

THE RELATION OF THE BIBLE TO AMERICAN LITERATURE
IN TEACHING FILIPINO YOUNG PEOPLE

By

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America rests upon four corner-stones: the English Bible, the English language, the common law, and the tradition of liberty. But liberty, language, and law might have been drawn from the Bible alone. Had we brought nothing with us across the sea besides this supreme book we might still have been great. Without this book America could not have become what she is, and when she loses its guidance and wisdom she will be America no more.

-- Dr. Odell Shepard

"The English Bible and American Men of Letters"

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. The Statement of the Problem

It is a notable fact that knowledge of the literature of other peoples promotes understanding, harmony, and unity of spirit with them. What men understand they sympathize with especially when the experiences, fears, longings, and hopes parallel their own as, basically and humanly, they often do. In their literature are laid bare the sensitiveness of the emotions, conscience, imagination, and the deepest aspirations of a people, of which their daily activities and practices are but the outward manifestations.

A conspicuous characteristic of American literature is that its tone and spirit bear the unmistakable effect of a vital experience with and knowledge of the content of the Bible. The American Fathers who founded the nation were irresistibly concerned with the problems of the soul and of destiny. They fed on the Word of God, and the literature which they were father to bears the stamp of their spiritual lineaments. The idealism, universality, spirituality, the vision and robust courage, the exuberant joy and yet the wholesome sense of "oughtness" of the Book of Life have indelibly affected the norms of American thought and life.

Yet in the teaching of this literature, this aspect of its character is often neglected and the valuable

opportunity for spiritual experience and growth as well as the appreciation of the vitality and influence of Christianity in men's lives as seen in their writings, is often wasted. It is a loss that we scarce can afford to allow to continue. Therefore, in consideration of the situation, our problem is to examine the relation of the Christian mode of thought and life as embodied in the Bible upon American literature. It is hoped that the findings will encourage those who teach the subject to Filipino young people to give this fact the proper amount of emphasis so that the study of literature may not only sharpen spiritual discernment but may also lead to a desire to study the Book of God.

B. The Importance of the Problem

The problem under consideration is important for three reasons which are inherent: first, in the present relation of the Philippines to the United States; second, in the educational system of the Philippines; and, third, in the religious situation of the Philippines.

1. The Present Relation of the Philippines to the United States

During its comparatively short but eventful history the Philippines has been under the influence of various cultures -- Chinese, Malayan, Dutch, Portuguese,

English, Spanish, American, and Japanese. Of these the strongest have been the Spanish and American, but because of the policy of benevolent government and democratic education which the United States pursued during its less than half a century of administration of the Islands, the Filipinos have absorbed more of the American language, civil government, educational ideas and practices than they had of Spanish culture during a period of three hundred and seventy-seven years. Yet because of the rapidity with which they have advanced to positions of governmental and educational responsibility before they were fully ready for it, and because of the fewness of generations of Filipinos actually born and brought up under American influence, it must be admitted that there is much need for greater Filipino understanding of the real bases of American democracy, ideas, and practices which they have assimilated into their culture, but many of which they follow only the form, missing the spirit. Much of this understanding can be secured from a proper study of American literature as suggested here. This study is very timely at present, when the Philippines has so recently been granted her political independence in a manner so unique in the history of colonization, and when the bonds that unite the two nations together must be spiritual than political.

2. The Educational System in the Philippines

The public school system in the Philippines is

centralized under the Bureau of Education which is headed by a Director. The departmentalization of instruction follows the American pattern -- elementary, high school, college, and university. Instruction is done in English. World history and literature are studied but because of historical relationship, that of the United States and of England receive the greater emphasis. As the Church and the State are separate the teaching of religion in the public schools is banned. In Catholic schools every subject possible is correlated to the propagation of Roman Catholicism. Many Protestant schools tend to follow the public schools in the absolute secularization of academic subjects leaving all religious training to Bible and Sunday School classes. Since most of the students come from Roman Catholic homes and do not attend these classes they cannot be reached in this way.

3. The Present Religious Situation in the Philippines

The estimated population of the Philippines is 19,066,800.¹ About two-thirds are Roman Catholics and about 1,000,000 belong to the "Aglipayano," or Independent Catholic Church organized in 1899 by a Filipino priest, Gregorio Aglipay. There are about 500,000 Moslems and 500,000 pagans. Two per cent of the entire population are Protestants of various denominations. More than ninety-five per cent of the people are Biblical illiterates.

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1. World Almanac, 1948.

What little knowledge they have of the Bible consists of the stories that get into the literature courses. The Roman Catholic versions disseminated, among the barrio and small town populations especially, are chiefly legends of the saints and their miraculous powers.

Thus there is an urgent need for spiritual enlightenment through all avenues possible. Of all secular subjects, that of the literature of America which reveals so much of the true basis of the spirit of democracy based on national righteousness is one of the best that could be used for the purpose.

C. The Limitation of the Problem

The vastness of material and the range of time to be covered prevent an exhaustive treatment of the subject under consideration. The field will be limited only to material which will be of value in teaching the fourth year of high school and the first two years of college.

Obviously also, not every American author can be included nor can every one of those chosen for study be treated in full detail. Consequently, this study will be concerned only with those personalities and writings in each period of the literary history of the United States which are definitely connected with our problem. Considering the Bible as the "constitution" of the Christian religion and the chief source of its revealed truths, our task

is to investigate the influence of the Bible in that area of human thought where the American people have recorded their judgments, feelings, and purposes concerning life.

A practical approach to this problem should follow up this investigation for space and time will not permit a just treatment of that phase of the problem, so it will have to be left to further research.

D. The Method of Procedure

The general plan of this parallels that of most textbooks in literature. The literary history is divided into a few main periods in chronological development. Then each period will be studied in the following general order:

1. A brief statement of the historical background giving important events and significant social and political conditions.

2. A general view of the literature of the period, its dominant types and its relation to historical and social movements.

3. A study showing the literary uses of the Bible in the literature of the period.

E. Sources of Data

As a basis for this study the two-volume College Book of American Literature by Ellis, Pound, and Spohn is

used because this is the type of material that is most accessible to teachers and students in the Philippines. The literary divisions or periods used are those in American Literature by William A. Long. As need arises other anthologies and historical books are also consulted.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

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THE BACKGROUND OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

A. Introduction

To gain a proper understanding of American literature it is necessary to go back beyond the colonial period to the England of the sixteenth century. Several of the chief movements which transpired then had close relation to the problem of this study.

It is the purpose of this chapter to give a summary view of the major events, the dominant tendencies, and the prevailing spirit of the age which preceded the settlement of North America and of the position that the Bible had in England at that time.

B. Historical Background

The most significant events in England in the sixteenth century were the Renaissance, the reign of the Tudors, the Reformation, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada.¹

1. The Renaissance, 1485-1514

The fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Turks in 1453 scattered the classical scholars, who

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1. John R. Green: A History of the English People, Vols. II - III.

had made it the center of their labors, all over Europe. Many of them moved westward bringing priceless Greek manuscripts including the Scriptures and ushered in the Era of New Learning, sometimes called the Revival of Letters or the Renaissance. Padua, Bologna, and Florence became new centers of learning. English scholars who studied there returned to teach at Oxford and Cambridge and from there the Renaissance spread all over England. The movement was facilitated by the printing press which had been invented earlier in the fifteenth century by Gutenberg. In 1476 William Caxton set up the first printing press in England thus providing the chief instrument for the democratization of learning by opening the channels of literature.¹

2. The Reign of the Tudors, 1485-1625

In more than one way this was the most significant period in English history and literature. The strong Tudor rulers governed England with absolute power, yet they were friendly to progressive thought and movements. The best known of the Tudor line were Henry VIII, who lived through the English phase of the Renaissance and the great Protestant Reformation, and Elizabeth whose brilliant reign was climaxed by the rise of England as a world power.

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1. Green, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 54.

The most comprehensive term for the spirit of the Tudor world is "expansion," geographically, politically, and in the realm of education and religion. The discovery of America and the explorations by the Cabots aroused the English to a high pitch of sea-fever which later made England the mistress of the sea.

3. The Reformation, 1540-1603

The important religious movement in western Christendom which was called the Reformation started early in the sixteenth century and resulted in the formation of various Protestant churches. The spiritual basis of the movement was the desire for a purer religion than that afforded by the corrupt papacy at Rome, and for intellectual freedom from medieval scholasticism. In England, as in other parts of Europe, a conspicuous part of the movement was a turbulent struggle between religion and politics. Though friendly to the new learning, Henry VIII was loyal to the Roman Church in the beginning. He wrote a book against Luther, banned the Protestant Bible, burned at stake the opponents of Catholicism, and thus earned from the pope the title of "Defender of the Faith."¹ His break from Rome was caused by the pope's refusal to invalidate his marriage to Catherine of Aragon

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1. George B. Woods, Homer A. Watt, George K. Anderson:
The Literature of England, Vol. I, p. 279.

so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. Infuriated by the knowledge that the refusal was caused by the pope's fear of antagonizing Emperor Charles V, Catherine's uncle, he secured from Parliament in 1534 the passage of the Act of Supremacy. This declared him the head of the English Church and gave him the right to confiscate the enormous endowments of the English monasteries. His action was aided by the growth of new learning which upheld individual freedom, and by the intense popular hatred for the clergy because of their abuses, power, and immunity from laws governing the laity. The powerful Catholics opposed these moves and in the ensuing conflict much that was old and venerable in English life was ruthlessly destroyed.

