THE PROBLEM OF THE ARTIST IN SOCIETY:

HAWTHORNE, JAMES, AND HEMINGWAY

APPROVED:

Lee W. Miller
Major Professor

Minor Professor

E. S. Clifton
Director of the Department of English

Robert B. Toulouse
Dean of the Graduate School
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By

Jane K. Beggs, B. A.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, and Ernest Hemingway are three American authors of fiction, writing in consecutive periods of time, who bear similarities in their thematic materials, their methods of gathering subject matter for their works, and their expatriotism. Although others--Alexander Cowie, T. S. Eliot, Lyon N. Richardson, Carlos Baker--have noted the relationship of the writings of Hawthorne and James and that of James and Hemingway, apparently no one has made a written study establishing the relationship of the three authors to one another. The most apparent and significant similarity is in their use of the artist as thematic material.

A major theme common to Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway is the problem of the artist in society. Hawthorne is the first American writer of standing to initiate the use of the subject as thematic material; he explores the artistic and psychological problems of four different kinds of artists--writer, painter, sculptor, and mechanical genius. James, though he writes of the painter and sculptor also, is primarily concerned with the artist as writer, and he probes
into the problem with greater depth and complexity. Hemingway, under the hard-boiled exterior of his stories, also reflects a vital concern for the artist as writer.

All show that because of his idealistic nature, the artist is in constant conflict with society, which is of a materialistic nature. The artist is confronted with a major choice. He can strive to attain the rewards of art at the cost of possible isolation from society, rejection by society, and loss of material pleasures, or he can seek the material pleasures of society at the expense of relinquishing his art completely or sacrificing the quality of it. The problem of the artist in society includes the artist's concept of art, the artist's concept of himself as artist, and the artist's conflict with himself as a member of a materialistic society. The purpose of this thesis is to trace the views of Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway concerning the problem of the artist in their shorter fiction and to compare and contrast the different aspects of the problem.

The personal concern of Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway as artists in conflict with American society seems to be reflected in the fact of their expatriotism. Both Hawthorne and James felt the limitations of America as material for writers of fiction. Both regretted the absence of historical tradition and a developed literary taste in America. In his preface to The Marble Faun, which has its setting in Italy,
Hawthorne expressed his own difficulty of using America for writing material.

No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land. It will be long, I trust, before romance writers may find congenial and easily handled themes, either in the annals of our stalwart republic, or in any characteristic and probable events of our individual lives. Romance and poetry, ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers, need ruin to make them grow.¹

James voiced a similar complaint in his study of Hawthorne.

History, as yet, has left in the United States but so thin and impalpable a deposit of local color that we very soon touch the hard substratum of nature; and nature herself, in the Western World, has the peculiarity of seeming rather crude and immature. . . . A large juvenility is stamped on the face of things, and in the vividness of the present, the past, which died so young and had time to produce so little, attracts but scanty attention.²

In a later passage of the same work, James comments on the disinterest in literature in America.

It is not too much to say that even to the present day it is a considerable discomfort in the United States not to be "in business." The young man who attempts to launch himself in a career that does not belong to the so-called practical order; the young man who has not, in a word, an office in the business quarter of the town, with his name painted on the door, has but a limited place in the social system, finds no particular bough to perch upon.³

³Ibid., p. 30.
Hawthorne, accepting a consulship in England, availed himself of the opportunities for writing and gathering materials there and later in Italy before returning to America. James, after living in England for many years and becoming disillusioned with America, renounced his American citizenship shortly before his death. Hemingway went to Europe as a journalist-writer and sought the company of the young American writers gathered in Paris, where he first began to obtain American recognition as a writer. Readers of these authors' works are familiar with the foreign settings they use, but it is significant to note that though these men may be classed as temporary or permanent expatriots, all three celebrate Americans as heroes in their works.

As a preliminary background against which to demonstrate James's more complex treatment and analysis of the Hawthornian theme of the problems of the artist, it may be best first to note the general similarities of Henry James and Hawthorne. James, who almost completely neglected the early American writers other than Hawthorne, found in Hawthorne a source of both technical inspiration and ideas. It is significant that he made a full-length study of Hawthorne in 1879 and that he often employed similar themes, materials, and methods of development. Both felt the importance of impressions rather than the plain fact, and both at times gave prolonged emphasis to one phase of action. Like Hawthorne, James also used
in his fiction the spiritual domination of one character by another, and his sinister villains set against unexplored evil backgrounds resemble those of Hawthorne.⁴ Both writers had a strong sense of the Past, which Hawthorne used for subject matter in his writing because of his barren Present and which James discovered to lend atmosphere to his own writing. In his study of Hawthorne, James says that the fine thing in Hawthorne was his caring for and becoming familiar with the deeper psychology, which James also reveals in his works. The two authors, sensitive to situation, grasped character through the relation of two or more people to each other, and both of them established solid atmospheres in their works. James's last novel, The Sense of the Past, seems to reflect the influence of and sympathy with Hawthorne.⁵

Though one may not immediately realize the connections between James and Hemingway, there are definite similarities, as Carlos Baker points out in Hemingway: The Writer as Artist, and as observant readers have probably noticed. Most important in this study, of course, is the fact that Hemingway has used three of the themes that interested James most:


the artist in society, the American in Europe, and the person who becomes obsessed by the memory of his past life. Like James, Hemingway establishes centers of revelation and projects his stories as though he were on a journey of discovery. Dialogue is very much alike; the extraction of a Jamesian conversation from its elaborate framework reveals the same manner of conducting dialogue that Hemingway uses, especially the repetition of key words and phrases. These similarities are not surprising when one realizes that Hemingway selected James's works, among those including only a few American authors, to study as examples of good writing and to recommend to apprentice writers.6

The relationship of James to Hawthorne and of Hemingway to James certainly indicates the close literary relationship of the three writers. This development makes it seem only natural that three such self-conscious artists would have recourse to similar interests and would employ in their writings common themes, ideas, and methods.

A method employed by all three authors for subject matter is the use of the "germ" of an idea, as James called it. Both Hawthorne and James kept notebooks in which they recorded fragments of ideas or plots, and from these "germs" they devised tales of their own imaginations. They could

use only the "germ," not the whole idea, for it was necessary that they be able to develop their own stories. Though Hemingway evidently does not keep a notebook for the same purpose, he does draw upon his own experiences for the "germs" of his stories. Hemingway stresses the importance of telling the truth, and he believes that he can accomplish this means by inventing on the basis of carefully observed experiences.

This study is limited to the short stories of Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway. The development of their concepts of the problems facing the artist can be more easily and more accurately traced in the shorter, and usually the earlier, fiction of all three writers. In addition, the shorter fiction demands more attention than it usually receives.

The procedure of treating the "problem of the artist in society" will involve a separate survey of the pertinent short stories of each author and a study of the stories individually. The review of each short story will include comment on the "germs" for the stories (if known), a portrait of the artist, an analysis of the basic theme and its subordinate parts, and interpretive character sketches of the individual members of society. The extent of character sketches will depend on the relative significance of the

8Baker, op. cit., p. 64.
characters in the stories, and the characterizations will concern primarily the attitudes and reactions of the representative members of society toward the artist. Society in general will be portrayed when its role is important in the story. After each story there will be a summary of the major points made relating to the artist's problem and, at the end of the chapter, a conclusion concerning the author's concepts of the artist's problem. Similarities between artists will be pointed out wherever possible, and those deserving greater attention will be treated in detail. The concluding chapter of the thesis will present a summary of the similarities and some differences in the views of Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway concerning the problems of the artist in society.

In this area sources of information, especially good ones, are greatly limited. The few periodical sources of any value have been incorporated into books, and the books, in most cases, supply only superficial treatments. The best sources seem to be the stories themselves. There are, however, a few critical works which merit special attention.

For Hawthorne the best reference work is Richard Harter Fogle's "The World and the Artist: A Study of Hawthorne's 'The Artist of the Beautiful'" in the Tulane Studies in English. This very thorough study explores the meaning of the tale as allegory by examining a series of oppositions: Warland's search for the beautiful versus the utilitarian
self-interest of society, idealism versus materialism, time and eternity, understanding and imagination, mechanical and organic. The study next deals with the human dimension, the complexity of characters, and compares the characters with other Hawthorne characters. Fogle's work is especially helpful as background reference for the study of Hawthorne's major short story about the artist, "The Artist of the Beautiful."

Carlos Baker's *Hemingway: The Writer as Artist* is particularly important here for its extended treatment of the short story, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." Baker discusses the origin of the story, the predicament of the artist, the parallels between the protagonist and Hemingway and between this story and James's "The Lesson of the Master," the operation of natural symbols, and an interpretation of the epigraph of the story.

There are no good references for the study of the short stories of James. The best sources are the stories themselves.
CHAPTER II

HAUThORNE

Hawthorne's four stories concerning the problem of the artist are "The Devil in Manuscript," "The Prophetic Pictures," "Drowne's Wooden Image," and "The Artist of the Beautiful." Though the exact dates of the stories are relatively unimportant and cannot be definitely ascertained because of Hawthorne's failure to publish his stories always in the order of his having written them, this is generally agreed to be the chronological order of these four. This arrangement shows a progressive development of Hawthorne's ideas from his first indication of concern for the artist and his problem in "The Devil in Manuscript" to his thorough treatment in "The Artist of the Beautiful."

In each short story Hawthorne treats an artist in a different medium, but all four artists incur similar problems. In "The Devil in Manuscript" Hawthorne treats the artist as writer versus a society including unsympathetic publishers and the insincere friend. "The Prophetic Pictures" deals with the artist as demoniac painter versus a very religious society, and "Drowne's Wooden Image" portrays the artist as woodcarver (sculptor) versus a society of
mediocre taste in art and other artists. "The Artist of the Beautiful" concerns the artist as mechanical genius in opposition to a materialistic and utilitarian society.

Hawthorne's first tale treating of the relationship of the artist and society is "The Devil in Manuscript." In all probability, Hawthorne based the story on his own experience as a struggling, unrecognized young author. "Oberon," the name of the protagonist in the tale, was a name he himself used during his college days and sometimes in his personal letters. Frustrated and disillusioned after several failures in attempts to gain publication of his early works, Hawthorne burned many of his papers. It is highly conceivable that this personal incident led Hawthorne to compose the tale in which he vents his bitterness toward the unsympathetic publishers.

"The Devil in Manuscript" is an "energetic parable of the artist as incendiary, getting revenge on an indifferent society by literally 'setting it on fire.'"¹ Society here is represented by the solitary visitor, but the major impression is created by the dialogue of Oberon, the frustrated writer.

Oberon conceives that he "has succeeded in raising the 'fiend' out of old New England demonology and filled his

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writings with his presence." This, he concludes, is the root of all his trouble. Outwardly posing as a student of law, inwardly he nourishes the passion to become a celebrated writer. The publishers fail to co-operate; they reject his manuscripts with very uncomplimentary answers, politely give a number of excuses for not being bothered, and offer to publish his works only on certain almost impossible conditions. The only publisher who has consented even to read them has criticized the tales so harshly that the insult has permanently injured the soul of the author. With great bitterness Oberon declares the whole group of publishers, with one exception, to be dishonest. These critics are so unfair "that no American publisher will meddle with an American work,—seldom if by a known writer, and never if by a new one,—unless at the writer's risk." The publishers' denial of the worth of his manuscript leads Oberon to become nauseated at the mere sight of the papers and to believe them bewitched by a devil.

Oberon's friend represents a more sympathetic element of society. His primary purpose is to act as a sounding board for the lamentations of his old friend, but he also betrays himself as an opposing force. Being an intimate

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2 Ibid.
3 Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Complete Writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1900), V, 243.
friend, the visitor extends sympathy, acquiescence, and flattery. He is not wholly sincere, for when Oberon wishes the manuscripts out of sight, the friend silently agrees. In fact, he holds a secret contempt for Oberon, for he describes the writer as "one of those gifted youths who cultivate poetry and the belles-lettres, and call themselves students at law," and he believes that the best place for the tales is in the fire. Even so, the visitor does confess the excellency of many passages in the stories if not that of the tales in entirety, and he perceives the great loss of the potential value if not the immediate value of the tales about to be destroyed. Like Annie Hovenden in "The Artist of the Beautiful," the friend has deep enough insight to deceive Oberon into believing him a truly sympathetic person but not deep enough to rid himself of the scorn he feels for the artistic nature.

