father of the short-story but this is not true. The two are, indeed, more alike than any other two forms of narration. The short-story is the older of the two, i.e., we find traces of it farther back in history, but the novel matured and secured a permanent form first and therefore exerted a great influence on the short-story.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE SHORT-STORY

##### I----What is a short-story?

Of course the first thing to be pointed out is that the short-story is a distinct literary type, that it has a distinct form and technique of its own. It is not a short nor a condensed novel. A short novel is a novelette, which is different from the short-story in kind, not in length; and the condensed novel is a synopsis, not a short-story. The hyphen is used in short-story to indicate that it is one word, the name of a distinct form of fiction, and not merely a short story.

The short-story, as we have seen, is not an outgrowth of the novel, but is somewhat like it. The novel aims to present



to secure unity of impression, which the novel does not have. It deals with a single character, a single event, a single emotion, a single situation. It has a simpler plot than has the novel, fewer and more vivid characters, more direct action, an unchanging time and place. Nothing is admitted but what tends to develop the action or has some influence on characters and events. The short-story is, therefore, compressed while the novel abounds in details.

The novel is a series of episodes and is therefore not as unified, not as much of a whole as is the short-story. The short-story is not an episode and cannot be elaborated into one. It is a complete unity, and is destroyed when expanded or when placed in a novel series. The short-story deals with a single person and a single incident. This isolation is the chief difference between it and the novel. The length depends upon the plot. "The Gold Bug" contains thirteen thousand words; "The Piece of String" less than five thousand. No word should be put in that the plot does not need; nor one left out that is necessary.

The short-story is so short that it requires more careful workmanship than does the novel. The novelist may be more leisurely elaborate, more commonplace. The writer of the short-story must have the power of compression and of conciseness; he must have a different kind of genius and more originality, for the short-story requires a more sustained imagination than does the novel. The short-story has been considered a good field for

the beginner to gain experience in, and therefore few great short-stories have been written.

Another difference between the novel and the short-story is the love element. Though the novel must almost always be a love story, the short-story need not concern itself with love at all. The love element requires time for its development so it is difficult to treat in a short-story.

Let us take a typical short-story and, point out these qualities which we have been discussing. "The Necklace" by De Maupassant has almost perfect technique. It is a short story but obviously not a novel. It contains one predominant incident--the loss of the necklace and the subsequent labor of Mathilde Loisel with all its tragedy and heartache. It covers ten years of time, but this lapse is cleverly and quickly denoted so that there is no abrupt break. There is one main character, Mathilde Loisel; the husband and Madame Forestier are mere shadows that contribute to the development of Mathilde's character. The plot is excellent, every incident adds to the gradual heightening of the interest until the climax is reached--the necklace was paste, and all those years and hopes were wasted. The story is compressed, has no unnecessary details; everything contributes to the singleness of impression.

This story has none of the love element, neither have "A Piece of String", "The Ambitious Guest," etc. "La Grande Bretiche", "The Luck of Roaring Camp," etc. Consider what Dickens' "David Copperfield" and "Tale of Two Cities", Thackeray's

"Henry Esmond" and "The Newcomes", and Hardy's "Return of the Native" would be without the love element.

"The Critic" chose the following list as the twelve best American short-stories. None of them are pure love stories and only three or four have the love element at all.

1----"The Man without a Country"

Edward Everett Hale

(Story of a man who when banished from his country learns to cherish her.)

2----"The Luck of Roaring Camp"

--Bret Harte

(Story of a child who brings luck to a rough mining camp.)

3----"The Great Stone Face"

--Nathaniel Hawthorne

(Story of a boy influenced by a natural phenomenon)

4----"The Snow Image"

--Nathaniel Hawthorne

(Fantastic story of a child made of snow)

5----"The Gold Bug"

--Edgar Allen Poe

(Story of the finding of buried treasure)

6----"Murders in the Rue Morgue"

Edgar Allen Poe

(Story of the solving of a murder mystery)

7----"The Lady, or the Tiger?"

--Frank R. Stockton

(Enigma of ancient Rome)



8----"Legned of Sleepy Hollow"

--Washington Irving

(Story of an outlandish school-teacher's attempt to court an heir-  
ess.)

9----"Rip Van winkle"

--Washington Irving

(Story of henpecked Rip's sleep which lasted twenty years.)

10---"Marse Chan"

--Thomas Nelson Page

(Negro Story)

11---"Marjorie Daw"

(Thomas Bailey Aldrich

(Story of the use of a fancied girl to cheer up a sick friend.)

12 "The Revolt of Mother"

--Mary E. Wilkins

(Story of mother's successful attempt to get a new house.)