Henry VIII was succeeded by Mary, his daughter by Catherine, who was a devout Catholic. Seeking to re-establish Catholicism as the supreme faith of England, she put to death so many Protestants that she earned the name "Bloody Mary." Persecution failed, however, because "the number of Protestants grew with every murder done in the cause of Catholicism."¹

Mary was succeeded by her half-sister Elizabeth, the daughter of Anne Boleyn. While far from being an ideal character, she ruled England successfully for forty-

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1. Green, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 292.

five years. With much courage and persistence she met the religious situation with a policy of wise toleration, a strange fascinating power, and far-sighted vision. Peace at home and abroad was her fundamental aim and under her, England attained a national unity as never before in history.

4. The Defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588

The cause of Spain's hostility to England was basically religious but it was also political and economic. Elizabeth's refusal to marry the Catholic King Philip of Spain, the failure of the plot to put Mary, Queen of Scots, on the English throne, English aid to the rebellious Netherlands, and the successes of the English seamen against the Spanish navy in the New World all contributed to Philip's resentment. With papal encouragement and aid the mighty Armada was prepared for the invasion of England. The English victory in this supreme battle had a world-wide significance. It made England a world power and it marked the breakdown of the Spanish empire. In a way it decided who should control the New World.

C. Social Changes

The reign of the Tudors saw the change from feudalism to the present social order. With the new learning there was a general democratization, and enlarged

commerce resulted in middle class expansion. Travel broadened interests and ideas and the manners, dress, and standard of living showed the effect of foreign contact.

The English people were now filled with a new spirit, the spirit of high hopes, large ideals, superb energy, and boundless enthusiasm, the spirit of exuberant and irresistible youth. Life was invested with a new glory; the world was recreated, its heavens lifted, and its horizon stretched into limitless space. The imagination was set free; nothing was too large to be possible or too strange to be true.

D. Prevailing Tendencies

1. Political

The prolonged War of the Roses had so depleted the national resources of England that the people welcomed the strong leadership of the Tudors in spite of their arrogance, absolutism, and ruthlessness. However, the spiritually enlightened generation, the product of the Reformation, already refused to swallow the doctrine of absolute monarchy even during the reign of the masterful Henry VIII. The wise and discerning Elizabeth, while arrogantly claiming absolutism, learned to yield at the right times to the will of her subjects and thus won their loyalty and devotion. The idea of mutual loyalty between the ruler and the ruled and that monarchs are not

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1. Julian W. Abernethy: English Literature, p. 115.

above the divine law in a moral universe was gaining foothold. At the same time the English, aware of the dangers within and without that threatened their country, learned that loyalty to the ruler was essential to national safety.

2. Educational

Medieval ideas of science, superstition, alchemy, and the scholastic method of reasoning were gradually being supplanted by the new learning. Public-spirited citizens, especially the Puritans, worked hard for the establishment of schools because they held that education was essential for a proper basis of religion. Under Bacon the process of inductive reasoning became popular. More of the young men of the nobility attended the universities, listened at famous inns to great thinkers, and finished off their education by continental travel. Scholarship, the classics, the humanities, and religion were advanced under the patronage of the court and the tutelage of Oxford and Cambridge. The printing press did invaluable service in the acquirement and circulation of knowledge and in the raising of literacy. Within a few decades after the printing of books, practically every Christian home possessed a copy of the Bible.¹

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1. Ante, p. 3.

3. Literary

The enthusiasm for life, the impelling force of new ideas and interests, and the surge of national pride stimulated creative expression and produced a literature characterized by spontaneity, brilliance, ornateness, profusion, and loftiness. The expression "a nest of singing birds" applied to England at the Elizabethan period refers to the clearest and fullest outburst of lyrical expression that has ever been heard in any country. "Literary expression was both a fashion and a passion."¹ Diversity and experimentation characterized Tudor prose. However, the crowning glory of Elizabethan literature was Shakespeare and the drama, for both overshadow every other literary personality and form of the age.

4. Religious

a. The English Bible

Since Protestantism regarded the Bible as the supreme authority in theological doctrines as over against the Church Councils, the translation of the Bible into the vernacular became a necessity. English scholars devoted their labors to the task, some of them paying the price of martyrdom.

The first complete version of the Bible in English was made in 1380 by John Wyclif, the leader of a

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1. Abernethy, op. cit., p. 116.

strong reform movement known as Lollardism, which failed because the people were not ready for it.¹ In 1525 William Tyndale's version stirred England like a revolution. Tyndale died a martyr, but nothing could stop the popularity of his work. His excellent use of the vernacular had a basic quality which was used as a pattern for later translations. Miles Coverdale's version in 1535 was less scholarly. In 1537 the martyr, John Rogers, put out the "Matthew's" Bible, a combination of the Coverdale and Tyndale versions. In 1539 the Great Bible which derived its name from its size was published by Miles Coverdale, and was the first to be chosen for reading in churches. The famous Geneva Bible came out in 1560, produced by English Protestants in exile during the reign of "Bloody Mary." It became the fireside Bible of the English people because of its small size, bold type, and numbered verse divisions. It was probably the one used by Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, and the Plymouth Pilgrims. In 1582 the Rheims New Testament, and in 1609 the Douai Old Testament were produced by Catholics in exile during the Elizabethan reign. These works are often called the "Vulgate in English dress." In 1568 the "Bishops'" Bible was produced by Archbishop Parker and eight other bishops and scholars in an effort to counteract the popularity of

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1. Lars P. Qualben: A History of the Christian Church, p. 193.

the Geneva Bible which the Archbishop disapproved of because of its Calvinistic interpretative notes. However, the unwieldy size and expensiveness of the "Bishops'" Bible made it unattractive. In 1603 James I, in an effort to reunite the various religious groups ordered a translation that could be used universally. The most brilliant scholars of England were given the task and in 1611 the "Authorized" or King James Version was issued. More than any other this version rose to unique fame and exerted a lasting influence on English life and literature. The rare beauty, simplicity, and majesty of its language and the aptness of its allusions and figures won the hearts of the people and became a permanent part of the fiber of English speech.¹

Too much cannot be said of the influence of the Bible on the life and character of the English people. As Green, the historian puts it,

The whole moral effect which is produced now-a-days by the religious newspaper, the tract, the essay, the missionary report, the sermon, was then produced by the Bible alone; and its effect in this way, however dispassionately we examine it, was simply amazing. The whole nation had become a church.²

b. Puritanism

Puritanism was a religious and political movement in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth

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1. Woods, Watt, and Anderson, op. cit., pp. 279-280.
2. Green, op. cit., p. 12.

centuries. Its chief aim was to "purify" the English Church by eliminating its episcopal organization and its ritualism still retained from Catholicism; and English life by stressing the spiritual values or "inner life." When it became involved in a political struggle with Charles I, great numbers of Puritans emigrated to New England "to seek in the wilderness of distant America that freedom which their own country no longer afforded them."¹

E. Summary

A brief summary of English history during the sixteenth century has been given to get the background of the beginnings of American literature. The chief movements noted were the Renaissance, the Tudor period, the Reformation, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada because all these contributed to the nature of the settlement of North America. The Renaissance or revival of classical learning spread from Europe to England and shaped English thought and society. The reign of the Tudors established peace and gave rise to prosperity, expansion, and nationalism. The Reformation, aided by the turn of political events established Protestantism in England and wrought

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1. Woods, Watt, and Anderson, op. cit., p. 560.

great changes in government, education, literature, and religion. The defeat of the Spanish Armada wrecked the last Catholic hope for England's reconciliation with Rome and made England a world power. All these changes caused the growth of democracy in society and politics, stimulated learning and creative expression, and promoted the return to pure religion based on Scriptural authority alone. The Bible was translated into the English language in several versions, the best known one being the King James Version. The Bible exerted a mighty influence on English life and literature. Reformers who wanted a still purer form of religion and would not conform to the established Church emigrated to other countries, among them North America.

CHAPTER II

THE COLONIAL PERIOD 1607-1765

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A. Introduction

More than is realized, American thought and conduct today reflect the points of view and the patterns of reasoning which were established by the first colonists. Why did the United States hesitate so long to use the atom bomb even after Pearl Harbor? Why did she, after having gained possession of the Philippines both by conquest and purchase freely grant her complete independence? Why have many Jews who had been forcibly ejected from Europe been allowed to get into the United States and own homes here? Why are there no laws against Roman Catholicism in a country that is dominantly Protestant? The attitudes that have prompted such actions have their roots in the principles that have governed the founding of the American nation as seen in the records of history and literature.

Colonial literature is chiefly the expression of Protestant middle-class Englishmen regarding the chief concerns of their life in a new environment. It embodies the basic moral and spiritual ideals of America and is interesting and important because of its closeness to the lives and experiences of the men and women who wrote it.

To know these men and women is to feel a pride and a confidence in the moral stature of mankind and to feel a deeper love and veneration for America. Their writings which give the human and intensely personal background of their achievements reveal that "they steered by stars which older shipmen knew."

B. The Spirit of the Early Settlers

The zealous Puritan, the high-born adventurer, the practical businessman, the classical scholar, and the ordinary common man were all represented among the early colonists, but they all possessed certain characteristics in common.