The young writer has subjected himself to his work, and his desire to become successful has become a consuming passion which, because of the tribulations he has encountered, eats away at his senses. He laments his predicament by saying:

You cannot conceive what an effect the composition of these tales has had on me. I have become ambitious of a bubble, and careless of solid reputation. I am surrounding myself with shadows, which bewilder me, by

Ibid., p. 239.
aping the realities of life. They have drawn me aside from the beaten path of the world, and led me into a strange sort of solitude,—a solitude in the midst of men,—where nobody wishes for what I do, nor thinks nor feels as I do. The tales have done all this. When they are ashes, perhaps I shall be as I was before they had existence.  

Disillusioned in his writing ability, Oberon prepares to burn the tales to free himself of his obsession but cannot help reminiscing over the tales of his imagination and the moods in which he wrote them. The influence of public opinion is greater than his persistence, and he surrenders his aspirations to escape being a condemned author. He summarizes his nightmare in the following passage:

To undergo sneers, taunts, abuse, and cold neglect, and faint praise, bestowed for pity's sake, against the giver's conscience! A hissing and a laughing-stock to my own traitorous thoughts! An outlaw from the protection of the grave,—one whose ashes every careless foot might spurn, unhonored in life, and remembered scornfully in death!

In a fit of madness he burns the manuscripts, and, believing himself to be rid of the "devil," he mournfully resigns himself to obscurity. The flames of the fire set the town afire, and Oberon triumphs in his achieving recognition by his tales even though fame has not come in the way he has anticipated.

In this story Hawthorne makes a slight comparison of creative art to human birth, a comparison which he uses again in "Drowne's Wooden Image" and which Henry James employs in

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5Ibid., p. 242.  
6Ibid., p. 247.
"The Next Time." The artist conceives the idea in his mind, and he labors and suffers as the idea develops and is born into a physical form. Hawthorne, comparing the unsuccessful tales of Oberon to imperfectly born children, describes Oberon's attitude toward his work: "He drew the tales toward him, with a mixture of natural affection and natural disgust, like a father taking a deformed infant into his arms."\(^7\)

After the writer has burned his papers, he laments his deliberate act of ending his creativity: "There, too, I sacrificed the unborn children of my mind."\(^8\)

In this story the artistic impulse is "an enslaving, destructive, illicit power,"\(^9\) as contrasted to the pure, redeeming nature of the artistic impulse of Owen Warland in "The Artist of the Beautiful." Like Warland, Oberon is rejected by society; however, Oberon, unlike Warland, is too weak to uphold his ideals in the face of opposition. The writer's situation is particularly unfortunate since he is being destroyed by the very people who have the power to save him—the unsympathetic publishers, who either cannot or will not recognize the worth of an American author. Oberon's interest in his art inevitably isolates him from society, as it also isolates Warland, for his time must be devoted to his

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\(^7\)Ibid., p. 244.  
\(^8\)Ibid., p. 249.  
\(^9\)Von Abele, op. cit., p. 10.
work, not to society. The refusal of the publishers even to consider his stories for publication heightens the writer's awareness of his isolation and increases his frustration. In his disillusionment the writer fails to see any possible reward for persisting in his art and foresees only the condemnation that would surely be his if he continued the work that society could not appreciate.

"The Devil in Manuscript" is an early study by Hawthorne of the "problem of the artist," preceding by ten years or more the story "The Artist of the Beautiful," which seems a more thoughtful, deeper study, ending on a more hopeful note. The artist in the latter story is beset by similar problems—conflict with society, disillusionment and frustration, lack of sympathy and understanding, isolation. However, in "The Artist of the Beautiful" Hawthorne, changing his viewpoint displayed in "The Devil in Manuscript," shows that the artist, by suffering and working, does succeed and that there are rewards.

Hawthorne next combines his interest in the artist and his concern with the Unpardonable Sin to produce "The Prophetic Pictures." The "germ," to use James's word, of "The Prophetic Pictures" is an anecdote about Gilbert Stuart in Dunlap's History of the Arts of Design. With the insight of genius, according to the story, Stuart had painted insanity into the portrait of Lord Mulgrave's brother, General Phipps.
Much later in India Phipps actually went mad and cut his own throat. 10

"The Prophetic Pictures" gives a picture of society much like the one in "Drowne's Wooden Image," a suspicious and deeply religious society, but it portrays an artist very different from any of the others in these stories of Hawthorne. The artist is a painter who exploits his human subjects to satisfy his artistic impulse despite the possible consequences to other people.

Aware of the painter's vast store of varied knowledge, the people in the community are awe-stricken by him, for they find it a rare talent in an artist to know so much about so many subjects. Though unable to appreciate the painter's technical skill, the people can yet admire the inner life which they detect in the portraits. However, they, like others who cannot comprehend the depths of the artist, cannot resist mingling prejudice with their admiration.

Some deem it an offence against the Mosaic law, and even a presumptuous mockery of the Creator, to bring into existence such lively images of his creatures. Others, frightened at the art which can raise phantoms at will, and keep the form of the dead among the living, are inclined to consider the painter as a magician, or perhaps the famous Black Man, of old witch times, plotting mischief in a new guise. 11


11Hawthorne, op. cit., I, 227.
The painter is a European who has learned everything that formal art can teach him and has come to primitive, picturesque America to absorb the lessons of nature and to commit to canvas the untainted images of the colonists. His purpose is not simply to paint anybody but to capture the countenances that suggest "anything uncommon, in thought, sentiment, or experience." Money is of no importance to him when he can satisfy his aspirations. Besides the pleasure he derives from painting the portraits, he has equal enjoyment in observing the effects of his paintings upon the uneducated sitters. He paints exactly what he sees, and he declares:

The artist—the true artist—must look beneath the exterior. It is his gift—his proudest, but often a melancholy one—to see the inmost soul, and, by a power indefinable even to himself, to make it glow or darken upon the canvas, in glances that express the thought and sentiment of years.

To paint the human form and imbue it with his genius is his sole passion, and nothing else concerns him if it be not associated with his purpose. Gentle and upright, he "has divorced himself, emotionally, from his human heritage." He has the ability not only to see into the characters of other people but even to prophesy their futures, yet he lacks

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12 Ibid., p. 226.  
13 Ibid., p. 236.  
insight into his own deranged mind. As a matter of fact, the painter's complete dedication to his art has put him on the verge of insanity and upset the balance in his life.\textsuperscript{15} He is "oblivious to his own evil instincts because his ego overrules all responsibility to the community; for the image he surveys is, after all, a communal symbol whose ethical purpose eludes him."\textsuperscript{16}

The painter's passion may best be described by the plot of the story. When two young lovers about to be married request their portraits done, the painter complies because he observes a unique effect to be wrought upon canvas. Painting the two pictures at the same time, he works into them and into a sketch the outcome of the young man's hidden trait of insanity, which the wise are able to detect upon close scrutiny of the finished work. Failing to heed the warning, the young lady enters into a marriage made miserable by her knowledge manifested by the pictures, and the artist, obsessed with the desire to know the outcome of his prophecy, arrives just in time to save the life of the girl.

"The Prophetic Pictures" contrasts the attitudes of artist and society. Society considers it a great evil for one to separate himself from the feelings common to mankind.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15}Von Abele, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{16}Stein, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 74.
\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}
This is the kind of evil the artist exhibits in painting the results of his psychological insight into the portraits. By imitating the human form with psychological insight, the painter runs the "risk of violating the human heart, of losing the respect for the sanctity of the human spirit."\textsuperscript{18} In other words, the artist, using his extraordinary powers, approaches the Unpardonable Sin. By isolating himself from society and letting the mind dwell on one ambition only, the artist also runs the risk of becoming insane. Hawthorne, referring to the painter, states:

"It is not good for man to cherish a solitary ambition. Unless there be those around him by whose example he may regulate himself, his thoughts, desires, and hopes will become extravagant, and he the semblance, perhaps the reality, of a madman."\textsuperscript{19}

This Puritanical society is intolerant of art, for it fears that the artist assumes too much of God's privilege,\textsuperscript{20} and it has grave suspicions about anyone who can capture the beautiful in painting. Similar attitudes of the artist and his society are found in James's "The Author of Beltraffio."

Hawthorne's third short story, "Drowne's Wooden Image," presents the artist against a superstitious, mediocre society. However, it does not deal so much with the problems of


\textsuperscript{19}Hawthorne, op. cit., I, 242-243.

\textsuperscript{20}Stein, op. cit., p. 74.
the artist in relation to society as it does simply with his creative problems.

Drowne, a young woodcarver well known for the figure-heads he carves for ships, produces works that are very pleasing to the common, untrained eye, but to the artistic eye they are, more or less, stereotypes.

It must be confessed that a family likeness pervaded these respectable progeny of Drowne's skill; that the benign countenance of the king resembled those of his subjects, and that Miss Peggy Hobart, the merchant's daughter, bore a remarkable similitude to Britannia, Victory, and other ladies of the allegoric sisterhood; and, finally, that they all had a kind of wooden aspect which proved an intimate relationship with the unshaped blocks of timber in the carver's workshop. 21

The major element of the artist's work is missing; there is no life, spirit, warmth—that without which the woodcarver is not an artist but only an artisan. Drowne, however, is well content because he is ignorant of the lack of this necessary quality; on the contrary, though modest, he is "conscious of eminence in his art." 22

Love is the powerful force that transforms Drowne from the woodcarver as mere copyist to the woodcarver as artist. While he is carving a figure-head in the likeness of a young lady, he falls in love with the girl, and under the influence of her attraction he is able to capture that missing essence and to instill it into his work. The achievement of the ideal

21 Hawthorne, op. cit., V, 91. 22 Ibid., p. 88.
converts the young man into another Pygmalion, so great is the purity of affection for his creation. At the same time he becomes cognizant of the deficiency in his previous models, and with disgust Drowne, using the comparison of art with human birth, announces that without that one element his works are "no better than worthless abortions. There is the same difference between them and the works of an inspired artist as between a signpost daub and one of a painter's best pictures." 23 Under this spell he has the ability to distinguish between real praise and false flattery. Like the butterfly in "The Artist of the Beautiful," the wooden image would bring its maker a small fortune, but he has no interest in the material value. The artist, interested only in the right effect, is disdainful of the formal rules of sculpture and the advice of men; to the suggestions of Copley, the painter, Drowne replies:

Let others do what they may with marble, and adopt what rules they choose. If I can produce my desired effect by painted wood, those rules are not for me, and I have a right to disregard them. 24

Just as it is by falling in love that Drowne rises to the heights of his artistic aspirations, so it is by becoming disappointed in love that he loses that perception and along with it the power even to recognize his own work or to

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23 Ibid., p. 95.  
24 Ibid., p. 99.
duplicate that same quality ever again. He returns to the state of the mechanical carver.

The attitude of society toward Drowne and his work is a mixture of innocent admiration and fear by ignorance. The works of Drowne have been admired for their surface quality since his boyhood, and his ornamental works have been in great demand by the public, who cannot distinguish between the products of true art and those of pseudo-art. The effect of the embodiment of spirit into the wooden figure is to throw many people into a state of fear, for this is a community where fear is a natural result of incomprehension. In ignorance some believe that Drowne is insane; others, that he has plotted with the Devil. In short, so long as Drowne is inspired, society, suspicious of inspiration,\(^{25}\) withdraws and speculates from a distance, and he remains in a state of isolation until he descends to the level of the common world.