## II---Classification of Short-stories:

1 Supernatural Story

"The Monkey's Paw"--Jacobs

2---Horrible Story

"Ligeia"--Poe

3---Didactic Story

"The Ambitious Guest"--Hawthorne

4---Story of technique

"The Piece of String"--De Maupassant

5---Human Interest Story

"The Old Folks"--Daudet

- 6-----Dramatic Story  
                   --"Mateo Falcone"--Merimee
- 7----Romantic Story  
                   "The Pit and the Pendulum"--Poe
- 8----Domestic Stories  
                   "The Lotus-Eaters"--Tracy
- 9----Allegorical Story  
                   "Feathertop"--Hawthorne
- 10---Local Color Story  
                   "The Luck of Roaring Camp"--Harte
- 11---Dialect Story  
                   "Ol Stracted"--Page
- 12---Surprise Story  
                   "Marjorie Daw"--Aldrich
- 13---Detective story  
                   "The Purloined Letter"--Poe
- 14---Psychological Story  
                   "The Liar"--Henry James

Barret gives the following classification progressively from the simplest to the most difficult. It will readily be seen that this is a thorough, complex classification which is not adaptable to class work. For a brief course in the short-story, classification preceding this one is better.

(1) Tale

This form is the relation, in an interesting and literary form, of some simple incident. It has no plot or problem, its interest depending on its action.

a----True Tale

True to fact, but written in literary form. Example, "Capture of Quebec"--Parkman.

b----Imaginative Tale

Narration of possible events, but which is a work of the author's imagination. It has no plot or love element. Example, "Murad the Unlucky"--Edgworth.

(2) The Moral Story

This type is usually didactic and contains just enough plot to convey the moral. It is capable of being highly polished, but preaches too much to hold high rank.

a----The Fable

The fable tacks the "moral" on at the end and usually has animals for characters. Due to its didacticism it is not popular now. Example: Aesop's Fables.

b----Story with Moral

This type hides the moral to some extent with a slight narrative. It has little plot and tends to show the results of some form of wickedness. Example "The Ambitious Guest"--Hawthorne.

c----The Allegory

This is the only form of the moral story surviving today as it disguises its moral with a good story. Example: "The Birthmark"--Hawthorne.

(3) The Weird Story

This type deals with supernatural characters, and usually has slight plot. It appeals to the love of the supernatural existing in everyone.



#### a----The Ghost Story

This type of story has a real plot with the ghost as an actor. In some of the stories the ghost may be real, in others it is a result of superstition. Example first type: "The Spectre Bridegroom", "The Upper Berth". Example second type: "Legend of Sleepy Hollow".

#### b----The Fantastic Tale

This type is a whimsical treatment of the supernatural in which the plot is subordinated. Example: "The Damned Thing".

#### c----The Study in Horror

This type is morbid, full of the terrible and requires a great imagination. The plot merely gives a setting to the story. Poe made this type popular and has no great imitators. Example: "The Fall of the House of Usher."

#### (4) The Character Study

This type treats of the development and delineation of human character.

#### a----The Sketch

This type is usually a psychological analysis of an inactive character. Example: "Old Esther Dudley"--Hawthorne

#### b----Character Study

In this type the character described is active and the plot gives him an opportunity to work out his personality in speech and in action. This is one of the highest forms of the short-story. Example: "The Liar"--James.

#### (5) The Dialect Story

This type is told in the English used by our uneducated classes

and by foreigners. The slight plot is aided by the language used. It is usually told in the first person and it gives a view of the character of certain classes of society. Example: "Ole Stracted"--Page.

(6) The Parable of the Times

This type is a development of the Tale and aims to give a time picture of present times by criticizing evil or by painting the life of some class. It is the most popular form today.

a----The Instructive Story

1----Stories that present the present day problems, but offer no solution. Example: "Christmas Present for a Lady"--Kelly.

2----Stories that criticize and try to offer a solution. Example: "By the Rod of his wrath"--White.

b----Story of Today

This type uses present day life merely as a background of a natural plot. It includes the social stories. Example: "The Lotus Eaters"--Tracy.

(7) Story of Ingenuity

This type is the most modern and the most ingenious. It deals with the marvelous and requires great inventive and imaginative genius. Poe was the originator and his stories are the best examples of this type.

a----Story of Wonder

This type is a vivid description of some astounding discovery; has a little plot and requires great imagination. Example: "The Damned Thing"--Bierce.

#### b----Detective story

The interest rests in the solution of a mystery and therefore the plot is the most complex of those of any of the short-story Poe wrote the first and the best short-stories of this type.

Example: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"--Poe.

#### (8) The Humorous story

contains little plot, depends upon the unusual and is generally crude in workmanship.

#### a----Nonsense story

Has very little plot, interest being obtained by odd characters whose conversations are witty. Example: "The House Boat on the Styx".

#### b----The Burlesque

Has plot that is absurd and impossible. Example: "The Lady or the Tiger?"--Stockton.

#### (9) The Dramatic Story

This type is a bit of real life with a definite plot and a strong climax. It demands skillful workmanship, and is the highest and most modern type of short-story.

#### a----Dramatic Form Stories

This class is miniature drama which can be acted. It consists mainly of dialogue, has definite plot, is too artful to be a good short-story but is very popular. Example: "Dolly Dialogues"--Hope.

#### b----Story of Dramatic Effect

Deals with a single crisis, conveys one impression, has perfect climax. This is the highest type of a short-story. Ex-



ample: "The Cask of Amontillado"--Poe.