1. Knowledge of the Bible

One might wonder whether the early colonists brought the Bible to America or whether the Bible brought them. It was the best known book among rich and poor, educated and ignorant. To the hungry mind of the Puritan people which abjured all art except that of literature, the Bible supplied not only religious instruction and sacred history but secular learning, folklore, anecdote, proverbial wisdom, lyric poetry, and romance. From Old Testament characters and incidents the colonial writers drew freely their illustrations as from classic mythology. In many ways they showed a childlike credulity, accepting

the literal text of the Bible in all matters, seeing divine intervention in all unusual events and the activities of the devil in all persons who showed the least sign of uniqueness in behavior. For this reason many men and women were executed as witches or as other agents of Satan. Bradford, Winthrop, the Mathers, Ward, and Sewall give evidence of this childlike faith. But more than that they give the impression of the practical-mindedness of a people who faced daily the grim realities of frontier life and were prepared for it by a daily early morning reading of the Book of God.¹

2. Love of Freedom

The Anglo-Saxon passion for freedom was one of the most conspicuous traits of the Pilgrim Fathers. They brought to the New World the highest type of liberty, both of conscience and of civil state, and, determined to secure it forever to their descendants, they sought first to create free states, and then to establish a free nation based on democratic principles. No twentieth-century descendant of these people nor any foreign country that has had an intimate relation with the nation that they founded has wholly escaped the influence of the "Mayflower Compact," Winthrop's "Little Speech on Liberty" and "Model of Christian Charity."

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1. Read portions of Bradford's Of Plimouth Plantation to illustrate this.

3. The Preservation of True Religion

The Pilgrim Fathers were religious dissenters from Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire who felt that the lordly power of the prelates of the Church of England ought not to be submitted to. Therefore they resolved:

whatever it might cost them, to shake off the anti-Christian bondage, and, as the Lord's free people, to join themselves by a covenant into a church estate in the fellowship of the gospel.¹

They were of the same faith as Calvin, but heedless of the acts of parliament, they rejected the offices, courts, and canons of bishops and:

renouncing all obedience to human authority, asserted for themselves an unlimited and never-ending right to make advances in truth, and to walk in all the ways which God had made known or should make known to them.²

Thus, a chief concern of the early settlers was to fight for the security of their souls through the preservation of the freedom to worship as led by the Spirit.

4. The Middle-Class Outlook

The dominant element in the colonial population was the middle-class people, thrifty, hard-working, and Puritan in their insistence upon moral righteousness. Cut off from the tradition of medieval class society they were strongly independent, positive in their attitude to life, practical-minded in business, yet with a moral idealism

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1. George Bancroft: History of the Colonization of the United States, Vol. I, p. 300.

2. Ibid.

for which they felt a personal responsibility in bringing it about. They have been accused of narrowness and intolerance but never of hypocrisy or irreverence.

5. High Regard for Learning

Though outwardly individualistic the colonists were one in their high regard for scholarship and in their decided preference for educated men as their leaders and representatives. They were jealous for the promotion of education which for them meant religious instruction. The clergy who were the intellectual leaders in the colony laid special emphasis upon theology as the most important field of speculation and knowledge. To this end some of the great American colleges were founded during this period: Harvard 1636, William and Mary 1693, Yale 1701, Princeton 1746, King's College (Columbia) 1754, Philadelphia 1740, Brown 1764, Dartmouth 1769. Of these only Philadelphia had no connection with any Protestant denomination but it had its beginning as the Charity School, founded in 1740 by George Whitefield, the great Bible evangelist. The Bible was a basic center of learning and the standard of all wisdom for life.

C. The Nature of Colonial Literature

1. Limited Writing

Frontier living conditions -- hardships, Indian attacks, sickness, starvation -- are related in the pages

of Smith, Bradford, and Winthrop and they explain why no literature of culture was produced in this period. Men and women were too busy making history to write it; too intent in preserving life and solving the problems of liberty and authority to sit down and write sonnets and novels. Besides, they considered themselves as Englishmen living abroad so they lacked that national consciousness which gives birth to spontaneous literary expression.

2. General Style

As practical living and spiritual idealism were the great concerns of the settlers, so history and theology were the literary forms in which they wrote about themselves. A desire to keep records of the colonization motivated the keeping of annals, historical manuscripts, journals, and diaries. To point out the hand of God in the history of the colony and to defend the type of religion for which its founders stood, Mather wrote the *Magnalia Christi Americana* (Christ's Great Achievements in America) and Edwards produced *Freedom of the Will* which is the epitome of Calvinistic reasoning and which for sheer, irresistible logic has hardly a peer in the English language. Colonial poetry was imitative of English form and had a somber, morbid tone as in Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom." Noteworthy among the miscellaneous literature was Eliot's translation of the Bible into the Indian tongue, America's first contribution to the literature of original investiga-

tion, and of scholarship.

3. Biblical Terminology

One very clear evidence of the influence of the Bible on colonial literature was the amount of Biblical diction which haunted the pages of the early writers. A few quotations will illustrate this.

When his son, Increase, the chief pride and joy of Cotton Mather's heart, turned out to be a reprobate, this bitter cry was wrung from the anguished heart of the stern theologian: "Ah, my son Increase! My son, my son! My heart is water and my eyes a fountain of tears. . . Oh, my God, I am oppressed; undertake for me."¹

In telling about his conversion, Jonathan Edwards said:

Those words . . . used to be abundantly with me, I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valleys. . . My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust, that I might be nothing, and that God might be ALL, that I might become as a little child.²

In the first anti-slavery publication made in America Samuel Sewall wrote:

/Originally/ and naturally there is no such thing as slavery. Joseph was rightfully no more a slave to his brethren, than they were to him; and they had no more authority to sell him than they had to slay him. . . And the sons and daughters of New England would become more like Jacob and Rachel, if this slavery were thrust out of doors.³

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1. Quoted by William J. Long, *American Literature*, p. 60.
2. Milton Ellis, Louise Pound, George Weida Spohn: *A College Book of American Literature*, Vol. I, pp. 137, 139.
3. *Ibid.* pp. 96-97.

The English Bible phraseology has for generations been such a model of simplicity, directness, and dignity that it acts in reflex ways upon the language of men. In moments of spiritual stress they unconsciously lapse into Biblical diction and style.

D. Other Biblical Elements

1. The Bible as Authority

The various denominations of Christianity that were represented in the colony differed as to doctrine, worship, and church government, but all these were overshadowed by the importance which every group attached to the Bible as their final authority on matters of doctrine and as the ultimate source of God's revelation. But the authority of the Bible was not limited to the church organization. The early laws framed by the Massachusetts General Court constantly cited the Bible as authority. In 1741 John Cotton, a great New England preacher and civil officer, drew up a code of laws every one of which was supported by a marginal reference to the Bible. The founding of the colony at New Haven is described by Bancroft, the historian:

A title to lands was obtained by a treaty with the natives, whom they protected against the Mohawks. When, after more than a year, the free planters of the colony desired a more perfect form of government, the followers of Him who was laid in a manger held their constituent assembly in a barn. There by the influence of Davenport, it was solemnly resolved, that the Scriptures are the perfect rule of a commonwealth;

that the purity and peace of the ordinance to themselves and to their posterity, were the great end of civil order; and that church members only should be free burgesses.¹

2. The Strong Sense of God's Providential Care

Many American leaders share the conviction of Jonathan Edwards that God had chosen America to be the "glorious renovator of the world." Increase Mather, the president of Harvard for sixteen years, wrote in 1684 his most famous book, *Illustrious Providences*, a record of the marvelous works of God on earth. In 1702 his famous son, Cotton Mather, published his great work *Magnalia Christi Americana* with the express purpose of glorifying God and demonstrating His particular concern with America and its people. In 1765 John Adams wrote:

I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder, as the opening of a grand scheme and design in Providence for the illumination and the emancipation of the slavish part of mankind all over the earth.²

Bradford's *Of Plimouth Plantation* gives many instances of the colonists' strong sense of God's watchfulness over them; Winthrop's "Journal" abounds in specific instances of divine intervention; and Mary Rowlandson relates her individual experiences under the title "The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, Together with the Faithfulness of His Promises, Displayed; a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Rowlandson, (1682)." This constant tracing of all

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1. Bancroft, op. cit., pp. 403-404.

2. Merle Curti: *The Growth of American Thought*, p. 49.

blessings to God's care and bounty led to the celebration of a general Thanksgiving Service, the origin of the national Thanksgiving Day which was legally adopted under Abraham Lincoln.

3. The Covenant Idea

Implicit in the religious foundation of the democratic principle of colonization was the idea of the covenant or compact between God and man, and men with men. The Puritans' covenant theory held that:

after the fall of man, God voluntarily condescended to treat with man as with an equal and to draw up a covenant or contract with His creature in which He laid down the terms and conditions of salvation, and pledged Himself to abide by them.¹

The terms of this compact were a sacred guide to men's conduct. Massachusetts and Connecticut were commonwealths in which the lives of men should be ordered in harmony with the will of God.

In November 11, 1620 popular constitutional liberty was born in the cabin of the Mayflower when the forty-one men who, with their families constituted the founding of New England, signed a solemn compact:

In the name of God, amen; we, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign King James, having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do, by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of

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1. Perry Miller and T. H. Johnson: The Puritans, p. 58.