Even artists sometimes look with disfavor upon other artists. The painter with the permanent artistic impulse, Copley, immediately recognizes the potential ability of the carver and the flaw that marks the wooden images as artistic failures. Copley is impatient at Drowne's inability to attain and retain the artistic inspiration, and he is slightly contemptuous toward Drowne, whom the painter dubs "a

\(^{25}\)Stein, op. cit., p. 96.
modern Pygmalion in the person of a Yankee mechanic." 26

Added to Copley's unfavorable feeling for the carver is the
further disdain which Copley feels when the carver openly
refutes the painter's advice of not painting the image.
Though an artist, Copley is also a materialist who esteems
the financial value of art as well as the aesthetic. Copley
believes genius, especially in this case, to be the product
of insanity. Finally, Copley, being of the artistic tempera-
ment himself, is the only member of society with deep enough
insight to realize that the love for a woman has inspired
Drowne's genius and transformed him into an artist for a
brief time.

Like Owen Warland, Drowne eventually achieves a physical
embodiment of the beautiful, too; but unlike the mechanical
genius, the woodcarver is too frail spiritually to retain it
without the support of love. He "neglects to hold in mind
the reality of the idea to which he has given concrete
form." 27 Here Hawthorne seems to emphasize not only the
importance but the necessity of love to the artist.

As long as the artist remains within bounds of the com-
prehension of the mediocre society, he is accepted; but when
he transcends the level of the ordinary, society rejects him.
It is a common thing for human beings to be suspicious of

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26 Hawthorne, op. cit., v, 96.

27 Stein, op. cit., p. 96.
that which they do not understand. Even other artists, who should feel a close relationship with the members of their group, often prove to be unsympathetic, scornful, and jealous.

Hawthorne's most outstanding short story concerning the problem of the artist is "The Artist of the Beautiful," in which the artist is a young watchmaker absorbed in making a mechanical butterfly and imbuing it with spirituality. The artist is hindered in his work by a materialistic and utilitarian society. Owen Warland, the artist-idealistic, is opposed by society in general and by three major representatives of that society--Annie Hovenden, the feminine representative of the common world; Robert Danforth, the blacksmith and "artist" on the utilitarian plane only; and Peter Hovenden, the retired watchmaker and cold materialist.

Because of his "delicate ingenuity" and impracticality, Owen Warland has been scorned by society from his early childhood. As a very young boy he had carved wooden articles into flowers and birds, representatives of the finest beauty in nature. Observers, amazed at his "love of the beautiful" and his absorbed interest in the minute and the mechanical, surmised at times that he was searching for the "hidden mysteries of mechanism." An attempt at transferring Owen's interest toward useful purposes had ended in failure, for he, having a "microscopic" mind which the world could not
appreciate, was horrified by the size and force of ordinary machines. Failing to comprehend Warland's genius and fearing to have him become a useless sculptor or the like, his relatives had seen "nothing better to be done—as perhaps there was not—than to bind him apprentice to a watchmaker, hoping that his strange ingenuity might thus be regulated and put to utilitarian purposes."28

Opinions already having been formed as to the worthlessness of Owen Warland in the material world, society stands eager to pounce on the artistic watchmaker as soon as the opportunity arrives. After Owen has assumed command over his master's little watch shop, which Hovenden has relinquished because of failing eyesight, his customers, "who hold the opinion that time is not to be trifled with,"29 resent his ornamenting their clocks with ingenious musical devices and dancing figures, judge him as unfit for his occupation, and consequently determine not to employ him for their services again. The fickle townspeople, however, observe his diligence in his watch-repair business during the period after Owen, under the spell of Danforth's presence, has accidentally ruined his art work; and they reluctantly admire and appreciate his excellent work in regulating the town clock in the church steeple—a deed for which they can easily enough

28 Hawthorne, op. cit., V, 294. 29 Ibid., p. 295.
praise him since everyone benefits from its usefulness. As Owen is preparing himself for resuming his secret creative task, the people accuse him of wasting his time because they discover him to be chasing and studying the insects instead of toiling in his shop. At length, "any persons who had hitherto retained a hopeful opinion of him that he was, in truth, irrevocably doomed to impotency as regarded the world, and to an evil destiny on his own part"\textsuperscript{30} feel amply justified to find Warland living a life of riot and wine. When a beautiful butterfly recalls Warland from his drunken companions and inspires him to resume his interrupted creative activities, the short-sighted, incomprehending townspeople resolutely declare him to be insane. "Perhaps he was mad. The lack of sympathy—that contrast between himself and his neighbors which took away the restraint of example—was enough to make him so."\textsuperscript{31} Although the townspeople cannot accept Warland as an artist with peculiar ideas, neither do they adjust to him when in his disillusionment he expounds on his readings of mechanical marvels. In short, his society in general, lacking the ability or even the desire to appreciate that which is not strictly utilitarian, rejects Warland from the first moment he allows his artistic aspirations to be detected.

\textsuperscript{30}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 308. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{31}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 311.
According to Hawthorne, Annie, as a woman, would be most likely to understand Owen's idealism, but she is the daughter of the cold, materialistic Hovenden and has absorbed too much of her father's attitude. Though she at first appears to be sympathetic toward Owen, the playmate of her childhood, Annie reveals herself in opposition to his aims.

With sufficient insight to delude Warland for a moment into believing her a kindred spirit, she yet lacks the talisman which would admit her to his inmost thought. With much kindliness, she feels a veiled contempt for Warland and his unreal quest for ideal beauty. Her marriage to Danforth, the man of earth and iron, is perhaps sufficient to account for her.\textsuperscript{32}

Unlike Hovenden, Danforth, the blacksmith, does not hate Owen for his idealistic nature but is "merely puzzled and amused by the artist's aspirations."\textsuperscript{33} Danforth prides himself on his brute strength and good-naturedly ridicules the delicacy of Warland. Like Hovenden, the blacksmith is unable to understand or appreciate the artist, but he maintains an amiable attitude toward Owen and warmly praises the toy-like aspect of the finished butterfly. He voices society's attitude toward Owen's art—an attitude of amused condescension—when he pronounces that no human being has the skill for such a project and that one would be foolish wasting time to copy something so abundant in nature.

The small child of Annie and Robert Danforth inherits a combination of the Hovenden materialism and the Danforth main

\textsuperscript{32}Fogle, op. cit., p. 34. \textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 34.
strength. It would seem that this innocent child would be a naturally sympathetic individual toward Warland's beautiful art object, but even here materialism and strength overpower innocence. The baby is attracted to the mechanical butterfly at once and demands possession of it. At first the butterfly glows more brightly than ever in the hand of the child, but its colors soon begin to fade. Warland perceives the sharp, shrewd expression of Hovenden in the face of the child, and, wearing this same countenance, the child snatches the butterfly from the air and crushes it in his strong little hand.

The most disturbing individual to Owen Warland is Peter Hovenden, "a cold materialist, whose mere presence is blighting to Warland's imagination."\textsuperscript{34} Being much averse to the material irresponsibility of his former apprentice, whose "creative eccentricity" he had formerly managed to restrain "within bounds,"\textsuperscript{35} Hovenden refuses to credit the young man with the genius he himself has observed in the watch shop other than to scoff that Owen "has not the sort of ingenuity to invent anything better than a Dutch toy."\textsuperscript{36} A man who despises anything not practical, the old watchmaker acclaims with much praise the village blacksmith as a sensible man because "it is a good and wholesome thing to depend upon main

\textsuperscript{34} Fogle, op. cit., p. 33.  
\textsuperscript{35} Hawthorne, op. cit., V, 294.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p. 290.
strength and reality, and to earn one’s bread with the bare and brawny arm of a blacksmith." The one instance in which Hovenden approves of his former pupil is that in which Owen repairs the town clock, and the old master is so elated at Owen's turn toward the materialistic that he admonishes Warland to "get rid altogether of your nonsensical trash about the beautiful, which I nor nobody else, nor yourself to boot, could ever understand,—only free yourself of that, and your success in life is as sure as daylight." It is with a sneer of contempt mingled with indignation that Hovenden taunts Owen about the butterfly's containing witchcraft and threatens to destroy the mechanism so as to free Owen from all future danger. It is also with a skeptical sneer that he prepares to examine the finished product when Owen presents it as a gift to Annie. With a cold and triumphant laugh, the materialistic old man delightfully witnesses the idealist's work of several years ruined in the grasping hands of Hovenden's grandson.

The effects of these people upon Warland ultimately are the same, for they tend to blight his imagination and to increase the spiritual gulf between the artist and his society. Hovenden, the most obvious bearer of contempt, has the greatest adverse effect on Owen, for the young man always becomes depressed, bitter, and barren of thoughts in the

37 Ibid., p. 291. 38 Ibid., p. 301.
presence of his elder. Annie, of whom Owen has been secretly enamored to the extent that he has endowed her with qualities which in reality she does not possess, is the one person in all the world who, Warland feels, not only can understand his aspirations but can encourage him in his idealistic pursuit; but he becomes disappointed to discover that not even she has true sympathy. Hawthorne suggests that love would have given her insight and understanding, but she does not love him.

... if any human spirit could have sufficiently reverenced the processes so sacred in his eyes, it must have been a woman's. Even Annie Hovenden, possibly, might not have disappointed him had she been enlightened by the deep intelligence of love.39

Owen finds Danforth and his tremendous strength repulsive and maddening.

Each of the three thwarts his creative progress. Danforth's brute force, before which Owen quivers, bewilders and obscures Owen's perception to the extent that Warland misjudges his hand movement and accidentally destroys the tiny art object; Hovenden's contemptuous nature throws the artist into so deep a state of despondency that he temporarily abandons his project; and Annie, whose mere presence is enough to unnerve him, with a needle point unintentionally, carelessly destroys the mechanism. Then Hovenden's announcement of Annie and Danforth's marriage, which could not have affected Warland more had it been a deliberate conspiracy by the three to

39 Ibid., p. 308.
put an end to his work, results in Owen's smashing his handi-
work himself.

Despite the pressures from society, Warland is wholly
dedicated to his art, and with the possible exception of his
early interest in the idealized Annie, nothing else is really
important. Thus being concerned with matters of an eternal
nature, Owen "behaves to Time with a levity which his society
finds intolerable."\(^{40}\) He turns the faces of the watches away
from the street, playfully adds musical devices to clocks,
and applies himself to watchmaking only when his ability to
create is momentarily lost. In contrast to Danforth's
interest in hammering out iron objects by great physical
strength, Warland desires only spiritual force. His passion
for his art causes him to be unwillingly isolated from soci-
ey; "from Annie he seeks love, and through love to link
himself with society."\(^{41}\) Though during his hardships he
despairs and at one point even succumbs to Hovenden's state
of understanding only what he can see physically, the beau-
tiful sight of a butterfly is sufficient to restore to his
spiritual part the "thought, imagination, and keenest sensi-
bility."\(^{42}\) It is because of his renewed idealism that he
finds life worthwhile and becomes anxious lest death should
overtake him before he can accomplish his life's ambition.

\(^{40}\) Fogle, op. cit., p. 34.  \(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 51.
\(^{42}\) Hawthorne, op. cit., V, 317.
Disregarding fame and great fortune which the sale of his work would bring him, the artist presents it as a Platonic gift to Annie. It is with true self-satisfaction and inner triumph only that he does so, for he realizes that the world, and Annie as the representative of the world, whatever praise might be bestowed, could never say the fitting sentiment which should be the perfect recompense of an artist who, symbolizing a lofty moral by a material trifle,--converting what was earthly to spiritual gold,--had won the beautiful into his handiwork. Not at this latest moment was he to learn that the reward of all high performance must be sought within itself, or sought in vain.\textsuperscript{43}

When the Danforths' small child, which Owen observes to be a duplicate of its cynical, materialistic, unimaginative grandfather, destroys the butterfly, Owen is not disturbed, because the butterfly is merely a symbol of the Beautiful, which he at last has achieved the artistic power to embody in a material art-form.