### III--Plot

The plot is the nucleus of the story and implies action. The event pictured need not be tragic but it must be of enough importance to justify narration. A tangled, complicated plot is impossible in the short-story for in it there can be no side plots. Plot is very necessary, for without it there would be no interest. The plot should be such that it can be compressed into a single sentence, the "true plot", and this can be compressed farther. It is narrower than the "theme" which is the subject or idea of the story. For instance the plot of "The Ambitious Guest" is--the futility of the desire for fame; of "On the Stairs"--the peculiar desire of the poorer classes for "grand" funerals; of "The Necklace"--much of our efforts are for bubbles; of "The Old Folds"--the childishness of the very old.

#### (1) Kinds of Plots

There are very few plots and these have been used since antiquity. The writer takes one of these old plots, adds new characters, new scenes, new incidents, thus freshening it up until the old plot is hardly recognizable. Some plots have been overworked until they have been to a great extent discarded, but one, the "love" plot, will never grow old.

Some say there are between four--those based on Love, Identity, Hunger, Death--and fourteen plots. The six principal ones are:

(1) Surprise--This is the simplest to form. The

surprise must be genuine and natural. Example: "Marjorie Daw".

(2) Problem Plot--Some problem plots are serious, some humorous. This type is difficult to handle and is not very popular. Example: "The Lady or the Tiger?"

(3) Mystery

a----Detective--A real clue is in plain sight, but is unsuspected by the reader. Example: "The Purloined Letter".

b----Ghost--Ghost must be used as only means of solving the problem. Example: "The Upper Berth".

c----Plain Mystery--Denouement concealed until the close. Example: "What was It? A Mystery".

(4) Plot of Mood--Some stories deal only with a mood. Poe's stories have plot, but it is subordinate to the mood, generally that of the horrible. Hawthorne and Maupassant are also masters of this type. Examples: Poe--"The Fall of the House of Usher"; Hawthorne--"The Great Carbuncle"; Maupassant--"The Coward".

(5) Plot of Contrast--In this type of story characters, scenes, incidents are contrasted. Example: "Outcasts of Poker Flat", character contrast.

(6) Plot of Allegory--The events, characters, etc. stand for some truth, and the plot is usually didactic. Example "The Birthmark."

(I was aided in this by Esenwein).

Gazzi says there are thirty-six original plot situations.

A----Problems

### A-P--Problems

- (10) Supplication
- (2) Vengeance Pursuing Crime
- (3) The Pursued
- (4) Revolt
- (5) Audacious Attempt
- (6) Enigma
- (7) Fatal Impudence
- (8) Enmity of Kinsmen or Friends
- (9) Rivalry
- (10) Unequal Victory
- (11) Obstacles to love
- (12) An enemy loved
- (13) Ambition
- (14) Struggle Against Destiny
- (15) Mistaken identity
- (16\*) In Clutches of Cruelty or misfortune

### B----Solution

- (17) The Savior
- (18) Vengeance taken upon kindred by kindred
- (19) Obtaining
- (20) Madness
- (21) Slaying a Kinsman Unrecognized
- (22) Self-sacrifice for kindred or friends
- (23) Self-sacrifice for an ideal
- (24) Discovery of the dishonor of a loved one
- (25) All sacrificed for passions



(26) Erroneous Judgment

(27) Remorse

(28) The Necessity of sacrificing loved ones

(29) Abduction

(30) Disaster

(31) Recovery of a lost one

(32) Loss of loved ones

#### C----Undesirable Plot Situations

(33) Adultery

(34) Murderous

(35) Crimes of love

(36) Involuntary Crimes of love.

#### (2) Development of Plot

The art of the short-story is a matter of technique. The writer must know where he is going and how he is going; the climax should be definitely known and then worked to. The incidents must be interesting, but complexity of plot is not desirable as the simple plot is the more powerful and lifelike. Singleness of plot produces the singleness of effect desirable in a short-story. Good plot does not make a good short-story unless it is well filled in with motives.

The plot is often a result of character as the things a man does are the results of his character. Sometimes, however, events modify character, but writers usually create the characters before they do the plot. There is great dramatic technique in the short-story for after the brief introduction there is a rapid rise in complication to the climax, then comes the

suspense, denouement, and conclusion. Notice "The Necklace," for example. There is first an introduction of Mathilde Loisel in her situation as a poor clerk's wife. Then the complication begins when her husband receives the invitation to the ball; it continues through the time when she procures her dress and the necklace. The suspense lasts through the years of toil and ends with the denouement--the necklace was paste. There is no conclusion except that surmised by the reader himself when he finishes the story. This story I use in my illustrations because it is one with almost perfect technique.

Often the writer forms a plot while trying to convey an impression he has received. This is the manner in which many stories are written. Take "The Coward" by Maupassant. It seems that the author of this story received the idea of a person who has to face a danger being afraid, not of the injury he may receive, but of the possibility of his acting cowardly, and had then created incidents to fit it. As a result we find a fine psychological or analytical story of a man who being afraid of acting cowardly in a duel he has to fight kills himself.

Plot must be constructed so that no part can be removed or displaced without ruin to the whole. Poe says: "but having conceived, with delicate care, a unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents--he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his initial sentence tend not to the out-bringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first steps. In the whole composition there should be no word written of which the

tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design.