God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together, into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most convenient for the general good of the colony Unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.¹

4. Calvinistic Concept of God and of Man

Colonial writings pictured God as a God of wrath and justice at whose hands no sinner was spared the fullness of torment. Even a casual reading of the religious poetry, catechism, and sermons of this period will reveal this view of a stern Judge who must interpret the law without pity or favor. Michael Wigglesworth's long poem "The Day of Doom," published in 1662, was for a whole century the most popular poem in America -- so popular that it was said every Puritan child could quote its whole two hundred and twenty-four stanzas. It described the final assembling of all people before the throne of God to be judged:

O dismal day! whither shall they
for help and succor flee?
To God above with hopes to move
their greatest enemy?
His wrath is great, whose burning heat
no floods of tears can slake;
His word stands fast that they be cast
into the burning lake. . . .

On July 8, 1741 Jonathan Edwards told his congregation at Enfield, Connecticut:

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1. Bancroft, op. cit., p. 309.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten times so abominable in his eyes as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment.¹

The wrath of God is based upon the sanctity of His holiness. Because He is holy, He must abhor sin.

The colonial view of man was likewise Calvinistic. Man in his natural state was utterly corrupt, unregenerate, and worthy of nothing but damnation. According to Wigglesworth, even new-born infants were condemned but because they died too young to achieve salvation they were given "the easiest room in Hell." However, human nature became good when the Holy Spirit entered into it.

5. Insistence on Christian Conduct

John Winthrop, the first President of the United Colonies of New England, wrote in his "Model of Christian Charity":

Now the only way to avoid shipwreck and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsel of Micah: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. For this end we must be knit together in this work as one man. . . . We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community

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1. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 147.

in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.¹

Repeatedly in their writings these early writers cited the Bible as their standard for life.

E. Colonial Poetry

The first book printed in English in America was the Bay Psalm Book published in Boston in 1640. It was a translation of the Psalms into verse to facilitate their use as songs. As the translators were interested in fidelity of translation rather than in poetry the results were often grotesque, as the opening lines of the first Psalm will show:

O Blessed man, that in th' advice
of wicked doth not walk;
nor stand in sinners way, not sit
in chayre of scornful folk, . . .²

The following quotations from occasional early poems show how even the minor poetry of the period had a distinct Biblical tone.

Paul in the Pulpit, Hooker could not reach,
Yet did He Christ in Spirit so lively Preach
That living Hearers thought He did inherit
A double Portion of Paul's lively spirit.³

And when a few years shall be gone,
This mortal shall be cloth'd upon.
A corrupt carcass down it lies;
A glorious body it shall rise.
In weakness and dishonor sown,
In power 'tis rais'd by Christ alone.⁴

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1. Long, op. cit., p. 20.
2. H. C. Schweikert, Rewey Belle Inglis, John Gehlmann, Norman Foerster: *Adventures in American Literature*, p. 914.
3. From John Cotton's "On My Reverend and Dear Brother, Mr. Thomas Hooker," Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 39.
4. Anne Bradstreet; "Longing for Heaven," *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Madam, behold the Lamb of God, for there's
Your pretty lamb, while you dissolve in tears;
She lies enfolded in her Shepherd's arms
Whose bosom's always full of gracious charms.¹

Most strange it was! But yet more strange that shine
Which fill'd my soul then to the brim, to spy
My nature with Thy nature all divine
Together joined, in Him that's Thou, and I.
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone! There's run
Thy Godhead and my manhood in thy Son.²

F. Summary

Many of the national policies which differentiate America from many empire-seeking countries are explained by the spiritual bases upon which her founders relied for their authority and guidance. In general the early settlers possessed an intimate knowledge of the Bible, a passion for freedom, a zeal for true religion, a democratic attitude toward the individual, and a high regard for learning. Within a few years after the settlement many of the greatest American colleges today were founded originally for the purpose of religious education.

The strenuous task of founding a colony and the hardships and dangers of life in the new environment kept the colonists from producing any literature of culture. Early American literature consisted of historical records, journals, diaries, and descriptions of the settlement.

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1. Ibid., p. 58.

2. Edward Taylor, "The Experience," Ibid., p. 60.

Most of these records show the spiritual earnestness of the settlers, their habitual use of Biblical diction, their desire to lift their social and personal life to the standards of Christianity, their reliance upon Scriptural truths for all authority, their strong sense of God's care for them and their recognition of man's covenant relationship with God. Their theology was strongly Calvinistic and they were stern in their insistence upon moral righteousness in life. The earliest poetry consisted of crude translations of the Book of Psalms into verse. Minor poetry also had a deeply spiritual tone and terminology.

CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF THE REVOLUTION (1765-1800)

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A. Introduction

The latter half of the eighteenth century was characterized by great activity and struggle. Four major movements, continuous yet separate, were of great historic significance. The first was the great industrial expansion which resulted in increased wealth and social activity, advance in education, and rapid growth of cities. The second was the intense agitation over the colonial policies of King George of England. The bitter and widespread opposition to the Stamp Act and other unwise measures united the separate colonies into one determined and inflamed patriotic body. The conflict culminated in the third movement, the Revolutionary War, which split the colonists into two parties -- the Loyalists or Tories and the Patriots or Whigs. The last movement involved the struggle to organize and establish a constitutional government.

B. The Nature of Revolutionary Literature

One is struck at once by the closeness with which literature follows life in the marked contrast between the writings of this period and those of the preceding one. Formerly the colonies existed independently of one another,

each jealously guarding its rights. Life was regarded as a brief preparation for the hereafter upon which men fixed their minds constantly. Therefore colonial literature was characterized by its narrowness, its isolation, and its deeply religious tone. After the Stamp Act in 1765 the common cause against England broke down the superficial barriers among the various settlements and under the pressure of war and politics men's attention shifted from heaven to earth. The literature of the revolutionary period, therefore is characterized by a splendid sense of unity and comradeship, a broadening outlook, and a practical and worldly bent. Jonathan Edwards and his theology which epitomized the spiritual yearnings of his age was replaced by Benjamin Franklin with his shrewd and practical "philosophy of common sense."

The form of literature underwent a similar change and expansion. The political strife gave rise to newspapers and magazines for the publication of speeches, satires, essays, and letters. The new social life encouraged the production of crude plays by Royal Tyler and William Dunlap and the romances of Charles Brockden Brown, the earliest American novelist. Ballads and patriotic songs voiced the rising national spirit. The successive political crises gave birth to the brilliant oratory which greatly molded American government, life, and literature. Poetic forms were still imitative of English patterns but prose literature was free and individualistic. Another strong quality

of revolutionary prose was the "commonwealth quality" which is characteristic of the democratic ideal arising from a unity of purpose and a profound sense of responsibility for each other's welfare.

C. The Biblical Motivation in the Subject Matter of Literature

The great movements which engaged the best energies of the emerging nation were but the results of the spiritual seeds which were planted during the preceding era. The pressure of life in the new period took religion out of men's minds and put it in their hands. The war with England was a struggle to maintain the freedom which the early colonists had sought in the New World. The Puritan doctrine that God had given man his reason to use in the pursuit of truth caused some thinkers to apply the test of reason to religion itself, but when the advocates of deism and naturalism assailed the Bible, able defenders were not wanting. The morality of Benjamin Franklin was a secularization of Puritan ethics and however defective it may have been, its highest values were rooted in the Bible. Humanitarianism in the form of anti-slavery literature, campaigns for women's rights, education for girls, and humane treatment of criminals were evidences of a new respect for the individual and being "my brother's keeper." Finally the establishment of the constitutional government was the application of the compact theory which the Pilgrim Fathers

had inaugurated in the cabin of the Mayflower.

D. Literary Uses of the Bible

Revolutionary literature shows the continuing influence of the Bible upon American speech and letters. This is manifested in various ways.

1. Religious Thought Patterns

John Dickinson in "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies" which appeared in the Pennsylvania Chronicle in 1767, frequently expressed himself in this manner:

. . . but while Divine Providence, that gave me existence in a land of freedom, permits my head to think, my lips to speak, and my hand to move, I shall so highly and gratefully value the blessing received, as to take care that my silence and inactivity shall not give my implied assent to any act degrading my brethren and myself from the birthright wherewith heaven itself "hath made us free."¹

This religious pattern of the sense of God's goodness and special favor is carried further by Nathaniel Niles in "The American Hero":

Good is Jehovah in bestowing sunshine;
Nor less His goodness in the storm and thunder:
Mercies and Judgment both proceed from kindness--
Infinite kindness!²

Another strong thought pattern in literature was the emphasis on the religious basis of government policies

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1. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 245.
2. Ibid., p. 263.

This is seen in the following sentences from that noble document called the Declaration of Independence composed by Thomas Jefferson:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.-- That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving¹ their just powers from the consent of the governed. .

In this bold assertion of the fundamental rights of humanity is seen the determined stand for liberty by the descendants of the colonial Puritans. The following quotation from George Washington's "Farewell Address" is also strongly reminiscent of Winthrop's "Model."²

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened and, at no distant period, a great nation to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people³ always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence.