"The Artist of the Beautiful" presents the most thorough picture of Hawthorne's views about the artist, his relation to society, the nature of art and the artist's reward. Society "not only misunderstands" the artist "but even actively condemns his purposes."\textsuperscript{44} Society is scornful of that which is not practical or utilitarian, and it cannot comprehend the value of that which transcends its material interests. As long as the artist fixes his attention on useful purposes,

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 326. \hfill \textsuperscript{44}Fogel, op. cit., p. 32.
such as repairing watches and clocks, society accepts him as one of the brotherhood, but the artist's application of his ability to create art for art's sake leads to a complete rejection by society.

This rejection by society isolates the artist in such a manner that it prevents his enjoying the friendships that are natural to the common man, but to the artist the isolation seems to be necessary for the artist's pursuit of his work without disturbances and to be inevitable.

To persons whose pursuits are insulated from the common business of life—who are either in advance of mankind or apart from it—there often comes a sensation of moral cold that makes the spirit shiver as if it had reached the frozen solitudes around the pole. 45

Hawthorne seems to believe that isolation is necessary for art at the cost of loneliness, for although Warland loses as a man, he wins as an artist. 46

Hawthorne seems to stress the importance of love to the artist. Though Drowne produces real art only with the inspiration of love, Warland manages to create art without the returning of his love. However, Annie's love for Owen would most likely have reduced the amount of time and frustration spent on the creation of his art. Love, then, is not absolutely necessary, but it is important.

46 Von Abele, op. cit., p. 41.
"The artist's 'vision' is the important thing, and the actual art-work is an anticlimax."\textsuperscript{47} The artist conceives and develops the idea for his art in the mind, and the physical embodiment is only proof of the image. Though the art-work is not important in itself alone, the art is not complete without it.

In contrast to the ideas expressed in "The Devil in Manuscript," Hawthorne here does perceive a reward for the artist. Only the artist can truly appreciate his art, but he has the satisfaction of having created, given birth to, an idea embodied in a physical form.

"The Artist of the Beautiful" concludes that the artist is morally superior "to all other conceivable categories of humanity,"\textsuperscript{48} for he seeks the beautiful, the ideal, the spiritual, the eternal value rather than the temporary, physical value.

A study of Hawthorne's four short stories together reveals of the artist in general certain characteristics which explain the position of the artist in society, for in most instances these characteristics are directly opposed to those of society in general. To judge by Warland and Drowne, the artist is small in size and stature. This makes him a natural prey for the predatory members of human society who

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p. 34. \textsuperscript{48}Fogle, op. cit., p. 32.
insist upon inflating their own egos by literally or figu- 
atively pushing around or trampling upon the little man. It 
also signifies the relative unimportance of the physical 
body, which many revere as the symbol of the real man, espe-
cially at a time when livelihood depends primarily upon main 
strength. Being a physical and, therefore, temporal thing, 
the body plays only a supporting role in the life of the 
artist, whose power lies in the mind, or the intellect. 

In accordance with the smallness of the body, the art-
ist's mind is microscopic in perception; that is, it can see 
those things invisible to the common mind. This, of course, 
is the distinguishing element between the artist and anybody 
else. It allows the artist to rise above the objectives of 
his fellow men and to seek the values that lie beyond the 
realm of the physical world. In his attempt to attain the 
ideal, he becomes the perfectionist, content with nothing 
short of his goal and impatient with himself in his failures. 
The sole value of the work of art to the artist is its sym-
bolism of the ultimate achievement of the ideal, but its 
value to mankind is of a practical, financial, physical 
nature.

The true artist, to withstand the badgering from soci-
ety, must possess

a force of character that seems hardly compatible with 
its delicacy; he must keep his faith in himself while 
the incredulous world assails him with its utter dis-
belief; he must stand up against mankind and be his own
sole disciple, both as respects his genius and the objects to which it is directed.\footnote{Hawthorne, op. cit., V, 299-300.}

Because of his interest in the ideal and his desire to embody his idea in a physical form for his own satisfaction, the artist is isolated from society. His difference makes him peculiar, for those who reach toward the heights or delve into the depths are misunderstood. People are fearful of things they cannot understand, and the people Hawthorne represents are still close enough to the period and the region of the belief in witchcraft and the severe rules of religion to attribute the actions of the artist to participation in witchcraft or evil. The great belief in the dignity of manual labor results in scorn for the artist, too, for society has no use for the person who is not in business or in some form of honest labor, and society can divine no practical purposes for art.
CHAPTER III

JAMES

Henry James shows a vital interest in the artist as thematic material for his short stories. Though some of his stories contain the artist as painter and sculptor as well, he is essentially concerned with the artist as writer. James himself called attention to these stories of artists by collecting them into a whole volume and part of another. Seven of the tales—"The Death of the Lion," "The Coxon Fund," "The Next Time," "The Lesson of the Master," "The Figure in the Carpet," "The Middle Years," and "The Author of Bel-traffic"—principally concern the relation of the artist to society, a problem even today.\(^1\) The artist realizes the possibilities of society's being as he would like it, but since society is not like that, he cannot consent to it and maintain his role as a true artist. Therefore, the artist is "smirched or driven out of society by the cruel stupidity of its conventions."\(^2\)

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James gives a deeper, more complex analysis and treatment to many of the artist's problems which Hawthorne treats generally and superficially. These similarities between the short stories of James and Hawthorne will be noted elsewhere in this chapter, but it may be well to mention them briefly here. In "The Lesson of the Master" James employs Hawthorne's theme of the idealist-artist versus a materialistic society, and he includes the lack of insight on the part of the woman nearest the artist. "The Death of the Lion" and "The Middle Years" present a similar artist's attitude toward death, and "The Author of Beltraffio" shows the artist's lack of concern for the effects of his work on other human beings. "The Next Time" has several problems similar to those of Hawthorne's artists--the artist versus the unsympathetic publishers, the mediocrity of society, and the artist's realization of the necessity of self-fulfillment. James also uses in "The Next Time" the functional assimilation of the creation of art with the image of human procreation.

James expands the problem of the artist in society to include the artist versus lionizers and prying reporters in "The Death of the Lion"; the artist versus a patronizing society and its conventions in "The Coxon Fund"; the artist versus publishers and reviewers in "The Next Time"; the artist versus wife and the materialistic temptations to "sell out," to prostitute his talents for popularity and gain in
"The Lesson of the Master"; the artist versus the critics and the dull readers in "The Figure in the Carpet"; and the artist versus wife and conventional morality in "The Author of Beltraffio."

James's first story to be considered here is "The Death of the Lion." Although he draws upon specific incidents for most of these stories, James says of this story that he is "confident of having again and again closely noted in the social air all the elements of such a drama" and that he has merely combined the elements with his own artistic skill to create a picture of "the poor foredoomed monarch of the jungle."³

"The Death of the Lion" presents a striking example of the dangers of society to the artist. It shows the debilitating effects of a writer's achieving fame during his lifetime. It also portrays the noble act of a small element in society—the true art-consumers—to stand aside and admire the writer from a distance.

The lion is the author, of course, Neil Paraday. His name has hitherto been obscure, but the publication of his book has made him famous overnight, and the plan for his next book promises him even greater success. Having separated from his wife and living very simply, he has previously had

³Henry James, The Novels and Tales of Henry James (New York, 1922), XV, xii.
no hindrances to his work. His recent severe illness with its slow convalescence has been his major obstacle. At this point the newspapers salute him as a contemporary, and this tribute is as good as a death warrant. The significance of his success is that Neil Paraday is to be "squeezed into his horrible age . . . A little more and he would have dipped down the short cut to posterity and escaped."4 He is confused and frightened when a magazine reviewer—the first significant indication of the invasion of his privacy—attempts to gain information concerning the author's personal life. His name immediately appears in the London social life, and he (like St. George in "The Lesson of the Master" and Harry in Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro") justifies his being imposed upon by saying that the people and the dinners offer him material for his work. His precious hours are now consumed by the inconsiderate public, the major force being a Mrs. Weeks Wimbush, who eventually prevails upon the author to spend a week at her country home with several well-known socialites. Here Neil Paraday is too cowardly to resist the social badgering, for "he has some reason, and he pays for his imagination, which puts him . . . in the place of others and makes him feel, even against

4Ibid., p. 111.
himself, their feelings, their appetites, their motives."\(^5\)
Thus he suffers a relapse that within a few days proves fatal.

Mrs. Weeks Wimbush, irresponsible, unrelenting, and conscience-free, is the "proprietress of the universal menagerie, . . . where on occasions when the crush is great, the animals rub shoulders freely with the spectators and the lions sit down for whole evenings with the lambs."\(^6\) She enthusiastically recognizes Neil Paraday as a major attraction, and she makes it her business to pretend to see that he does what is good for him, makes the best use of his time, maintains his privacy—-all of which occupies much of his valuable time. This woman takes advantage of the privileges of friendship, and even without malice she is as flagrant as an enemy.\(^7\) Mrs. Wimbush uses Paraday, as she uses every other artist, for her own gain and plays him against the others. On the pretense of giving a house party for him, she displays the writer to attract other illustrious guests. Paraday and his latest work are conversation pieces for Mrs. Wimbush, who has not read even ten pages of his book, and her guests, who have not read more than twenty. Despite Paraday's poor health, his hostess continues to push him until his body can no longer oblige. Equally thoughtless in relation to

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 143.  
\(^6\)Ibid., p. 123.  
\(^7\)Osborn Andreas, Henry James and the Expanding Horizon (Seattle, 1948), p. 32.
Paraday's work, she lends her mentally shallow guests the manuscript of the author's next book, which they carelessly misplace and never recover. Her real interest in Paraday, an interest precipitated by a completely selfish motive to use him as a rung in her social ladder, becomes apparent when she replaces him with a popular author while he is ill and, in her impatience to rejoin the social circle, disgustedly leaves him to his fate.

Another parasitical member of society is Mr. Morrow, an aggressive magazine reviewer who determines to be the first to publish an article on the overnight celebrity. He announces that his syndicate of thirty-seven journals "would greatly appreciate any expression of his views on the subject of art he so nobly exemplifies," but his primary purpose is to discover any personal peculiarities of the author. He is so little interested in Paraday's ideas that he scarcely notices the writer's withdrawal. Morrow's insincerity is further proved by his contempt at being admonished to read Paraday's book if he really wishes to know him.

Though they come in no direct contact with the great author, the two popular writers are partially, indirectly responsible for society's impositions on Paraday. Guy Walsingham, female author of Obsessions, and Dora Forbes, male

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8James, op. cit., p. 113.
author of *The Other Way Round*, are representative of the fake writers who resort to innumerable measures to attain popularity, to secure the public attention that Faraday would like so much to shun. Both pseudo-intellectuals, the pair impress the ignorant readers and listeners by their enthusiastic discourses concerning the "larger latitude." Only too eager to acquire publicity for themselves, Dora Forbes assists the reviewer in his search for personal material by such foolish actions as showing his table drawers to him, and Guy Walsingham allows the reviewer to write a "sketch of her method," which she highly praises for having "made her genius more comprehensible even to herself."9 Walsingham and Forbes vie for society's attention by assuming names of the opposite sex and by using their writing as a means of avenging their personal insults. By encouraging the public to exploit them, the popular writers lead society to believe erroneously that all writers, good as well as bad, welcome the opportunity to serve the lionizers.

In contrast to Mrs. Wimbush and Mr. Morrow, there is the young American, Fannie Hunter, who sacrifices her aspiration of meeting the distinguished author so as to "perform an act of homage really sublime."10 For her it actually is a sacrifice, for she has come all the way from America to meet him. Nevertheless, in the spirit of a true art-consumer she

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accepts the advice of "seeking him in his works even as God in nature." Therefore, she refrains from presenting Paraday one of her letters, and she follows the suggested plan, that of silently admiring the author solely on the merits of his work and not seeking his personal attention, to such extremes that on certain occasions she even deliberately avoids the possibility of seeing the author.