Baker says, "The short-story may be defined as a tale which purposing to convey a single effect sets forth to secure this effect by an introduction which strikes the keynote, by skillful touches of suggestion which hint at the outcome without revealing it, by maintenance of atmosphere and unity, and by progress toward a climax which is unexpected and dramatic, with the addition at times of a few words to restore a quieter tone, abruptly ends the narrative."

#### V----Beginning The Short-story

"The best place to begin is as near the climax as possible! A long introduction at the beginning is tiresome and the reader often quits before he reaches the story, because he knows that a poor beginning usually means a poor ending. A long long description is not used as much now, as a beginning, however, as it once was, for the short-story requires narrative, not description. Hawthorne and Irving often used long, tedious introductions. Take, for instance, Rip van Winkle. A long description of the country along the Hudson is given before Rip is introduced at all.

It is best to make the opening sentences rapid, perhaps giving the setting, characters, situation, etc. Previous happenings may be given in the introduction but it is better to let one of the characters give the needed information in the dialogue. These facts should not be listed, but brought in naturally. After the short introduction, one page is enough, the story



is plunged into. It is said that Poe began a story of setting with a description; a story of character with a remark made by or about that character; and a story of action with incident. Let us see if this is true:

"Ligeia"--character story begins: "I cannot, for my soul, remember now, when, or even precisely where, I first became acquainted with the Lady Ligeia."

"Fall of the House of Usher"--story of setting begins:

"During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher."

"A Descent into the Maelstrom"--a story of action:

"We had now reached the summit of the loftiest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too much exhausted to speak.

'Not long ago', he said at length, 'and I could have guided you on this route as well as any of my sons; but, about three years past, there happened to me an event such as never happened before to mortal man--'".

There are two ways in which stories may be opened:

1----With Dialogue

Dialogue as a beginning attracts the attention merely thru the fact that everybody is interested in what people say. This dialogue may skillfully bring in the previous happenings, may give the present situation, any present character; but it must

be immediatly explained by means of narration and description. After the dialogue the narration must continue the trend of the story instead of giving a long treatment of former happenings. Due to the fact that this continuance is not an easy thing to accomplish we find that very few stories begin with dialogue. "The Arrival of a True Southern Lady" by Smith is one that does.

"Mistress yer, sah! Come yistidd'y mawnin'.

How Chad beamed all over when this simple statement fell from his lips."

Then follows a description of Chad; then four lines conveying preceding events. The other knowledge necessary to the reader is given as the story progresses.

## 2----Without Dialogue

Kipling often begins a story by stating a general truth which the story is to substantiate. He often does it cleverly, but few others can succeed with it. Some stories tell at the beginning how a story happens to be told, as for instance a group sit around a fire and one of them tells the sotry. This type of beginning is found in "The Upper Berth" by F. Marion Crawford. A group of men sit together over their cigars and wine, when almost all have had their say, Brishame tells the uncanny story of the upper Berth. This is too often an awkward method and is, therefore, not used much.

The best method is to plunge into the story without any preliminaries. Poe always did so. Notice the effective beginning of Poe's "Cask of Amontillado".

"The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as best I could; but when he ventured on insult, I vowed revenge. You, know so well the nature of my soul, will not suppose however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be revenged; this was a point definitely settled--but the very definiteness with which it was resolved, precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity---."

Pure narration as a beginning is interesting but is apt to lack clearness unless combined with description and dialogue. In most of the best short-stories description is used as an introduction as it may give the necessary information and set the tone of the story. Narration and dialogue usually follow immediately after.

#### VI---Setting

The setting of the story may merely be a background for an sub-ordinate to the story as in "The Necklace"; or it may be necessary to the plot and therefore closely bound up with it as in "Among the Corn Rown". The former type of setting may be used to make the story realistic or to picture some region. The latter produces the "local color story". The elements of setting are:

1----Time--The writer should not try to portray the life of a period which he knows nothing about. The characters should be people of the period described and not of some other. Things described in a certain time of the year should be seasonable. Things should not be described as being seen at night when they cannot be observed at that time. "The Fall of the House of



Usher" has the autumn as its time; the setting and the details it brought in--cloudless sky, dismal day, gray coloring--are seasonable.

2----Characters--The characters portrayed should be true to time, to class, to environment, to occupation, etc. In "Among the corn mows" Julia and Rob are typical people of the Middle West.

3----Place--The writer must be familiar with the locality he describes and must describe it vividly. If a certain locality is described, a "local color" story is formed. Harte's "The Luck of Roaring Camp" has for its setting a typical mining camp of the West, and is a local color story.

4----Mood--Poe's stories have a mood as part of the setting, a mood of the horrible, melancholy, or dismal.

5----Occupation--The writer must be familiar with the trade described and must know their trade terms. We see in "The Lotus-Eaters" that the author knew well the thoughts of actors.