2. The Use of Direct Quotations

The "Journal" by John Woolman which Whittier has characterized as a "classic of the inner life" simply abounds with direct Biblical quotations including references:

. . . the most high, whose tender love to his children exceeds the most warm affections of natural parents, and who hath promised to his seed throughout the earth, as to one individual, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" Heb. XIII. 5. . . And we trust, as there is a faithful continuance to depend wholly upon the almighty arm, from one generation to another, the peaceable kingdom will gradually be extended "from sea to

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1. Ibid., p. 307.
2. Ante, p. 26.
3. Ellis, Pound and Spohn, op. cit., p. 338.

sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," Zech. IX. 10, to the completion of those prophecies already begun, that "Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, nor learn war any more." Isa. II. 4. Micah IV. 3.¹

Even Benjamin Franklin, the practical philosopher, quotes in "The Project for Attaining Moral Perfection" one of the proverbs of Solomon as his motto for wisdom:

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.²

3. Allusions

Both prose and poetry of the revolutionary period made frequent use of Biblical terminology or imagery in the form of literary allusions. Timothy Dwight in describing the "American Village" writes:

For here mild manners good to all impart,
And stamp with infamy th' unfeeling heart;
Here law from vengeful rage the slave defends,
And here the gospel peace on earth extends.³

Philip Freneau, one of the spokesmen of deism and later of Unitarianism, is now better remembered for his lyrical poems rather than for his satires and invectives. The following lines are from his "The Power of Fancy":

Lo! she walks upon the moon,
Listens to the chimy tune
Of the bright harmonious spheres,
And the song of angels hears. . .
Where Religion loves to come,
Where the bride of Jesus dwells.⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 171.

2. Ibid., p. 213.

3. Ibid., p. 277.

4. Ibid., p. 354. Cf. "Ode" and "Stanzas," *ibid.*, pp. 366-367.

Francis Hopkinson, a distinguished citizen of Philadelphia and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, facetiously describes the husband's place of refuge during the spring white-washing: "This is considered a privileged place, even in the white-washing season, and stands like the land of Goshen amidst the plagues of Egypt."¹

4. A Combination of Ways

The language of the famous "Speech Before the Virginia Convention" by Patrick Henry in 1775 combines the above methods:

Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings. . . I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. . . Trust it not, sir: it will prove a snare to your feet. . . Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. . . An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us! . . . Sir, we are not weak if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. . . There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. . . The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone. . . Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace -- but there is no peace. . . Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!²

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1. From "A Letter from a Gentleman in America to His Friend in Europe on White-washing," *ibid.*, p. 277.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-280.

E. Summary

Industrial and social expansion, a growing national unity, intense patriotism, and the struggle for freedom and organization of government characterized the revolutionary period. Literature was a most useful tool for securing unity. Various forms developed in newspapers and magazines as essays, orations, satires, ballads, and songs echoed the prevailing political opinions. A literature of the leisure type evolved in the form of plays and romances. Life and literature involved the putting into practice of the spiritual ideals set down by the early colonists and the Biblical influence in the content and language of literature was visible in all types of poetry and prose.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST NATIONAL PERIOD (1800-1840)

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A. Introduction

Like the preceding period the early part of the nineteenth century had four major developments. The first of these was a strong national unity which resulted from the American victory in the War of 1812 and was facilitated by the improvement of communication through national roads, railroads, and the steamboat. Second, a rapid expansion followed the purchase of Louisiana and Florida, and the population was greatly increased by the influx of new immigrants. Third, the growth of the democratic spirit was manifested in the shift of political leadership from the privileged class to the common people exemplified by the election of Andrew Jackson as president. This resulted from the labors of Thomas Jefferson in behalf of the common man, the public system of education, the French Revolution, the English Reform Bill, and the liberation of slaves in all British colonies. Fourth, there was an unexampled growth in industrial and social life as the nation grew richer and extended its frontiers. Along with these four developments, there grew slowly a sense of conflict and disunion brought about by the financial panic of 1837

and the unsettled question of slavery and state rights.¹

B. The Nature of the First National Literature

The national enthusiasm at this period parallels that of Elizabethan England. For the first time there was a definite attainment of real creative writing which commanded the respect of critics abroad. Sharing the common characteristics of the great Romantic movement, the first national literature possessed distinct American features. It had a freshness and originality arising from the use of a material of experience and a method of approach with which there was nothing comparable in the Old World. Then, in harmony with vast horizons and rich natural resources, there was a certain expansiveness of outlook and an expectancy of future greatness. It also voiced an intense patriotism and a reverence for democracy as the ideal political state. Finally, it had a greater degree of Puritan insistence on morality than the literature of any other country during the Romantic period. American literature had a great concern for reform movements and was a chief instrument for influencing public opinion.

C. The Bible on Social Issues

Puritan and Quaker traditions played a major role

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1. Cf. Long, op. cit., pp. 169-174.

in the reform movement. Curti, in writing about the reform activities, said that they were rooted in the example of Christ and that the arguments for them were of a religious nature. Alcoholism was opposed because it led to moral corruption and physical ruin. Opponents of war cited the Sermon on the Mount to show how Christ condemned it. Capital punishment was opposed because it cut off all possibility of repentance and true moral reformation. But the most inspired crusade was against slavery because it violated the "literal word and, above all, the spirit of Christ's teachings."¹

D. Literary Uses of the Bible

Biblical influence on the literature of this period was so extensive that it is impossible, for reasons of space to quote all the allusions, reflections, thought patterns, and other literary uses. Only a few samples can be given of each. In general more quotations are used than in the preceding period, but not as many as the literary allusions. The use of Biblical themes is prominent in the short stories.

1. Religious Thought Patterns

William Cullen Bryant, the "American Wordsworth," saw God manifested everywhere in the beauty and grandeur

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1. Curti, op. cit., p. 381.

of His world. The following lines from "The Ages" give this religious consciousness:

Look on this beautiful world, and read the truth
In her fair page.
 . . . Eternal Lord doth keep,
In his complacent arms, the earth, the air, the deep.
 Will then the merciful One, who stamped our race
 With his own image, . . .
 . . . leave a work so fair all blighted and accursed?

Oh, no! a thousand cheerful omens give . .
And love and peace shall make their paradise with man.¹

Again in "A Hymn of the Sea" Bryant voices the same consciousness:

The sea is mighty, but a mightier sways
His restless billows. Thou, whose hands have scooped
His boundless gulfs and built his shore, thy breath,
That moved in the beginning o'er his face,
Moves o'er it evermore.²

John Pierpont recognizes God's sovereignty over the elements in the little poem "The Ballot":

A weapon that comes down as still
As snowflakes fall upon the sod;
But executes a freeman's will,
As lightning does the will of God.³

The parable of the sower is easily recognized in "The Careless Heart" by Lydia Huntley Sigourney:

Say, canst thou tell me what is like the heart
That cold and careless ne'er performs its part?

A garden, left neglected, waste, and bare,
Where light the wandering people of the air,
To catch the scattered seed that moulders there.⁴

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1. Augustus Hopkins Strong: American Poets and Their Theology, p. 25.
2. Ibid., p. 23. Cf. "A Forest Hymn," and "The Prairies."
3. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 578.
4. Ibid., p. 580.

The following lines from the last stanza of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by Francis Scott Key shows the strong sense of God's concern over the American nation that has prevailed since colonial times:

Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, -- "In God is our trust":
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.¹

Bryant's "To a Waterfowl" expresses the same idea of God's care for His creatures:

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast --
The desert and illimitable air --
Lone wandering, but not lost. .

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.²

James Fenimore Cooper in his exposition of "The American Democrat" maintains that there should be an intellectual aristocracy in a real democracy to the extent of fully developing one's gifts without being handicapped by law or custom. He says, "The law of God is the only rule of conduct in this, as in other matters. Each man should do as he would be done by. ."³

In times of stress and peril even the half-savage characters of Cooper's novels quote the Scriptures. The

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1. Ibid., p. 394.
2. Ibid., p. 535.
3. Ibid., p. 595.

following dialogue is from The Deerslayer:

"God's will be done!" murmured the young man, as he walked sorrowfully away from the beach, entering again beneath the arches of the wood; "God's will be done, on 'arth as it is in heaven! I did hope that my days would not be numbered so soon! but it matters little, after all!"

. . . "Why did you kill the Huron, Deerslayer," returned the girl reproachfully. "Don't you know your commandments, which say 'Thou shalt not kill!' They tell me you have now slain the woman's husband and brother."

"It's true, my good Hetty, -- 'tis gospel truth, and I'll not deny what has come to pass. . Did you witness that deed, girl?"

"I saw it and was sorry it happened, Deerslayer; for I hoped you wouldn't have returned blow for blow, but good for evil."¹

2. The Use of Direct Quotations

The private correspondence of Mary and Katherine Byles, given in a series of letter books which are preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society Library, has this entry:

Your Grandfather sends his Blessings, and the solemn Charge, II Tim. iii. 14. But ah! Poor Child! He has forgot to take his Bible with him. Do Polly write the Words. "But continue thou in the Things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."²

Edgar Allan Poe, the least religious of the great writers of this period, quoted from the Bible more frequently than is ordinarily suspected as the following will indicate:

a. From the tale "The Shadow":

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1. Ibid., pp. 607-608.