Comparable to Miss Hunter's act of devotion is that of the narrator. His original purpose is to write about Paraday a personal account that will attract readers for his periodical, but his failure results instead in praise for the author's talent. He decides against betraying Paraday's privacy, becomes an ardent admirer of his works, and sets himself up as Paraday's barrier against society. Though his actions prove admirable, he admits differently of himself.

I'm made restless by the selfishness of the insincere friend--I want to monopolise Paraday in order that he may push me on. To be intimate with him's a feather in my cap; it gives me an importance that I couldn't naturally pretend to, and I seek to deprive him of social refreshment because I fear that meeting more disinterested people may enlighten him as to my real motive.  

The young man obstructs the prying magazine reviewer in his search for personal, chatty information about Paraday and advises the more sensible course of studying the author's work.

\[11\text{Ibid., p. 133.}\] \[12\text{Ibid., p. 140.}\]
The artist's life's his work, and this is the place to observe him. What he has to tell us he tells us with this perfection. My dear sir, the best interviewer's the best reader. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

It seems to me in our time almost wholly neglected, and something should surely be done to restore its ruined credit. It's the course to which the artist himself at every step, and with such pathetic confidence, refers us.13

A similar admonition he gives in saying, "Don't force him to take account of you; admire him in silence, cultivate him at a distance and secretly appropriate his message."14 Without success he tries to prevent Faraday's being sacrificed to the country-house socialites and to regain the author's lost unfinished manuscript.

"The Death of the Lion" overflows in criticism of society in regard to the author, whose "death" is very obviously a result of the demands of society.15 The greatest misfortune that can befall the author is to become eminent in his lifetime, for society will, if given the least possible chance, crush him to death figuratively if not literally. His public will use and abuse both him and his work in as many ways as it finds convenient. Newspapermen and magazine reviewers will harry him to obtain light reading material for their subscribers. Clubs and socially prominent individuals, on the pretense or for the real purpose of honoring him, will expect the writer to forsake his precious work to waste away valuable hours with them. People will partially

13Ibid., p. 119. 14Ibid., p. 131. 15Ibid., p. xiii.
or completely ignore his books and pry into his personal life instead. Autograph seekers interested chiefly in impressing their friends will flock to his door, and he will be besieged at every other turn by those requesting favors of him. Then when society has consumed all of the author's energy or has discovered a fresher talent, it will cast aside the worn-out artist to renew the process on another victim, as one tosses away the tube from which the toothpaste has been well squeezed out. Again and again society shows the least concern for the fate "of the subject, however essentially fine and fragile, of a patronage reflecting such credit on all concerned, so long as the social game may be played a little more intensely, and if possible more irrelevantly, by this unfortunate's aid."¹⁶ There are, of course, those rare persons, the true art-consumers, who will unselfishly refrain from disturbing the artist and will devotedly subject themselves to studying his works, but this fact does not alleviate the problem created by the selfish, powerful, destructive element of society.

The attitude of James's author toward death reflects a similar attitude of both Hawthorne's mechanical genius and Hemingway's writer. Apprehensive of death's claiming him before he can finish his work, Paraday, like Warland, applies

¹⁶Ibid.
his energy toward completing another book after his illness. When he senses death approaching, he pleads for his work to be printed in its unfinished form. Just as Hemingway's artist wishes to write as much as possible in the short period of life remaining, Faraday also desires to leave as much of his art as possible in a physical form. Except for its cutting short his artistic production, Neil Faraday seems almost to welcome death as a relief from the pressures of a predatory society.

The forces of society are equally devastating to the artist in James's next tale, "The Coxon Fund." Whereas Faraday's society destroys him by consuming his time and energy, Frank Saltram's patronizing society ruins him principally by smothering him with financial gifts. Another victim of society, Saltram irregularly conforms to the conventions of society and at other times opposes them altogether.

The subject for "The Coxon Fund" had been of interest to James earlier, but J. Dyke Campbell's monograph on S. T. Coleridge actually provided the "germ" for the tale. James's idea was to reflect rather freely the Coleridge type, which to James was more interesting than the man.17

Mr. Saltram, the recipient of the Coxon Fund, is not so much the writer as the great speaker and potential writer.

17Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii.
His writings lack the quality of his talk, but he is a master of intellectual conversation. He is not a reliable person for keeping engagements, except in the drawing room of his benefactors, the Mulvilles; when he is scheduled to lecture publicly, he fails to appear. Saltram lacks the usual sense of dignity, though he embodies a majesty of unconscious concern of the little things in life, especially his maintenance and money. Money, he feels, should have no relation to the spiritual; that is, it simply should be used without much thought given to it. He is addicted to drink and thinks nothing of substituting a drinking period for himself in place of a public appearance, or of appearing disheveled and unkempt in the drawing room of his host.

He takes whatever comes, but he never plots for it, and no man who is so much of an absorbent can ever have been so little of a parasite. He has a system of the universe, but he has no system of sponging—that is quite hand-to-mouth.\(^{18}\)

Irresponsible in his conduct, he leaves his wife to support herself and abandons his other belongings, including three illegitimate children fathered in his youth, to be cared for by others. Though he tires of his benefactors, he never criticizes them. "He accepts favours, loans, sacrifices—all with nothing more deterrent than an agony of shame."\(^{19}\) Frank Saltram receives the Coxon Fund as he has

\(^{18}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 298.}\)

\(^{19}\text{Ibid.}\)
received everything else previously, but with this final act of charity he begins to decline and completely ceases to produce his art.

The executor of the Coxon Fund is Ruth Anvoy, a young American. The Fund is left to her by her deceased aunt, who has intended it to endow an intelligent but financially handicapped person earnestly searching for moral truth. According to the terms of the plan, Miss Anvoy, failing to discover one worthy of the honor, may inherit the thirteen thousand pounds for her own use; however, she feels a moral obligation, despite her father's financial failure, to bestow it on a worthy person. Ruth, having read but not having understood some of Saltram's works, becomes curiously attracted to him by Mrs. Saltram's stories regarding his lack of virtue. On her meeting the man, she impulsively releases a sum of thirty pounds to help him. She discovers his faults but continues to like and admire him, nevertheless. For Saltram, Ruth Anvoy breaks off her engagement because her decision not to keep the money causes her to realize the difference between the fundamental values of herself and George Gravener.

George Gravener, of course, opposes Saltram and the Coxon Fund completely. Because of his distaste for the Mulvilles and their social action, he insists that Saltram is a humbug, a fraud. He is disgusted with society's preoccupation with a "wind-bag." Gravener says that Saltram is
worthless if he is not a "real gentleman," and he declares, "The only thing that really counts for one's estimate of a person is his conduct." Even though he dislikes Saltram's type, Gravener even considers using him in his attempt to become elected to the House of Commons. He strongly believes Miss Anvoy's decision to give away her fortune is foolish, especially as he actually wants to use it himself, and the loss of the anticipated fortune puts an end to his interest in her.

Saltram's greatest antagonist is his wife. She "under-values him where he's strongest, so that, to make up for it perhaps, she overpraises him where he's weak." She spreads stories of his lack of virtue and succeeds in making many people hate him. By using him in such a manner, she gains public sympathy and a higher position in the social circle. She comes to believe in him only as he ceases to produce, and then she blames his benefactors for causing him to become like everybody else.

The most regular benefactors are the Mulvilles, who make a practice of extending their hospitality to celebrities, who in turn innocently attract the attention of many other members of society. Their outward intention is to reunite Saltram with his wife and to make it appear that the great man is actually supporting her and their children.

\(^{20}\)Ibid., p. 291. \(^{21}\)Ibid., p. 297.
They exhibit him in their drawing room, where their guests thrill to his eloquent words. The Mulvilles house, feed, and clothe him, make appointments for him to lecture and then furnish excuses for his not appearing, and tolerate him in his periods of intoxication. For Saltram they also sacrifice their fine carriage, but Mrs. Mulville finds ample compensation by having the public see him with her as she drives about performing her shopping and visiting. When Saltram leaves them for the hospitality of others, the Mulvilles readily forgive him his ingratitude and reinstate him in their favors at the first opportunity.

Saltram's public alternately love and hate him. So long as he performs for them, he is a gem of wisdom and entertainment; but when he boldly ignores them, they indignantly pronounce him ungrateful and unworthy. Miss Anvoy's benevolence is meritorious in that she has no ulterior motive and that she recognizes him for his true value as a writer and dismisses, though she is certainly aware of them, his serious faults as a man. Gravener represents the element of society that insists upon disregarding any other merits and first appraising a man's worth only according to whether he is a "real gentleman." The unsympathetic wife aids in blighting the writer's efforts by alienating him from his home and thereby indirectly forcing him upon the world. It is for selfish reasons that people like the Mulvilles confer their
too abundant hospitality upon the artist, for, by keeping him on exhibition, they expect to use him as the key to securing a high status in the social world. By bestowing such honors upon him, they feel that a sense of obligation will force him to subject himself to their wishes.

Society's extreme hospitality has adverse effects upon the artist. Saltram lacks force of character and cannot resist the favors extended to him. The benefactors give only financially, but they take in return the artist's imagination and an essential part of the man. The acceptance of charity debases his dignity and further weakens his character. Searching for relief, he resorts to drinking. The bestowing of the Coxon Fund on him robs him of his last ounce of dignity, and he is so debased as a man that he has no moral strength left to pursue his artistic talents.

Saltram is, after all, another Paraday, another social lion. Both are too frail spiritually to withstand the constant attention from society. They are fully aware of their precarious situations, yet they lack the force to withdraw completely from the public or even to try to curb the advances from society. Saltram, accepting without hesitation the wealth bestowed upon him, foreshadows the Hemingway artist, who willfully receives the same type of benefits even though he despises himself for his weakness of character.
Turning from "The Death of the Lion" and "The Coxon Fund," both of which show artists preyed upon by society, James presents in "The Next Time" the artist who tries unsuccessfully to "make society his prey, but fails because he cannot help remaining the harmless, the isolated monarch of his extreme, imaginative, ardent self."22 As society has used Paraday and Saltram for selfish purposes, the protagonist of "The Next Time" seeks to use society to achieve his personal aim.

"The Next Time" is based on James's own unhappy experience. In his notebook he wrote that the idea was suggested by the memory of his own frustration, and he reveals his unsuccessful attempt to make some Paris letters for The New York Tribune bad enough to satisfy the editor.23

Even though one may write principally to satisfy his artistic aspirations, the necessities of life require that he receive a substantial monetary return for his endeavors. Unless the author who cherishes his writing enough to continue it despite its financial failure reduces himself to sacrificing his time and his energy on an occupation that will provide a decent livelihood, he is destined to a life of thwarted hopes and general frustration until his works


23 Matthiessen, op. cit., p. 5.
begin to sell. It is impossible for some great writers to "attract the allegiance of millions of people." This type of failure appears in "The Next Time."

Ray Limbert is doomed to perpetual failure, and the ironic reason is that he is too brilliant a writer to succeed. That is, the genius in his writings soars above the literary taste of the mediocre public, and his works fail to produce the needed capital. Regardless of what he writes, it is good and, therefore, does not sell. As he acquires more dependents, eventually five children and a mother-in-law, and his economic situation becomes more desperate, Limbert resorts to writing the lowest forms of literature. Every attempt only proves his inability to adjust to the mediocre. To maintain his family moderately well until one of his books can provide for them, Ray accepts a number of jobs with newspapers and periodicals. Even at this his writing is too good to allow him to maintain his position.

When the _Beacon_ demands that his contributions be livelier than those of his competitor, Limbert very cleverly concocts a chatty, personal account that is actually embarrassing in places. However, he loses his position because his editor insists upon something "more gossipy, more personal ... 'journalism' ... tremendous trash," and Limbert insists "that such work as he has done is the very worst he

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24 Richardson, _op. cit._, p. xc.
can do for the money." As editor of a monthly which is supposed to print genuine literature, Limbert cunningly schemes to be successful by reversing his tactics; he employs pure vulgarity in his serial and uses in the rest of the magazine "the prime qualification, the mediocrity that attaches, that endears." As usual, his employer discharges him for giving to the magazine too much pure thought, too much intellectuality, especially in Limbert's own contribution. All of his novels are hopeless masterpieces and cannot possibly be popular. Limbert's predicament is best described in this passage:

... you can't make a sow's ear of a silk purse! It's grievous indeed if you like--there are people who can't be vulgar for trying. He can't--it wouldn't come off, I promise you, even once. It takes more than trying--it comes by grace. It happens not to be given to Limbert to fall. He belongs to the heights--he breathes there, he lives there, ... .