#### VIII--Body

The body of the story concerns itself with one principal incident to which all others are subordinate. All incidents should contribute to the development of the plot and increase in intensity until the climax is reached. Take for instance "Mateo Falcone" by Merimee. The main incident is the traitorous action of the son and the punishment meted out by the father. The minor details that develop the main thought are the appearance of the refugee, his bribery of the boy, the ar-

rival of the officers, the second bribery, etc. In "The Thief" by Dostoreski there are several incidents that help to develop the character of the drunkard thief, but this multiplicity detracts from the worth of the story.

Along with unity of incident is unity of time, place, and character. As nearly as possible the incident must take place in one spot or in one locality. In "On the Stairs" the incidents occur in only one spot--on the stairs. The inside of the sick-room, the street are mentioned only as sensed from the stairs. The incidents of "Among the corn rows" take place in the corn-field and at the farm house. The time elapsing in the former is less than twenty-four hours; in the latter about twelve hours. Unity of character will be discussed later.

Some incidents are more striking if suggested in stead of expressed. In "On the Stairs" we see what a great impression is gained by the fact that the author says, "From the room came a clink of money falling into a teapot," instead of elaborately telling that Mrs. Curtis refused to buy the wine necessary to the life of her son; and by the suggestion, "but nothing left the room that night. Nothin that opened the door-----".

#### VIII-Climax

Every story must have an ending, and the first element of the ending is the crisis. This is not always the climax; it is a time of decision, of change; it is the critical moment of the story. The climax may be the turning point, but it is the result of the crisis which must be natural, momentous, and decisive.



Another element of the ending is the suspense. This is a lull in the action when the reader wonders what will happen next, and it must not be too long or interest will cease. suspense may be gained by inserting description ("One the Stairs"), by conversation ("The Upper Bath"), by incidents ("The Black Poodle"), and by analysis of character and emotion between a crisis and the climax. It may also be increased by finding a dramatic situation in which the disaster may be prevented only by one certain happening. In "La Grande Bretiche", for instance, we have a hope that the unknown man in the closet may be saved when the Countess attempts to tear down the wall. The climax comes when she sees her husband behind her and knows that all is lost. Another example of suspense is to be found in "Esther". We think for a moment when Haman pleads with Queen Esther for mercy that he will be saved; but when the king returns, we see his fate.

The climax is the surprise, the peak of interest in the story. It must be brief, intense, and must satisfy the reader and relieve the suspense. A "false" climax tends to break the unity and, if used, should be placed so as not to detract from the main climax or be confused with it. In "The Black Poodle" the acceptance by the Currie's of the false Bingo seems to be a climax but the presence of Travers soon drives the action upward to the real climax.

The reader must not be allowed to feel too sure of what the climax will be though it need not be so great a surprise that the story is a "surprise" one. This type of story lacks in-



terest in the second reading and so cannot attain the highest stage of greatness. The reader may be given a slight hint as to what the climax is to be. If this is done there must be inserted incidents that keep the interest from flagging, delay the climax, and make the reader feel less sure of what the end will be. In "The Black Poodle" we sense the climax, the unearthing of the true Bingo by the false one, when we learn that the latter spent the night in the yard burying bones. By the time the Frenchman arrives, claims the dog, and takes it away, we are not so sure that we have perceived the climax. But the Frenchman returns and we know that we were right.

The climax is usually found near the end of the story and sometimes it is at the very last. The last words of "Marjorie Daw"--"there isn't any colonial mansion on the otherside of the road, there isn't any piazza, there isn't any hammock--there isn't any Marjorie Daw"--is the climax. There is no conclusion save the one left for us to form in our own mind. In "The Necklace", also, the last words--"Why, mine was paste, it was worth at the very most five hundred francs."--forms the climax. The conclusion--the fact that the real necklace was returned, the moral that it could never repay the wasted years--is left to the imagination of the reader to form. This is, perhaps, the most striking position for the climax.

In "The Black Poodle" we see that the climax--"That thrice accursed poodle which I had been insane enough to try to foist upon the colonel must, it seems, have buried his supper the night before very near the spot in which I had Bingo, and

and in his attempts to exhume his bond had brought the remains of my victim to the surface."--is following by a two-page conclusion that gives in summary the following events. In "Esther" we see the climax--"and the king said unto him: 'What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor?' (Haman tells him, thinking he is the one meant). Then the king said to Haman: 'Make haste and take the apparel and the horse as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai, the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all thou hast spoken.'--led up to by a definite rising action and followed by as definite a falling action. This structure would be unusual in a short-story of today.

The climax must be carefully prepared for from the beginning; it must seem inevitable, though unexpected.

#### IX---Conclusion

The conclusion solves the problem, unties the tangle, and winds up the narrative. The conclusion should not be too long, for after the climax the interest has ceased. One paragraph usually suffices and often, as shown above in the case of "Marjorie Daw" and "The Necklace", it is omitted entirely. The latter type of ending is the most common today.

#### X----Character

There should be only one or two main characters and they should be unusual and striking. The few other characters may be more normal, exist merely to aid the action and to emphasize the importance of the main personages. These main characters must be isolated, must have little past or future, and



and few or no relatives. The space is too limited in the short-story to allow for very much narration of the past. This is usually presented in the dialogue and so skilfully that the reader unconsciously secures the needed knowledge. This unity of character is as necessary as the unities of place of incident and of time discussed above. The main character in "Esther" is Esther; in "The Revolt of Mother" is Mother; in "The Necklace" is Mathilde; in "The Old Folks" is the aged man and wife.