2. Ibid., p. 444.

Yea! though I walk through the valley of the
Shadow: Psalm of David.¹

b. From the tale "The Man That Was Used Up":

. . . man that is born of a woman hath but a
short time to live; he cometh up and is cut
down like a flower!²

c. From the poem "Al Aaraaf":

In Scripture is this passage -- "The sun shall
not harm thee by day, nor the moon by night."³

d. From "The Raven":

Is there -- is there balm in Gilead?⁴

e. From "Pinakidia," a collection of miscellaneous

notes:

In Judges is this expression, "And he smote them
hip and thigh with a great slaughter."⁵

Again, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my
right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue
cleave to the roof of my mouth."⁶

3. Allusions

There are numerous allusions to the Bible in the
poems of Bryant. The following is based on Mary's saying
at Cana:

Whate'er he bids observe and do;
Such be the law that we obey,
And greater wonders men shall view
Than that of Cana's bridal day.⁷

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1. James A. Harrison: Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe,
Vol. 2, p. 147.
2. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 264.
3. Ibid., Vol. VII, p. 32.
4. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 848.
5. Harrison, op. cit., Vol. XIV, p. 70.
6. Ibid., p. 71.
7. Strong, op. cit., p. 32.

To celebrate Christ's nativity Bryant wrote these lines:

As shadows cast by cloud and sun
Flit o'er the summer grass,
So, in thy sight, Almighty One!
Earth's generations pass. .

Yet doth the Star of Bethlehem shed
A lustre pure and sweet;
And still it leads, as once it led,
To the Messiah's feet.¹

The following lines by Bryant were inspired by the crusade against alcohol:

When doomed to death, the Apostle lay
At night, in Herod's dungeon-cell,
A light shone round him like the day,
And from his limbs the fetters fell.

A messenger from God was there,
To break his chain and bid him rise,
And lo! the Saint, as free as air,
Walked forth beneath open skies.

Chains yet more strong and cruel bind
The victims of that deadly thirst
Which drowns the soul, and from the mind
Blots the bright image stamped at first.

Oh, God of Love and Mercy, deign
To look on those, with pitying eye,
Who struggle with that fatal chain,
And send them succor from on high!

Send down, in its resistless might,
Thy gracious Spirit, we implore,
And lead the captive forth to light,
A rescued soul, a slave no more.²

In "The Life that Is", written after Mrs. Bryant's recovery from a long and painful illness, he said:

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1. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

2. Ibid., p. 34.

Now may we keep thee from the balmy air
And radiant walks of heaven a little space,
Where He, who went before thee to prepare
For His meek followers, shall assign thy place.¹

Poe's writings are also rich in Biblical allusions. The last stanza of a metrical allegory of human life runs thus:

Out -- out are the lights -- out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of the storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man",
And its hero, the "Conqueror Worm".²

The following separate allusions are taken from just one of his poems, "Dream-Land":

- a. White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth -- and Heaven.
- b. For the heart whose woes are legion.
- c. For the spirit that walks in shadow.
- d. Behold it but through darkened glasses.³

In the tale of "Morella" the following allusions are given:

- a. The most beautiful became the most hideous, as Hinnom became Gehenna.
- b. I am dying, yet I shall live.
- c. a worm that will not die.⁴

"The Masque of the Red Death" contains these figures:

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1. Ibid., p. 37.
2. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 845.
3. Ibid., p. 845.
4. Harrison, Vol. II, pp. 30, 31, 32.

- a. But the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod.
- b. His vesture was dabbled in blood.
- c. He had come like a thief in the night.¹

4. Biblical Themes

Many of Poe's tales belong in the realm of morals and conscience where good and evil wage a mortal combat for the soul of man. "William Wilson" is an example of this warfare and is of the type of Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." "The Fall of the House of Usher" typifies the hypersensitive yet not guiltless conscience. "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "William Wilson" are built around the theme "Be sure your sin will find you out." Two tales by Poe have Biblical Titles as well as themes: "Thou Art the Man" and "The Tale of Jerusalem."

Moby Dick by Herman Melville does not use Biblical phraseology, but it allegorizes man's bitter struggle with and avenging hunt for the moral evil which has mutilated him. Captain Ahab captures the inmost spirit, the tragedy, and the grandeur of Job as he tracks down his enemy in his New Bedford whaler and the splendid courage of Job's "I know that my Redeemer liveth!" is magnificently voiced by Ahab's "Defyingly, I worship thee!"

Bryant's poem "Receive Thy Sight" is a metrical paraphrase of the gospel story:

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1. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., pp. 876-877.

When the blind suppliant in the way,
By friendly hands to Jesus led,
Prayed to behold the light of day,
"Receive thy sight," the Saviour said.

At once he saw the pleasant rays
That lit the glorious firmament;
And with firm steps and words of praise,
He followed where the Master went.

Look down in pity, Lord, we pray,
On eyes oppressed with moral night,
And touch the darkened lids and say
The gracious words, "Receive thy sight."

Then, in clear daylight, shall we see
Where walked the sinless Son of God;
And, aided by new strength from Thee,¹
Press onward in the path He trod.¹

Another Biblical theme used by Bryant is entitled
"He Hath Put All Things under His Feet."

Lo! in the clouds of heaven appears
God's well-beloved Son;
He brings a train of brighter years:
His kingdom is begun;
He comes a guilty world to bless
With mercy, truth, and righteousness.

Oh, Father! haste the promised hour,
When, at His feet, shall lie
All rule, authority, and power
Beneath the ample sky;
When He shall reign from pole to pole,
The Lord of every human soul;

When all shall heed the words He said
Amid their daily cares,
And, by the loving life He led,
Shall seek to pattern theirs;
And He, who conquered Death, shall win
The nobler conquest over Sin.²

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1. Strong, op. cit., p. 32.
2. Ibid., p. 35.

E. Summary

The first national period was characterized by a strong national unity, territorial expansion and enlarged population, the extension of the democratic spirit and rapid growth in industry and wealth. Literature, in general, had romantic tendencies and was peculiarly American in its originality, expansiveness, patriotism, and moral tone. The reform issues were a maturing of the movements started in the revolutionary period and were the outgrowths of the Puritan tradition of community responsibility for sin. The Bible was the chief authority cited in reform literature. In secular literature its influence pervaded all forms in ideas, imagery, and diction.

CHAPTER V

THE SECOND NATIONAL PERIOD (1840-1890)

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THE SECOND NATIONAL PERIOD (1840-1890)

A. Introduction

The second national period in America was characterized by political tumult and social unrest. The historical movement may be summarized as follows: The long-standing hostility between the North and the South was brought to a dangerous point when a balance of power was established in Congress as a result of the formation of new states after the rapid westward expansion. Then the increasing demand for American cotton in Europe brought up the question of the necessity of extending slave labor into Texas and other new states. When the North opposed it, the hostility was intensified and threats of secession were made. The government labored mightily to preserve the Union by compromise and conciliation but the extreme abolitionists and the extreme pro-slavery parties were irreconcilable. The feverish political situation reached a crisis and the secession of the southern states was followed by the terrible civil war which ended in the complete abolition of slavery. This was succeeded by the difficult and dangerous period of reconstruction, the firm reestablishment of the Union, the amazing recovery of the nation, and the orderly progress of popular government.

B. The Nature of the Second National Literature

Two types of literature developed in this stormy period: the minor or sectional literature in prose and poetry which reflected the emotional excitement of partisan politics and the agitation for reform and which, because of its occasional nature, is now almost forgotten; and the major or national literature which dealt with permanent moral and spiritual ideals undisturbed by temporary conflicts and which has an abiding place in American letters.

In general, minor literature was characterized by a great enthusiasm for a cause, a strong moral conviction of its rightness, and impatience and misunderstanding for all opposing views. The major literature showed five general characteristics. First, the danger of secession and the war intensified the national spirit and the ideal of unity was cherished with renewed devotion. Second, the genius of American poetry reached a full development at this period with such men as Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Lanier, Emerson, Holmes, and Whitman. Third, the poetry of nature showed a highly spiritual quality. Fourth, the mysticism of Oriental literature appeared in the works of some major writers. Fifth, the moral quality which had pervaded American literature from its earliest beginnings reached a climax here for every important writing of this period sought to bring a message or spiritual lesson and

this teaching was backed by the author's own personal moral purity. This marked tendency of American literature had its counterpart in the literature of Victorian England.

C. The Spiritual Phase of the Struggle

The spiritual agitation which, like the political storm, had its origin in the first national period and which had taken the guise of various reform movements, also reached its peak in the second national period. It is possible that the cult of individualism with its optimistic faith in the perfectability of human nature, was a religious reaction to slavery. Unitarianism defined man not as a machine to be governed by a foreign force but as a being of free spiritual powers capable of the utmost self-improvement. Transcendentalism also held the individual soul to be of supreme importance and sought first to make man upright and then to make him free, not only in body but in mind. These new principles preached from pulpit and lyceum demanded the practice of Christian ethics in all phases of human life. Numerous communistic societies were organized to function together in a kind of brotherhood. Brook Farm, the best known of these societies, had in its membership many of the greatest American minds of the period. No reform movement failed to support its program by appeals to "the higher law."