Nevertheless, Ray Limbert, using all his strength and cunning to become popular, persistently works toward the next time. In contrast to Saltram in "The Coxon Fund," Limbert, who has sacrificed honor and pride to the question of money, refuses all offers of financial aid in his attempt to bargain his talent for public favor.

Shortly before his death, Limbert suddenly conceives a great idea for another book, and in quiet mystery he pursues

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25 James, op. cit., p. 171. 26 Ibid., p. 191.
27 Ibid., p. 204.
his art up to the very point of death. Pleased and excited about his work, he is heedless of his former pecuniary interest in his writing. It is as though, like Owen Warland and Hemingway's artist, Ray Limbert suddenly discovers the necessity to return to true art and to embody his ideal in physical form before death overtakes him. Years of failure to win popular acceptance by prostituting his talent have proved that he has nothing to gain by such measures, but in reverting to his buried ideals, he stands to achieve a reward which far surpasses any material reward—the reward of self-fulfillment.

At the other extreme is Limbert's sister-in-law, Jane Highmore. With her technique for writing trash, she is doomed to popularity and financial success. The author of eighty volumes, Mrs. Highmore writes a successful book every time. "She can't explain herself much; she's all intuition; her processes are obscure; it's the spirit that swoops down and catches her up." 28 Her true aspirations are not to achieve perfection, and she never speaks "of the literary motive as if it were distinguishable from the pecuniary." 29 Jane Highmore's love for humanity and her interest in her sister's welfare compel her to seek publishers and employers for Ray Limbert, but lack of great intellect prevents her enjoying his writing. Though she cannot fully appreciate

28 Ibid., p. 188.  29 Ibid., p. 181.
his genius, Mrs. Highmore does perceive the existence of his
talent, and the knowledge produces within her a secret jeal-
ousy. The realization that several reliable persons attrib-
ute Limbert's failure to his inability to be vulgar or
mediocre results in her yearning "to be, like Limbert, but
of course only once, an exquisite failure."\textsuperscript{30} Her desire is
not to attain perfection but to expand her reputation.

The relationship of Limbert and his public is appropri-
ately described in this segment of conversation:

\begin{quote}
Dull? Ralph Limbert? He's as fine as the spray
of a lawn-irrigator.
It comes to the same thing, when your lawn's as
course as a turnipfield.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

This is "the age of trash triumphant,"\textsuperscript{32} and the readers
prefer Mrs. Highmore's trash to Limbert's eloquence. They
esteeem themselves critics, and the announcement that Ray's
magazine may be acceptable

\begin{quote}
produce\textsuperscript{s} in some quarters much reprobation, and
nowhere more . . . than on the part of certain persons
who \textsuperscript{have} never read a word of him, or assuredly \textsuperscript{have}
ever spent a shilling on him, and who \textsuperscript{hang} for hours
over the other attractions of the newspaper that
\textsuperscript{announce} his abasement.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

The public's idea of literature is the twaddle of the lady-
humorist Minnie Meadows, whose writings apparently are worse
than those of Jane Highmore.

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., p. 158. \textsuperscript{31}Ibid., p. 201.
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 159. \textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 214.
It may well be folly for the true writer to depend for livelihood upon the financial success of his works, for unless he can adapt to the requirements of the reading public, his works will not sell. Society in general is mediocre, and its literary taste tends toward the ordinary, often toward the sensational. The public demands simple entertainment, trash instead of literature. Editors and publishers contribute to the trend by ignorantly issuing bad literature for good; furthermore, for financial purposes they encourage the consumption of trash by intentionally lowering the quality of literature to the level of the ordinary readers. It is significant that the most unfavorable critic will be the most ignorant of the author's works. Once society associates an author with a particular type of writing, the label sticks, regardless of what the writer may do to gain public acceptance. Consequently, the next time to win popular success never comes to the struggling author.

In "The Next Time" James employs the same method of comparison that Hawthorne uses in "Drown's Wooden Image." Through the thoughts of the narrator, James assimilates the creation of art with the image of human procreation. Referring to Limbert's financial failure and his latest masterpiece, the narrator gives this comment:

Poor Limbert in this long business always figured to me an undiscourageable parent to whom only girls kept being born. A bouncing boy, a son and heir, was devoutly prayed for and almanacks and old wives consulted; but
the spell was inveterate, incurable, and *The Hidden Heart* proved, so to speak, but another female child.\(^{34}\)

Thus it is that the "child" born of Limbert's imagination is unwanted and unappreciated.

Another similarity between "The Next Time" and "Drowne's Wooden Image" is the mediocrity of society. Limbert's society can appreciate only common literature as Drowne's society can fully appreciate only stereotyped wood-sculpture. In contrast, however, Limbert cannot descend to that medium, whereas Drowne fails to rise above it except once. Limbert's indifferent publishers reflect Oberon's unsympathetic publishers in "The Devil in Manuscript." Though Oberon reacts to the publishers' rejection by burning his work, Limbert urges himself to try again.

The adaptability to turn from composing masterpieces to producing popular novels is the missing factor that condemns Ray Limbert to failure in the material sense; however, it is the presence of this same adaptability that assures Henry St. George of worldly success when he exchanges his artistic aspiration for material rewards in "The Lesson of the Master."

About the time that James wrote this story in 1888, he was suffering from the disappointment of having had a poor

\(^{34}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 193.\)
reception of his last two novels and his shorter fiction. In his despondency James considered the fate of writers who have the dexterity to write both good literature and low-quality popular stories. Though, like the disciple Overt in the story, James seems to envy the Master for his dexterity, he consoles himself in attaining true art.\textsuperscript{35}

Henry St. George, who sacrifices his art for love and material values, is the Master in "The Lesson of the Master." He has written three tremendously successful books, but since them his work has not contained that previous high quality. The public, however, is deluded into thinking him still a literary genius, and it is only he, as well as a few others of his mental caliber, who realizes the deficiency in his writings. Like Harry in Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," Henry St. George has become "the depressing, the deplorable illustration of the worship of false gods," which are "the idols of the market; money and luxury and 'the world'; placing one's children and dressing one's wife; everything that drives one to the short and easy way."\textsuperscript{36} He has money, fame, a helpful wife, and honorable children, but he lacks the really important thing--the sense of having done the best--the sense which is the real life of the artist and the absence of which is his death, of having drawn from his intellectual

\textsuperscript{35}Richardson, op. cit., pp. 487-488.

\textsuperscript{36}James, op. cit., p. 36.
instrument the finest music that nature had hidden in it, of having played it as it should be played.\textsuperscript{37}

Though St. George loves his wife and is deeply indebted to her for her managing his affairs so that he will be free to write, he vows that marriage interferes with the artist's perfection, for a wife lacks the conception of art and, therefore, cannot truly sympathize with her husband. He affirms also that one should not have children if he wishes to do anything good, for children are an "incentive to damnation, artistically speaking."\textsuperscript{38} He has made no sacrifices for his work and has missed the important thing. His experiences as a common man have provided him with a rich store of subjects for writings, but at the same time they have sapped his ability to turn them into great works.

Mrs. St. George is the primary cause of her husband's relinquishing his artistic aspirations. According to St. George, she has been "the making of him,"\textsuperscript{39} a double-meaning phrase which in this case means that because of his love for her and his ambition to provide her with the life she wishes, he has compromised his art to become a popular success. She lacks the insight and the sympathy necessary to the wife of an artist. When she casually remarks that she once made him burn a book which she did not like, she adds, "That's all!" In the same conversation she scoldingly says that he has

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 69. \textsuperscript{38}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 37. \textsuperscript{39}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 78.
lately been lazy and needs to "write a few" books.\footnote{Ibid., p. 77.} It is as though she attaches no importance to his work and fails to realize the difficulty involved in producing one book of quality, and, in truth, she cares nothing for perfection. Thinking she knows what is best for him, Mrs. St. George forbids him to smoke or drink, and she manages the business end of his work. Her interest in his art is strictly financial; thus she provides him with a practical, windowless room and regular work hours so that he can concentrate solely on his writing to keep the money coming in.

St. George's reason for giving up writing altogether after his wife's death is a young Miss Fancourt, who very much admires his genius. Having lived with her father in a kind of isolation in India, she is automatically attracted to St. George as the older man. She, too, has tried to write, and she feels a kinship between herself and the writer. Her curious mind and her keen literary intelligence make her sympathetic toward both St. George and the young writer, Paul Overt. Her sympathetic nature is not strong enough, though, according to St. George, to overcome her womanly desire for children and material possessions—the very things which force the author to forsake his art in an endeavor to supply his wife's wishes.
Though the Master has been caught up in the world, there still lingers in him the desire to be the true artist. Since he is too much involved with the trivialities of life, he turns to Paul Overt, the young writer who has just published his first real success, to show him what St. George wants most to see—"a life in which the passion—the artist's—-is really intense." \(^{41}\) The advice of the Master leads the disciple to declare that the artist is "a mere disfranchised monk and can produce his effect only by giving up personal happiness." \(^{42}\) Overt gives up his love for Miss Fancourt and isolates himself in Switzerland to work without disturbances on another book. He is almost assured of the soundness of the Master's advice until St. George writes with great feeling of the death of his wife; St. George's deep grief, which seems to be a contradiction of his words of admonition, then causes Paul to doubt the wisdom of his own course of action. Perfectionist that he is, Overt is recalled by St. George's injunction to continue with his work until the completion of it. After two years of isolation, during which time he writes a book that he knows to be good, Paul is shocked and tormented at the sudden knowledge of the forthcoming marriage of his two best friends, Miss Fancourt and Henry St. George. Feeling betrayed, Paul Overt, like Owen Warland (who because of his absorbed interest in art loses Annie to Danforth),

\(^{41}\text{Ibid.}, p. 78.\)

\(^{42}\text{Ibid.}, p. 77.\)
bends even greater attention upon his writing, and he finds that "Nature has dedicated him to intellectual, not to personal passion."\textsuperscript{43}

According to James, worldly gain does not compensate for the loss of the artist's integrity. To attain self-fulfillment, the artist must relinquish all desires in the material world and resign himself to an isolation in which he can develop his art without external impediments. One of the greatest obstacles to the perfection of the artist's work is marriage, for the maternal and social instincts rule the nature of even the most sympathetic-appearing wife; and the encumbrances of marriage, therefore, compel the artist to sacrifice quality to mass production in the effort to cope with his increasing material responsibilities. Thus the true artist must necessarily be governed by an intense intellectual, not personal, passion.

"The Lesson of the Master," more than any other James story, seems to link Hawthorne's "The Artist of the Beautiful" and Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." All three artists--St. George, Warland, and Harry--are confronted with the problem of submitting to a materialistic society at the cost of their artistic ideals or clinging to their ideals at the cost of material rewards and possible isolation. St. George yields to materialism but is tormented by the sense of

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 96.
misplaced values and seeks to have his artistic passion fully maintained by a younger writer. Warland and Harry also submit to society, but Warland recovers his idealism in time to perfect his work of art, whereas Harry fails to respond soon enough to his artistic impulse. The women closest to the artists could have helped the men in their artistic pursuit, but they lack the necessary insight. Even as Warland's imagination is temporarily blighted by Annie's failure to return his love and Harry's talent is buried under the weight of his wife's money, St. George's wife demands the material possessions and social status that necessitate his writing for the market instead of for himself.