Real people are too commonplace to be interesting, so a character in a story must be exaggerated. The most realistic characters are those which are combinations of several real people, the real idealized. "The effect sought in characterization is that of life-likeness. The author may try to mold characters exactly as they are in life (realism); as they should be (idealism); as they might be under extraordinary circumstances (romanticism); as they would be if exaggerated (caricature)."  
-----Esenwein.

There are two kinds of characters, stationary and non-stationary. In the novel we are satisfied with the unusual character, but in the short-story we want a fresh character in action. If the character is stationary, the situation must be unusual. The best short-stories present a developing character at a crisis, at a time when it is being tested, when the real character comes out. We may say, then, that there is one type of person in fiction whose characters do not change, but are disclosed; and another type whose character changes by a battle in the soul, the force being big enough to account for the change. The latter



type is desirable for the short-story.

There are several ways of presenting character: description, conversation, analysis, action, names. We will take up each of these in turn and discuss them.

### 1. Description

Character may be presented by description, either direct description by the author or by the indirect description by another character, or by suggestive description. The character should be gradually unfolded as the story goes along, just as it is in real life. A listing of details fails to arouse the imagination and elaborate description of costume is unnecessary except to portray local color or peculiarity. Description of character is often presented through the speeches of other characters. In "Rip Van Winkle" we have a direct presentation of Rip's character by the author himself and through the actions of Dame Van Winkle toward him. This type of presentation is not prevalent in present day short-stories.

### 2. Conversation

Dialogue may be used to present character. The speech of each character can be made to express his individuality, to express his views on certain subjects, to portray his temperament, etc. Poe and Hawthorne devoted pages to analysis of character, while the present day writers secure the same effect by allowing the character to express himself in dialogue. In "The Lotus-eaters" character is portrayed almost exclusively through conversation. The characters of Victor and Suzanne in "The Proprietor of the Cafe' saint Antoine" are presented in the same way.

### 3. Analysis

Often the action of characters must be analyzed as to motive. This demands a psychological analysis of the actor which must not be too long as it is uninteresting. This analytical type of story appeals to very few people as it requires some thinking and instructs as well as amuses. This method is, therefore, an undesirable one, and when used, should be brief. It is better to let the person express his own character--to let him speak and act for himself. The psychological stories of Henry James, as "The Thief", and of Hawthorne are good examples.

### 4. Action

Action is used in many short-stories to represent character, and, when combined with conversation, is perhaps the best method. We judge a person by what he does to a great extent. This is true in the story as well as in real life. We judge the character of the gambler Oakhurst in "The Outcasts of Poker Flat", of the Count in "La Grande Bretiche", of "Matio Falcone" in the story of that name, by their actions almost entirely.

### 5. Names

The names of fictitious people are important, as they may be used to suggest character. These names must be fitting, for certain names do not fit certain types of character. We would not think of calling an aristocratic lady "Molly Brown"; it would be "Marguerite Browne". A Duke could not be called "Mile" or "Handk". A sissy must be named Algernon Reginald, etc; a strong man, John, Bill, Etc. Names should be definite, not indicated by initials or dashes. No one can be interested

in a Mr. M----, or a Miss B---, or in my friend-----. Names should be interesting, not commonplace. Who ever heard of the heroine's being called Jane Smith or Mary Jones? Rip van Winkle, Algernon Weatherhead, victorine, etc. are suggestive names used in fiction. Names that suggest character are good, such as those of Dickens'.

A questionnaire was sent out to great writers, such as Doyle, Jacobs, Tarkington, Page, Hinchart, Cobb, London, etc. to find out which they thought to be the best short-stories. The ones chosen were those that best portray character.

1. "Lodging for the Night"--Stevenson  
"The Outcasts of Poker Flat"--Bret Harte
2. "The Man who would be King"--Kipling  
"The Brushwood Boy"  
"Without benefit of Clergy"  
"Heart of Darkness"--Conrad  
"A Municipal Report"--~~O'Henry~~ O'Henry
3. "A Christmas Carol"--Dickens  
"The Gold Bug"--Poe  
"The Fall of the House of Usher"--Poe  
"The Luck of Moaring Camp"--Bret Harte  
"The Belled Buzzard"--Cobb

These stories are arranged in the descending order of preference. Poe is placed last because of his lack of interest in people, and Hawthorne omitted because he was too interested in the conscience and therefore unpopular. (Baker records the questionnaire)



## XI---Dialogue

Good conversation is essential to the short-story and there have been few good ones without it. The lighter the story, the more conversation used. Stories vary from an average of 10% conversation to 60%. Conversation may reveal character, bring out incidents, convey setting, develop plot, give variety, etc.

The dialogue of the short-story cannot be as lengthy as that of the novel; it must be more condensed. The speech of everyday life is used, but it is selected and relevant to the story. Each character should have his own individual way of talking, and also must speak the language of his class. The farmer, the professor, the street urchin, all speak a different type of English. A variety of substitutes for "said" should be employed to avoid monotony. Dialect may be introduced to suggest "local color", but introduce it must be intelligible and not used excessively.