The impact of the war quickened the religious consciousness of the worldly-minded and materialism in general gave way to moral and spiritual values. Even the reform crusades with the exception of the abolition of slavery were temporarily suspended. The fellowship of sacrifice and discipline evoked beautiful manifestations of charity and heroic service both in the battlefield and at home. As with all mankind in crisis situations the people sought light, comfort, and hope in the Bible. Though paper was scarce, in 1864 the Christian Commission sent to soldiers and sailors about six million devotional books, almost a million hymn books and psalm books, over a million Bibles and New Testaments, and eleven million tracts with more than thirty-six million pages. Some army officers read several chapters of the Bible every morning before breakfast.¹

D. Literary Uses of the Bible

The literature of the second national period was especially rich in religious thought patterns and Biblical allusions both in poetry and in prose. By comparison with these two the use of direct quotations was small but was as persistent. The use of the Biblical themes also increased and extended into many of the longer prose works which still hold a high position in the literary world. As with the

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1. Curti, op. cit., pp. 461, 466.

preceding period not all of these uses can be quoted and only a representative sampling of each can be given.

1. Religious Thought Patterns

The theme of Emerson's "The Problem" is the divine inspiration of man's noblest ideals and works. Thus:

The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew
The conscious stone to beauty grew . .

The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken; . .
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.¹

In the poem "Grace," Emerson, the apostle of self-reliance testifies to the practical value of restraining influences with religious thankfulness:

How much, preventing God, how much I owe
To the defenses thou hast round me set;
Example, custom, fear, occasion slow --
These scorned bondmen were my parapet.
I dare not peep over this parapet
To gauge with glance the roaring gulf below,
The depths of sin to which I had descended,
Had not these me against myself defended.²

Intellectual freedom, the moral law, and divine inspiration form the climax of Emerson's famous oration, "The American Scholar," delivered in 1834 before the Phi

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1. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 634.

2. Ibid., p. 637. Cf. Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty."

Beta Kappa Society in Harvard:

We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. . . The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defense and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men.¹

In "The Over-Soul" he says:

Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfilment of every contact, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the pay is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.²

In "The Crystal" Lanier shows that all human teachers and great men of history had flaws in character. Then in contrast he presents this picture of Christ, the true Teacher, true King, and true Lord:

But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of Time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,--
What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's, --
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?³

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1. Ibid., p. 658.
2. Ibid., p. 681.
3. Strong, op. cit., p. 409.

The following lines from Whittier's "Snow-Bound" express the poet's hope of immortality:

Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just,)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!¹

Whittier's address "What Is Slavery?" delivered at the Liberty Party Convention in 1843 was full of religious figures. He said:

Slavery is, in fact, a struggle with the Almighty for dominion over His rational creatures. It is leagued with the powers of darkness, in wresting man from his Maker. It is blasphemy lifting brazen brow and violent hand to heaven, attempting a reversal of God's laws. Man claiming the right to uncreate his brother; to undo that last and most glorious work, which God himself pronounced good, amidst the rejoicing hosts of heaven! Man arrogating to himself the right to change for his own selfish purposes, the beautiful order of created existences; to pluck the crown of an immortal nature, scarce lower than that of the angels, from the brow of his brother; to erase the God-like image and superscription stamped upon him by the hand of his Creator, and to write on the despoiled and desecrated tablet, "A chattel personal!"²

"The Present Crisis" by James Russell Lowell, one of the most quoted poems of all time contains the well-known lines:

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or
evil side; . . .

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1. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn, op. cit., p. 723.
2. Ibid., p. 739. Cf. Lowell's "Stanzas on Freedom."

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems
and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the
throne,--
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim
unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above
His own.¹

One of the most sublime public utterances of
spiritual moral righteousness was made by Abraham Lincoln
in his "Second Inaugural Address":

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with
firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the
right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in;
to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who
shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and
his orphan -- to do all which may achieve and cherish
a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all
nations.²

2. The Use of Direct Quotations

Abraham Lincoln's use of the Bible has often been
the subject of remark. When he used it to enforce an argu-
ment it seemed like the last word that could be said on the
subject. The following are some of his famous quotations:
"Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs
be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the
offense cometh."³ . . "Let us judge not, that we be not
judged."⁴ "The judgments of the Lord are true and right-
eous altogether."⁵ "A house divided against itself cannot
stand."⁶

1. Ibid., pp. 778-779.
2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 216. Cf. Lincoln's "Address in
Independence Hall, Philadelphia," and "Gettysburg Address."
3. Ibid., p. 215.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 216.
6. Speech in Springfield, 1858.

The variety of Biblical quotations is seen in many authors. The following are examples: "An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth," from Emerson's "Compensation."¹ "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree," from Longfellow's "King Robert of Sicily."² "Although your sins as scarlet be," from Longfellow's "Divina Commedia."³ "Forgive them for they know not what they do," from Holmes' "Crime and Automatism."⁴ "Man shall not live by bread alone. . . Love thy neighbor. . . Never shalt thou the heavens see, Save as a little child thou be," from Lanier's "Corn."⁵ From Harriet Beecher's Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin:

Whoso causeth one of these little ones to offend, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.⁶

3. Allusions

Many of the greatest writers of the second national period drew heavily on the Scriptures for some of their most striking figures of speech. Their writings abound in allusions, Biblical incidents, or practical interpretations of Biblical fact into life and faith. The following examples are presented to illustrate this:

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1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 679
2. Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 171-174.
3. Ibid., p. 176.
4. Ibid., p. 208.
5. Ibid., pp. 325, 326, 328.
6. Ibid., p. 227.

Emerson.

a. From "Goodbye":

I laugh at the lore and pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan;
For what are they all in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet?¹

b. From "The American Scholar":

The new deed is yet a part of life, . . . In some contemplative hour it detaches itself from the life like a ripe fruit, to become a thought of the mind. Instantly it is raised, transfigured; the corruptible has put on incorruption.²

c. From "Self-Reliance":

. . . our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. . . Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee. . . They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die."³

Lanier.

a. From "Lecture at Johns Hopkins":

. . . he, in short, who has not come to that stage of quiet and eternal frenzy in which the beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty mean one thing, burn as one fire, shine as one light within him; he is not yet the great artist. .⁴

b. From "A Ballad of the Trees and the Master":

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forespent, forespent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forespent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn-trees had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.⁵

c. From "The Revenge of Hamish":

Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,
He snatches the child from the mother, and clambers
the crag toward the sea.⁶

1. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 631.
2. Ibid., p. 653.
3. Ibid., pp. 659, 663, 669.
4. Long, op. cit., p. 364.

5. Ellis, Pound, and Spohn,
op. cit., Vol. II, p. 334.
6. Ibid., p. 330.

Whittier.

a. From "Revisited":

The roll of drums and the bugle's wailing
Vex the air of our vales no more;
The spear is beaten to hooks for pruning,
The share is the sword the soldiers wore!¹

b. From "Songs of Labor":

The doom which to the guilty pair
Without the walls of Eden came,
Transforming sinless ease to care,
And rugged toil, no more shall bear
The mark of old crime, or mark of primal shame.²

c. From "The Kansas Emigrants":

Upbearing, like the Ark of old,
The Bible in our van,
We go to test the truth of God
Against the fraud of man.³

d. From "Burns":

But think, while falls that shade between
The erring one and Heaven,
That he who loved like Magdalen,
Like her may be forgiven.⁴

e. From "Maud Muller":

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!⁵

f. From "Laus Deo":

Let us kneel:
God's own voice is in the peal,
And this spot is holy ground. . .

For the Lord
On the whirlwind is abroad;
In the earthquake He has spoken; . .

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1. Long, op. cit., p. 307.

2. Ellis, Pound and Spohn, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 708.

3. Ibid., p. 712.

4. Ibid., p. 713.

5. Ibid., p. 715.

Loud and long
Lift the old exulting song;
Sing with Miriam by the sea,
He has cast the mighty down;
Horse and rider sink and drown; . . .¹

g. From "Snow-Bound":

"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham." . .

The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophecies! . .

And hope for all the language is,
That He remembereth we are dust!²

h. From "Abraham Davenport":

. . . not as he looked
A loving guest at Bethany, but stern
As Justice and inexorable Law.³

i. From "Among the Hills":

Showing as little actual comprehension
Of Christian charity and love and duty
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been
Outdated like a last year's almanac: . . .⁴

j. From "The Eternal Goodness":

I hear our Lord's beatitudes
And prayer upon the cross. .

The bruised reed He will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.⁵

Lowell.

a. From "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration":

But some day the live coal behind the thought,
Whether from Baal's stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar⁶ brought,
Bursts up in flame; . .

. . . 1 . . .

1. Ibid., p. 720.

2. Ibid., pp. 724, 727.

3. Ibid., p. 730.

4. Ibid., p. 732.

5. Ibid., p. 733.

6. Ibid., p. 806.

b. From "An Ode for the Fourth of July, 1876":

A sweeter vision than the castled Rhine,
Kindly with thoughts of Ruth and Bible-days benign.¹

c. From "Thoreau":

It was the Pentecost of Shinar.²

Hawthorne.

a. From "The Maypole of Marry Mount":

"Stand off, priest of Baal!" said he, . . .³

b. From "The Scarlet Letter":

"Of a truth, friend, that matter remaineth a riddle;
and the Daniel who shall expound it is yet a-wanting,"
answered the townsman.⁴

c. From "The House of the Seven Gables":

. . . but the tender sadness of a contrite heart, broken,
at last, beneath its own weight of sin?⁵

Holmes.

a. From "How the Old Horse Won the Bet":

Like Lazarus bid to Dives' feast,
So looked the poor forlorn old beast; . . .⁶

Longfellow.

a. From "The Wreck of the Hesperus":

And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.⁷

b. From "The Warning":

There is a poor blind Samson in the land,
Shorn of his strength and bound in bonds of steel,⁸ . .

c. From "The Arsenal at Springfield":

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1. Ibid., p. 812.
2. Ibid., p. 820.
3. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 38.
4. Ibid., p. 70.