Beginning with the next tale, James turns from the artists who allow society to crush or alter their artistic ideals to the artists who persist in striving for perfection despite the attitudes or actions of society. A result of the attempt to attain perfection is the loss of communication between the writer and his public. "The Figure in the Carpet" provides a good example of the kind of communication barrier that arises when society is content with giving only superficial attention to the work of art.

James states in his preface that he was motivated to write "The Figure in the Carpet" by the impression of the Anglo-American's
so marked collective mistrust of anything like close or analytic appreciation—appreciation to be appreciation, implying of course some such rudimentary zeal; and this though that fine process be the Beautiful Gate itself of enjoyment.\textsuperscript{44}

James had long nurtured the inclination to restore analytic appreciation to its state of dignity, and he was charmed by the idea of an artist whose public had missed the rewarding experiences of perceiving the artist's intention.\textsuperscript{45}

"The Figure in the Carpet" expresses an author's disgust with the critics, as well as with other readers in general. Hugh Vereker, successful despite his lack of popularity, is the current subject of the critics. The critical reviews strike the author as only "the usual twaddle."\textsuperscript{46} The reviewers fail to perceive the important element in his works; they miss his "little point with a perfection exactly as admirable when they[Dat him] on the back as when they[Kick him] in the shins."\textsuperscript{47} Vereker explains that his point is

the particular thing[He's] written his books most for. Isn't there for every writer a particular thing of that sort, the thing that most makes him apply himself, the thing without the effort to achieve which he wouldn't write at all, the very passion of his passion, the part of the business in which, for him, the flame of art burns most intensely? Well, it's that!\textsuperscript{48}

This point or intention underlies every book, and everything else is secondary. Therefore, it is the duty of the critic

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., p. xv. \textsuperscript{45}Ibid., pp. xv-xvi. 
\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., p. 226. \textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p. 229. \textsuperscript{48}Ibid., p. 230.
to seek and to find this general intention. Because of the failure of the critics to discover his point, Vereker declares himself a failure. It would not be so disheartening if it were only the common people who were blinded to the author's point, but, as Vereker contends, "The critic just isn't a plain man: if he were, pray, what would he be doing in his neighbor's garden?" 49 Into twenty volumes Vereker has written his general intention without the least idea that it should so easily escape the readers' detection. In defense of this declaration he states:

If my great affair's a secret, that's only because it's a secret in spite of itself--the amazing event has made it one. I not only never took the smallest precaution to keep it so, but never dreamed of any such accident. If I had I shouldn't in advance have had the heart to go on. As it was, I only became aware little by little, and meanwhile I had done my work. 50

Vereker's disgust with the ignorance of the critics and the dull readers acquires an aspect of amusement, and he confesses that he lives almost to see if anyone will ever detect the secret. His warm reception of the critic who does eventually discover Vereker's intention signifies the rewarding pleasure of the author's knowing that someone actually understands and, therefore, sincerely appreciates his art.

Other than what Vereker himself has to say about the critics, this story presents very little else concerning the

49 Ibid., p. 232. 50 Ibid.
major issue. Lady Jane represents the ordinary, dull readers, who cannot express their own opinions but agree with the critics' interpretations, which Vereker dismisses as mere twaddle. It is sufficient for her to accept without question Vereker's statement and to remain in ignorant admiration of him. The critic-narrator becomes feverishly enthusiastic about searching for the author's general intention and launches into a fruitless study which results in frustration, humiliation, and eventual boredom. Miss Erme, a writer herself, pursues Vereker's mystery with her fiancé, remains interested in the point, but relinquishes the task to Corvick alone. George Corvick, who is "like nothing . . . but the maniacs who embrace some bedlamitical theory of the cryptic character of Shakespeare," is the only one to stay with the problem until he solves it; to do so, the critic finally isolates himself abroad and even avoids seeing the novelist before he discovers the "figure in the carpet."

James implores society, especially critics, to extend to the artist's work a close perusal rather than the ordinary casual reading. Since an author's intention is not deliberately hidden in the work, it is despicable of one who calls himself a critic not to study the artist's work until he finds it. James seems to advocate isolation, if necessary, for the art critic, who in his search to obtain the artist's

51 Ibid., p. 244.
meaning, becomes an artist himself. The critic's discovery, "the final knowledge of which is an experience quite apart," proves a self-satisfying experience for both artist and critic.

Another tale concerning the loss of communication between the writer and his readers is "The Middle Years." The writer here is sure of the worth of his book, but when he discovers that his fervent disciple has missed the intention in the book, the writer despairs of ever having the intention discerned by the impartial public. Coupled with this disappointment is the writer's regret that death is about to terminate his creative production at the same time that he has begun to write well.

James may well have drawn upon his own life for this story. He makes the author Dencombe to be of his own age and to be, like himself, "a passionate corrector" of his work. Dencombe's cry of having outlived and lost by the way reflects James's heightened feeling of isolation after his sister's death a year before this story. The author also emphasizes James's own thoughts when he refers to "the madness of art."

"The Middle Years" doubles as the title of both this story and the book of Dencombe, the protagonist. Recuperating from a serious illness, Dencombe mournfully discovers

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52 Ibid., p. 257.  
53 Matthiessen, op. cit., p. 6.
that he does not fully recognize his own book. The sense of lost opportunity to do what he has really wanted to do overwhelms the realization that his career has ended with a work as magnificent as The Middle Years. In this book Dencombe perceives the art that surpasses his difficulties, and his appreciation of his own talent produces a hope that he may yet have a second chance. Development and attainment of his art have required so many years of experience and mistakes "that to fructify, to use the material, one should have a second age, an extension."54 Unafraid of suffering or even death, the author (with the regret common to the artists in "The Artist of the Beautiful," "The Death of the Lion," and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro") dreads "the idea that his reputation should stand on the unfinished. It is not with his past but with his future that it should properly be concerned."55 Dencombe's appreciation for the great tribute paid him by his young admirer, someone who sincerely cares for his work, transfigures his despair into triumph, and in intense enlightenment the author declares:

A second chance—that's the delusion. There never was to be but one. We work in the dark—we do what we can—we give what we have. Our doubt is our passion and our passion is our task. The rest is the madness of art.56

54 Henry James, The Novels and Tales of Henry James (New York, 1909), XVI, 82.
55 Ibid., p. 93. 56 Ibid., p. 105.
Dencombe's devoted admirer is young Doctor Hugh, who confesses that Dencombe's books are the only ones worth his reading twice and that Dencombe is "the only man who has put flesh between the ribs of an art that was starving on superstitions." 57 Hugh has refrained from writing to the author because of a deep respect, but he is delighted at his opportunity to talk with him when Dencombe suffers a relapse. As intelligent as he is, Hugh misses Dencombe's intention in The Middle Years, but his interest in the man makes him reread the book to gain a better appreciation. Furthermore, his intense devotion to the novelist and good literature leads him to forfeit a large inheritance by paying homage to the author instead of to his wealthy, selfish patient.

Though there is to be no second chance for the author, there is one for the public. It is the public's opportunity to read and study the author's work to discover the author's intention. If the author can be assured that even one reader has obtained the full understanding and appreciation of his work, then he can rejoice in the glory of success.

A pronounced loss of communication between the artist and society occurs in "The Author of Beltraffio," for it is a tale in which the artist's work creates an expanding void between him and his wife. Though he is unaware of the possible tragic consequences, he is conscious of the threat to his

57 Ibid., p. 88.
personal happiness, yet the artist strives persistently to satisfy his artistic aspirations.

The full idea for "The Author of Beltraffio" originated in the comments on the embarrassments of the life and character of an eminent author. James was informed by a friend that the author's wife "objected" intensely to what he wrote. She couldn't bear it . . . and that naturally created a tension--1.  

"The Author of Beltraffio" concerns the conflict between author and wife because of his books. The author is Mark Ambient, who with his book Beltraffio is the first to write a masterpiece in aesthetics.

People had endeavored to sail nearer to "truth" in the cut of their sleeves and the shape of their sideboard; but there had not as yet been, among English novels, such an example of beauty of execution and "intimate" importance of them. Nothing had been done in that line from the point of view of art for art.  

Mark Ambient, like the true artist, is a perfectionist. His purpose is to picture life itself. In this passage he explains his ideas:

When I see the kind of things Life herself, the brazen hussy, does, I despair of ever catching her peculiar trick. She has an impudence, Life! If one risked a fiftieth part of the effects she risks! It takes ever so long to believe it. . . . It isn't till one has been watching her some forty years that one finds out half of what she's up to! Therefore one's earlier things must inevitably contain a mass of rot. And with what one sees, on one side, with its tongue in its cheek,
defying one to be real enough, and on the other the bonnes gens rolling up their eyes at one's cynicism, the situation has elements of the ludicrous which the poor reproducer himself is doubtless in a position to appreciate better than any one else. Of course one mustn't worry about the bonnes gens. 60

Ambient feels that those who cannot be real enough in their art should be forbidden to write, for he considers imperfection a crime of both aesthetic and social natures. His fear of scandal prevents his writing his better and bolder thoughts.

The wife of Mark Ambient is almost perfect except for her lack of intellectual sympathy toward him. In her is the "deep hostility which the worldly vested interests always feel for the close and inquiring scrutiny of basic values exercised by the race of artists." 61 With supreme resignation she listens to the praises of her husband and admits that he is very clever but that she does not read his books. Mrs. Ambient, wary and fearful of beauty, contends that one should not "cultivate or enjoy it without extraordinary precautions and reserves." 62 Though Mark admires his wife's good sense in general, he scornfully explains her conception of a novel as "a thing so false that it makes him blush. It's a thing so hollow, so dishonest, so lying, in which life is so blinked and blinded, so dodged and disfigured, that it

60 Ibid., pp. 42-43. 61Andreas, op. cit., p. 108.

62James, op. cit., XVI, 46.
makes his ears burn." In short, Mrs. Ambient considers her husband's writings immoral, and she fears his influence on the ideals and principles of their child. She becomes so obsessed with this fear that she refuses the father opportunity even to come near the small boy any more than is absolutely necessary. When their son contracts diphtheria, Mrs. Ambient, by not administering to him the medicine, allows the child to die rather than live to be subjected to his father's unchristian ideas. Afterwards, however, her grief converts her to a degree, and she reads Ambient's new book and part of Beltraffio before her early death.

Certainly the reaction of Mrs. Ambient to her husband's art is one of exaggeration, but this case proves the inability of some people to appreciate good literature. As Ambient says, "There's a hatred of art, there's a hatred of literature--I mean of the genuine kinds. Oh, the shams--those they'll swallow by the bucket." He is indifferent to the ignorance of the simple, unappreciative readers and little regards the vulgar treatments given him by the newspapers.

"The Author of Beltraffio" may be compared in certain respects to Hawthorne's "The Prophetic Pictures." Ambient is like the painter, who gratifies his artistic impulse.

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63 Ibid., p. 47. 64 Matthesen, op. cit., p. 72.
65 James, op. cit., XVI, 47.
regardless of its effects on others. Mrs. Ambient's attitude toward her husband's lack of precautions and reserves reflects Hawthorne's comment about the painter:

It is not good for man to cherish a solitary ambition. Unless there be those around him by whose example he may regulate himself, his thoughts, desires, and hopes will become extravagant, and he the semblance, perhaps the reality, of a madman. 66

As the painter's society suspects him of sacrilege and of dealing with the Devil, Ambient's wife considers him a pagan, and Mark's sister implies a contrast between his ideas and Mrs. Ambient's extremely religious and moral views.

The artists in these tales of Henry James are doomed men. They are "as doomed as the characters in Hemingway, but not as in Hemingway by the coming common death." 67 Either they cannot meet the requirements of society, or society will not accept them regardless of their efforts. Therefore, these artists succumb to the pressures of corrupt society, or society refuses them a living or recognition. In "The Lesson of the Master," "The Death of the Lion," and "The Coxon Fund" the authors give in to society, but the authors in the other four stories stand apart. The author in "The Next Time" does attempt to give in to society, but he fails to meet the requirements.