Good dialogue is found in "The Dolly Dialogues" by Hope. The "Uncle Remus" stories and those of Page are good dialect stories.

## XII--Style

Many people think style not essential to a good short-story. Baker thinks that this attitude of Americans is lowering the literary tastes of the American people. He says, "The English people seem to have a greater reverence for style than do the Americans, and the motto, 'American subjects for American readers', helps to keep it so. Jack London and Gouverneur Morris

have a good English style in spots, but such writers as Gene Stratton Porter, Rupert Hughes, Harold Bell Wright, etc. cannot compare with Joseph Conrad, John Galsworthy, and Kipling."

The short-story is so short that it must be highly polished. Commonplaces are subordinated by being expressed in ordinary language or by leaving them out entirely. "Fine writing is the attempt by those who think common things vulgar to express them in stilted language instead of calling them real names."

Poetry should not be inserted in the dialogue as ordinary people do not quote it and are not interested in it. Figures of speech should be limited, and foreign words eliminated save where there is no English equivalent to express the thought. Certain characters may use these foreign words, however, to give local color. Slang, also, may be used by certain characters, but only pure English is allowed in the indirect discourse. The short, the periodic, and the exclamatory sentence seem to be little used. The best sentence structure is the simple declarative sentence, loose, and of medium length. Unnecessary words and ideas are left out so as to save the limited space and to hurry the action.

The most important element of the style is personality. Each writer has a style of his own and will impress his individuality on everything he writes and must be natural, be himself and not an imitator.

#### XIII-The Title

The first duty of the title is to advertise the story.

A poor title usually indicates a poor story; and a good title draws a host of readers. A good story with a poor title is not enjoyed as much as a poor story with a good title. A good title usually characterizes the story and gives some hint of what is to come. The editors realize this advertising value and rarely look into a manuscript with a poor title.

Titles to be avoided are:

1. Commonplace

"A Funny Incident"

2. General

"Happy Days"

3. Lengthy

"The Exciting Adventures of Captain Jones and his Merry Crew".

4. Abstract

"Revenge"

5. Trite

"As you like it"

6. Names of characters (when names are uninteresting and commonplace

"Many Brown"

Qualities of good titles:

1. Brevity

"The Coward" "The Old Folds"

2. suggestion--(should suggest what is to happen, but not to reveal it)

"The Revolt of Mother"



3. Originality

"The Leuk of Roaring Camp"

4. Names (when novel and attractive)

"Ligeia" "Marjorie Daw"

5. Euphony

"The man who would be King"

KINDS OF SHORT-STORIES PRINTED BY THE MAGAZINES

Most American magazines try to occupy a particular, individual field. Each one has a peculiar tone which it observes in selecting stories to print. Thus a story may be rejected by one magazine because it is not the kind they print, and be accepted by another which used that type of story.

The Cosmopolitan prints "sex stories", stories that deal with passion, not love. Rupert Hughes, who ceased to be an artist in order to make money, is its typical writer.

The Saturday Evening Post uses stories that deal with American business and American humor, and is essentially edited for men. It deals a great deal with the West, the spirit of which is most typically American.

The All-Story Weekly, The Popular and Adventure print clean stories about cowboys--men that do things.

The detective story, as Reeve's "Craig Kennedy" tales and the "Sherlock Holmes" stories attract. The love story, when true and unsentimental, appeals to every one. Purely sentimental, ~~appeals-to-every~~ short-stories are printed by The Ladies Home Journal; Pictorial Review, and Good Housekeeping.

It is not in the high priced magazines--Harper's, Atlantic, Scribner's, Century--that we always find the best fiction. Many of the best writers have deserted them for the cheaper magazines that have larger circulations and pay better.

## On The Stairs

### Story:

1. The house had been "genteel". When trade was prospering in the East end, and the ship-fitter or blockmaker thought it no shame to live in the parish where his workshop lay, such a master lived here. Now, it was tall, solid, well-bricked, ugly house, grimy and paintless in the joinery, cracked and patched in the windows; where the front door stood open all day long; and the womankind sat on the steps, <sup>(2)</sup> talking of sickness and death and the cost of things; and treacherous holes lurked in the carpet of road-soil on the stairs and in the passage. For when eight families live in a house, nobody buys a door-mat, and the streets are always muddy. It smelt, too, of many things, none of them pleasant (one was fried fish); but for all that it was not a slum.

### Analysis

1. Short introductory paragraph of description to give the setting. This grimy setting is a fitting background for the characters.

2. Introduces the things that occupy the minds of these people and thus lays foundation for the story.

Three flights up, a gaunt woman stayed on her way to <sup>(4)</sup> listen at a door which, opening, let out a warm, fetid waft from a close sick-room. A bent and tottering woman stood on the threshold, holding the door behind her.

### Analysis--

4. Gives place where story takes place. Everything



happens "on the stairs".

3. Straightforward plunge into the story.

5&6

"An' is 'e no better now, Mrs. Curtis?" the gaunt woman asked, with a nod at the opening.