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67 Dupree, op. cit., p. 205.
These stories present a number of admonitions to the reading public in regard to the artist. The reading public should pay the artist his due attention and should expend the attention on the artist's work, not his personal life. The literary critic should carefully and seriously study the author's work, and he should examine and appreciate the work the author has done instead of that which he might have done.  

$^{68}$ Andreas, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
CHAPTER IV

HEMINGWAY

Continuing the theme initiated by Hawthorne and developed by James, Ernest Hemingway vividly reflects in the short story, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," the problem of the artist in society. Hemingway's treatment of the theme reveals the artist versus a society of materialism and patronage. The artist abandons his art for the pleasures of a society he comes to despise, and he dies before he can restore his personal satisfaction by resuming his art.

Hemingway's artist compares with the artists of Hawthorne and James on several points, which will be treated in greater detail later in this chapter. He is similar to artists of both Hawthorne and James in the discovery of the necessity of self-fulfillment and in the attitude toward death. His attitude toward his relinquished art reflects the attitude of Hawthorne's mechanical genius, and his submission to society and his acceptance of material patronage recall the artists of James.

The origin and outline of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" can easily be traced back to Hemingway's own life. It is almost certain that Hemingway has used for the background of the
story the incident in which he himself, seriously ill, had
been flown out of the plains country of Africa, where he
could see the snow-capped Kilimanjaro, and east to Nairobi
for medical treatment. In such a situation it would be only
natural for him to consider the plight of an artist who dies
before he completes his work. This situation is only the
"germ" of the story, as James would call it, however; the
details are of Hemingway's imagination.¹

The artist in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is Harry, a
writer, dying because of a gangrened leg resulting from an
infection occurring while he and his wife are on a safari in
Africa. As Harry senses death approaching, he becomes acutely
aware of himself as a failure in life. Harry has the talent for writing and once had the inspiration as well, but at
one point in his career he gave up his art for an easier,
more glamorous life. He has come to realize the false values
of his second way of life, and the adventure in Africa, where
he had been happiest in the better part of his life, has been
designed to recondition his mind for resuming his writing.
Ironically, though, as his mind attempts a rebirth, his body
begins to die, and for Harry, as for Dencombe in "The Middle
Years," there is no time for a second chance.

The realization of lost opportunity causes Harry to
reflect upon the reasons for his not having applied himself

to his work. His excuse is that he has collected and preserved his thoughts and experiences until he should have acquired enough knowledge to write them well. He rationalizes that by not having tried to write these things he has not risked failing in the attempt, and he further contemplates that the procrastination may be due to inability to write them. In reality, however, the writer admits to himself that he has sacrificed his talent for security and comfort. Believing the rich people to be glamorous, he had been attracted to them and had gained a place in their society by marrying wealthy women, each one wealthier than the preceding one. In this life of ease and luxury he had retained his visions of writing. "But he would never do it, because each day of not writing, of comfort, of being that which he despised, dulled his ability and softened his will to work so that, finally, he did no work at all."\(^2\)

The two extremes of society—the poor and the rich—have affected Harry's talent in different ways. It had been the atmosphere of the poor and common people that had stimulated his ambition to write, and it had been the environment of the rich that had stifled his inspiration. The society he had loved best centered in the "poverty quarters" of Paris, where he had lived very simply, had enjoyed the

friendship of his neighbors, and had witnessed interesting real-life dramas everyday. It had been in that society that he had begun his writing career in a cheap top-floor hotel room, from which he could hear and observe the experiences that offered him an abundance of material for his work. The rich society for which he had yearned, on the other hand, had deluded him; Harry had found the wealthy people to be dull and repetitious. In their luxurious modes of living they sank into boredom and drank too much or frittered away their time in meaningless actions. Harry's discovery of the falsity of their type of life had been a rude shock, but, lacking the courage to rebel, he had attempted to hide the knowledge in the recesses of his mind. To establish peace of mind, he had tried unsuccessfully to avoid thinking and to assume an indifferent attitude toward his relinquished art as he allowed himself to pursue a life of physical comfort and mental sloth in a society he had come to despise.

Harry's last wife has become a symbol of that which has destroyed his writing talent. She is the wealthiest of all the women who have provided his financial security and comfort. In his disgust with himself Harry transfers to his wife the blame for the destruction of his talent, but he justly admits that her only crime has been in having money and spending it lavishly on him. Harry realizes that if it had not been this woman who had made him too comfortable to
work, it would have been another. Except for her keeping him in constant, monotonous luxury, she is a good wife, devoted to him and thoughtful of his needs and interests. It is ironical that she has been attracted to Harry by envy of the life he leads and the belief that he does exactly what he wishes to do, for, in truth, he has a contempt for his manner of living and despises himself for continuing to drift aimlessly about. Though she loves him as writer, man, companion, and proud possession, she lacks insight into his artistic nature and cannot see the damaging effects of her money. Not comprehending the true purpose of the safari, which is to aid Harry's adjusting himself to his former way of life by employing the minimum of comfort, the woman laments that he could have had his adventures in Hungary, where they could also have been comfortable. She likes his books, but she cannot understand his need to write; after all, she has sufficient money so that he has no necessity to work.

Harry, however, not only feels the necessity to restore his personal dignity and to make proper use of the talent which he has betrayed; he considers it a duty to write. He has experienced and observed the changes, major and minute, in people and events in the world; he has been a part of it. He is one of the few with the innate ability to record his observations, and, having witnessed these changes and events,
he is in a position to give an authentic account of them. Besides these, Harry feels it his duty to pass on to others the wisdom or philosophy he has acquired by living in the world, and he has an intense desire to expose accurately the society of the very rich. With the exception of his wish to remove the mask from the face of the society which has proved detrimental to his aspirations, his intention is not to hurt, an act he could easily do, but merely to record and inform.

The epigraph of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is significant in the study of Harry. His life involves a conflict between artistic and moral idealism and aimless materialism. Kilimanjaro symbolizes Truth, and the leopard frozen on its western summit symbolizes the writer's moral nature. The mysterious force that has driven the predatory animal to the snowy height is the same kind of force that preserves the idealism of the man in a purely material world.\(^3\) Whereas the leopard has struggled to reach the summit, Harry dies in the valley. In its attempt to reach the Ngāje Ngāi, or the "House of God," the leopard dies but becomes preserved indefinitely by freezing so that, in a sense, it becomes immortal. Harry's dream preceding his death bears out his desire for immortality, for in his dream he sees himself transported to the top of the mountain. As the leopard has become "immortal"

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by the freezing of a physical carcass, Harry has hoped to achieve immortality through his writings. Like the leopard, though, the writer dies before he reaches the height.

Hemingway's artist embodies many likenesses to Hawthorne's mechanical genius, Owen Warland in "The Artist of the Beautiful," and James's writers—Neil Paraday in "The Death of the Lion," Henry St. George in "The Lesson of the Master," Dencombe in "The Middle Years," and Frank Saltram in "The Coxon Fund." Both Harry and Paraday readily admit themselves into the social circle but excuse their entrance as a means of obtaining subject matter for their writings. Like St. George, Harry abandons his art for the luxuries of life, yet he retains a suppressed spark of inspiration. Just as Warland scoffs at the mechanical marvels of others during his brief period of submission to the influence of materialistic society, Harry feigns indifference to the art he has forsaken. At the cost of self-respect he continues to accept his wives' riches in the same manner in which Saltram receives from his benefactors the monetary gifts which debase his personal dignity; Harry, however, does not allow this benevolence to destroy his artistic ability completely. As Warland and St. George come to realize the importance of the sense of having done one's best with the talent he possesses, Harry also discovers the same necessity. Death becomes important to Warland only because he fears the lack
of time to give physical form to his inspiration; Harry's sudden sense of approaching death fills him with desperation to write, even to dictate his thoughts or to telescope as much as possible into one paragraph, just as Paraday insists upon having his incomplete manuscript published, before his life is snuffed out. Like Dencombe, he needs and cannot have a second chance.

As Hawthorne and James have indicated in their fiction, Hemingway stresses the necessity of the artist's keeping himself apart from society even while living in it. The writer must live in society to obtain his material, but he must remain apart to use it. Too much contact with society stifles the inspiration. The artist can more easily maintain his distance in a poor society than in a rich one, for in the poor society everyone is so busily engaged in the struggle to survive that nobody has time to interfere with the artist and his work. The artist in such an environment can keep his mind free from financial worries and social obligations so that he can fill his imagination with thoughts of his work. He can enjoy social contact at his will, yet he can always withdraw to his privacy without hindrances. By simple observation he can, without social pressures, secure material for his work, for the poor society abounds in interesting life experiences. In contrast to the poor society, the rich society demands time and attention of the writer, is dull and
repetitious, has a meaningless existence, and yields nothing worthwhile to compensate for the demands made of the artist.

The writer must be strong enough to resist the temptations detrimental to his art. Money and comfort, according to Hemingway, combine to form one of the greatest obstacles to the artist. One tends to make himself comfortable in relation to the amount of money he has, and too much comfort is harmful to the artist. As the writer Harry says, too much physical comfort is as harmful to the author's mind as too much fat is to the athlete's body; both decrease the functioning powers. Comfort breeds neglect or carelessness of the mind, and the writer becomes mentally lazy. Too much comfort lessens the necessity and the will to work.

The artist's reward is a just compensation for the sacrifices made to obtain it. The immediate reward is the self-satisfaction of knowing that one has developed his ability to its full extent and has expressed his observations of life kindled with his own personal feelings. Doing this, the artist will achieve immortality in the sense that he will live in his writings.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway all show the artist to be in constant conflict with society. Society is, for the most part, materialistic and cannot comprehend the idealism of the artist. Society is also mediocre and cannot truly appreciate the artist's work. The artist is opposed by a society which not only misunderstands him but even condemns his purposes as well.

As a member of a materialistic society, the artist is also in conflict with himself. Since materialism and idealism are in direct opposition to each other, the artist must decide which one he is to seek and to retain. He cannot effect a compromise, for such an act would result in the mediocrity of his work, which could no longer be called true art. If the artist, like Warland, retains his whole idealism, he is denied the usual material pleasures, is rejected by society, and is isolated to some extent from society. On the other hand, if the artist, like St. George and Harry, succumbs to the materialism of society, he comes to despise himself for his misplaced values and harbors a deep feeling of dissatisfaction arising from the lack of self-fulfillment.
Isolation from society is a point on which Hawthorne, James, and Hemingway vary. Hawthorne seems to feel that isolation from society is inevitable though not necessary. Hawthorne seems to believe that the woman, such as Annie Hovenden, could be a link between the artist and society if she returned the artist's love. James, especially through the words of St. George, advises deliberate isolation from women specifically and from society in general. Hemingway reflects the necessity of complete isolation from the rich society and partial withdrawal from the poor society.

The artist's full realization of himself as artist is usually accompanied by a disregard for worldly matters and a concern for the brevity of life. Life becomes important to him only as a means of completing his art. The artist is conscious of the great amount of time required for gathering the mental material for his work, and his one fear is that he may die before he can embody his idealism into a complete physical form.

Art, to be complete, is a physical embodiment of the ideal. The idea or the mental image is naturally the primary thing, but it is not sufficient to be called art. The artist must give a material form to his idealism. One may have the idea and yet not have art because of his failure to reproduce that idea in a physical form. For example, Warland, Paraday, and Harry all had for a long time the mental images of their
art, but those were not the same as works of art. Warland's image became art when he finished the mechanical butterfly, and Faraday's idea became art when he put it into a book, but Harry's thoughts, not expressed in a physical form, failed to materialize into a work of art. Art is also a demanding mistress that exacts the artist's full attention.

The reward of art is a just compensation for the sacrifices made to obtain it. To Hawthorne the reward is the satisfaction of having transcended the physical realm, James considers self-fulfillment to be the reward, and Hemingway feels that the reward of true art is immortality through one's work of art. All three agree that the reward of the artist, whatever it may mean exactly to the individual, far surpasses any material rewards of society.
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Articles