The old woman shook her head, and pulled the door closer. Her jaw waggled loosely in her withered chaps; "Nor won't be; till 'e's gone." Then after a certain pause: 'E's goin'" she said.

5

5Don't doctor give no 'ope?"

6

"Lor' bless ye, I don't want to ast no doctors," Mrs. Curtis replied, with somethin not unlike a chuckle." I've seed too many on 'em. The boy's a-goin' fast; I can see that. An' then"--she gave the handle another tug, and whispered-- "he's been called." She nodded again. "Three seprit knocks at the bed-head las' night; and I know what that means!"

The gaunt woman raised her brows, and nodded. "Ah, well," she said, "we all on us comes to it some day, sooner or later. An' it's often a 'appy release."

The two looked into space beyond each other, the elder with a nod and a croak. Presently the other pursued; "'E's been a very good son, aintt he?"

#### Analysis:

5. Dialogue is in language of these poorer people. It is clear, natural, and appropriate.

6. Complication

7. This and other speeches of Mrs. Curtis give her character better than do the remarks of author. We see her as

one imbued with the poor persons desire for "respectable funerals" and superstitions.

"Ay, ay, well enough son to me," responded the old woman, a little <sup>7</sup> peevishly; "an' I'll 'ave 'em put away decent, though there's on'y the union for me after. I can do that, thank Gawd!" she added, meditatively, as chin on fist she stared into the thickening dark over the stairs.

7. The word "peevishly" gives character.

8. Complications

"When I lost my pore 'usband," said the gaunt woman, with a certain brightening, "I give 'im a 'ansome funeral. 'E was a Oddfeller, 'an I got twelve pound. I 'ad a oad caufin an' a open 'earse. There was a kerridge for the fam'ly an' one for 'is mates--two 'orses each, an feathers, an' mutes; an' it went the furthest way round to the cimitry. 'Wotever 'appens, Mrs. Manders', says the undertaker, 'wou'll feel as you've treated 'im proper; nobody can't reproach you over that.' An' they couldn't. 'E was a good 'usband to me, an' I buried 'im respectable."

9. Good local color in this speech.

gives the customs of the very poor in the city.

The gaunt woman exalted. The old, old story of Manders's funeral fell upon the other one's ears with a freshened interest and she mumbled her gums ruminantly. "Bob'll 'ave a 'ansome buryin', too," she said. "I can make it up, with the insurance money, an' this, an' that. On'y I dunn about mutes. <sup>10</sup> It's a expense."

9

In the East End, when a woman has not enough money to buy a thing much desired, she does not say so in plain words; she says the thing is an "expence", or a "great expence." It means the same thing, but it sounds better. Mrs. Curtis had reckoned her resources, and found that mutes would be an "expence". At a cheap funeral mutes cost half-a-sovereign and their liquor. Mrs. Manders said as much.

10. Complication 3

91 Notice the pure English used in the indirect discourse, whereas dialect is used in the dialogue.

"Yus, yus, 'arf-a-sovereign," the old woman assented.

Within, the sick man feebly beat the floor with a stick. "I'm a-comin'," she cried shrilly; "yus, 'arf-a-sovereign, but it's a lot, an' <sup>10</sup> I don't see 'ow I'm to do it--not at present." She reached for the door-handle again, but stopped and added by afterthought, "unless I don't 'ave no ploods."

11 11. Problem to be solved.

12. Possible solution.

"It 'ud be a pity not to 'ave ploods. I 'ad--"

There were footsteps on the stairs: then a stumble and a testy word. Mrs. Curtis peered over into the gathering dark. "Is it the doctor, sir?" she asked. It was the doctor's assistant; and Mrs. Manders tramped up to the next landing as the door of the sick-room took him in.

13

For five minutes the stairs were darker than ever. Then



the assistant, a very young man, came out again, followed by the old woman with a candle. Mrs. Manders listened in the upper dark. "He's sinking fast," said the assistant. <sup>14</sup> "He must have a stimulat. Dr. Mansell ordered port wine. Where is it?" Mrs. Curtis mumbled dolorously. "I tell you he must have it," he averred with unprofessional emphasis (his qualification was only a month old). "The man can't take solid food and his strength must be kept up somehow. Another day may make all the difference. Is it because you can't afford it?"

13. Notice nothing in sick-room described, only as suggested by sound, dialogue, etc., all action "on the stairs".

14. complication number 4.

"It's a expense--sich a expense, doctor," the old woman pleaded. An' wot with arf-pints o' milk an'--." She grew inarticulate, and mumbled dismally.

"But he must have it, Mrs. Curtis, if it's your last shilling: it's the only way. If you mean you absolutely haven't the money--"and he paused a little awkwardly. <sup>15</sup> He was not a wealthy young man, --wealthy young men do not devil for East End doctors, --but he was conscious of a certain haul of sicpences at nap the night before; and, being inexperienced, he did not foresee the career of persecution whereon he was entering at his own expense and of his own motion. He produced five shillings: "If you absolutely haven't the money, why--take this, and get a bottle--good: not at a public house. But mind, at once. He should have had it before."