5. Ibid., p. 84.
6. Ibid., p. 194.
7. Ibid., p. 122.
8. Ibid., p. 126.

I hear once more the voice of Christ say,
"Peace!"¹

d. From "Evangeline":

. . . and crowed the cock, with the selfsame
Voice that in ages of old had startled penitent Peter.
. . . and wild with the winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with
the angel.
. . . she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her
footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael
wandered with Hagar! . . .
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross
is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness
and holy compassion!
Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer,
"O Father, forgive them!"
. . . and their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah
ascending the mountain.²

e. From "King Robert of Sicily":

. . . And with new fervor filled the hearts of men,
Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.³

f. From "Dante":

Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!⁴

g. From "Morituri Salutamos":

Who said not to their Lord, as if afraid, ⁵
"Here is thy talent in a napkin laid," . . .

4. Biblical Themes

Hawthorne, the best representative of New England

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1. Ibid., p. 129.
2. Ibid., pp. 137, 138, 143, 145.
3. Ibid., p. 174.
4. Ibid., p. 175.
5. Ibid., p. 178.

Puritanism, wrote several romances which were chiefly studies of sin and its expiation. The Scarlet Letter depicts the effect of sin upon the soul, the cleansing effect of confession and humble acceptance of punishment, and the torture and futility of hiding one's guilt. The theme of The House of the Seven Gables is the text "The sins of the fathers will be visited upon the children." The Marble Faun and the tale "Young Goodman Brown" deal with sudden impulsive sin and the consequent knowledge of evil that it brings into an innocent nature. "Ethan Brand" shows the tragic result of morbid curiosity regarding the unpardonable sin.

Emerson's "The Over-Soul" is an emphatic declaration of faith on the divine Source of all human knowledge and authority which suggests the text from Jeremiah: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." Emerson carried the same thought in "The American Scholar" when he said, "If a single man plant himself indomitably upon his instincts and there abide, the huge world will come round to him."¹

Whittier's "Ichabod" resulting from his grief at the supposed faithlessness of Daniel Webster to the party is based on I Samuel 4:21, "The glory is departed. . . ." His "Laus Deo" is the Latin version of "Praise be to God."

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1. Ibid., Vol. I. 658.

Longfellow's "Hymn for My Brother's Ordination" is based on Christ's saying to the rich young ruler: "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell all thou hast and give it to the poor, and come and follow me." "Blind Bartimeus" is a metrical version of the gospel story. "The Warning" compares the Negro slave to the blind Samson who, when he regains his strength may destroy the whole Temple. "King Robert of Sicily" is based on the text "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."

E. Summary

The historical development of the second national period was centered on the Civil War, the main causes of which were the questions of slavery and of states rights. The political storm was paralleled by intellectual and spiritual unrest which manifested itself in social reforms, the philosophic movement called Transcendentalism, and communistic societies. Two kinds of literature developed: the minor which treated of temporary problems of partisan or sectional interest; and the major which treated of abiding ideals and common traditions unprejudiced by political or sectional opinions. The discipline of war awakened a sense of spiritual need and a turning to the Divine source of strength and comfort. Never had the Bible been used so much before as a guide and source of inspiration both for living and thinking. Prose and poetry of major and minor literature quoted from it, alluded to it, and used its

truths to interpret human problems.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONTEMPORARY PERIOD (1890-1948)

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THE CONTEMPORARY PERIOD (1890-1948)

A. Introduction

Recent history, from the too close perspective of the present, appears like a bewildering succession of rapid changes. Its major tendencies and events consisted of the sharp shift to realism in business and daily life necessitated by the Civil War; the passionate affirmation of democracy in social and in national life; the growing integration of the older immigrant population into the social, economic, and political life of the nation; the continuing influence of science on daily life, on ideas, and on social relations; the Spanish-American War and the acquiring of new territory; the colossal expansion of industry due to new machinery, mass output, and efficiency experts; the continuous migration toward industrial centers and the increasing complexity of modern society; World War I; the disturbed relation between labor and capital; the committal of a larger participation in international affairs; World War II and the atomic bomb; and mighty efforts at world relief and reconstruction.

B. The Nature of Recent Literature

The impact of new scientific discoveries and

inventions upon industry and society and of the gospel of realism upon existing standards of thought has created a tumult of responses which is reflected in modern writings. This literature is characterized by its realistic acceptance and presentation of life as it actually is, varying from gentle frankness to stark sordidness and overstressing of the unpleasant. Conflicting with this is a persistent romantic tendency and a longing for the past, manifested in a considerable amount of reminiscent literature. A new literary development was the rise of local-color fiction produced by regional groups of writers representing the varied social backgrounds of the nation. There is a great concern for social justice at home and political justice for smaller countries abroad signifying the place of democracy within the nation and in the world. Realistic prose carries a tone of gloom and disillusion but the great writers of this school who avoid sensationalism in content and method give the impression of unflagging energy, of heroic endurance, and of ultimate achievement. Immigrant literature is popular and respect for individual personality of whatever background is given emphasis. Naturalistic or instinctivist fiction which tends to release man from responsibility for any instinctive act is balanced by the humanistic theory which maintains that progress is achieved by man's development at "his best, not at his second or worst." Poetry and literary criticism which had declined at the end of the Civil War had a fresh revival at the

second and third decades of the century. Free verse achieved new power and effectiveness and the movement called Imagism used it with unique originality. The drama and the novel make much use of the findings of sociology and psychology and of the immense amount of experiential material presented by the great wars and international relations.

C. The Spiritual Struggle

The influence of science upon the life of man has penetrated deeper than the physical realm. It has touched his intellectual and spiritual life and modified his ideas of his place in the universe and among his fellowmen. The biological findings on evolution, heredity, and environment which have generally been accepted as natural laws have come to be regarded as final and, by implication, have undermined man's faith in the religion of his fathers which had supplied him with spiritual goals and a sustaining hope. The great wars added their weight of destruction. The immense sacrifice of life and property would have been justifiable only by the realization of spiritual values and ideals. When this realization was not immediately visible, reaction set in and the human spirit was staggered by bitter disillusionment succeeded by cynicism, moral breakdown, hopelessness, and a blind groping for new standards and spiritual certitude.

In looking at this picture a few things must be taken into consideration. First, the situation in America is only a part of the general world situation. Second, the truly spiritual portion of the population have never doubted or, if so, have emerged triumphant and strengthened. Third, the great need for spiritual resources having been revealed and acknowledged, the initial step to recovery had been taken. Never have religious leaders been so vocal or so concerned to meet the need of the situation not only at home but in the world. Judging by the number of Bibles being circulated in the country and overseas, the efforts that are being made to improve and enlarge the facilities for religious education, and the unprecedented missionary movement to war-torn areas, it is surely not being over-optimistic to observe that proper adjustment is now being made and that the Bible abides as the chief source of inspiration, of strength, and of hope of the main body of the American population.

D. Literary Uses of the Bible

For reasons of space this portion of this study will be limited to textbook material which extends only to the year 1933. It is obvious, therefore, that only a tiny keyhole view is obtainable.

As the preceding era was an unusual wave-crest of spiritual exaltation so, in consonance with other phases

of contemporary life, the following era seems, in comparison, like a trough in the literary expression of the religious attitude. Whatever use, therefore, is made of the Bible, within the above limits of material and time, would have added significance for this study.

The use of religious thought patterns and allusions are about equal in amount. Biblical themes are suggested by several book titles mentioned in the textbook, but selections from them are not given. Quotations, likewise, are still popular. However, none of these materials can be quoted in full.

1. Religious Thought Patterns

In *Social Justice*, Henry George makes use of the gospel story in developing his argument:

Nineteen hundred years ago when another civilization was developing monstrous inequalities, when the masses everywhere were being ground into hopeless slavery, there arose in a Jewish village an unlearned farmer, who, scorning the orthodoxies and ritualism of the time, preached to laborers and fishermen the gospel of the fatherhood of God, of the equality and brotherhood of men, who taught his disciples to pray for the coming of the Kingdom.¹

In "The Man with the Hoe" Edwin Markham protests in behalf of the laboring class:

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity? . . .
O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quenched?²

Carl Sandburg expresses in "To a Contemporary

1. Ibid., p. 537.

2. Ibid., p. 717.

Bunkshooter" his contempt for some evangelistic practices:

You come along . . . tearing your shirt . . . yelling about Jesus.

Where do you get that stuff?

What do you know about Jesus,

Jesus had a way of talking soft and outside of a few bankers and higher-ups among the con men of Jerusalem everybody liked to have this Jesus around because he never made any fake passes and everything he said went and he helped the sick and gave the people hope. . .

He never came near clean people or dirty people but they felt cleaner because he came along. It was your crowd of bankers and business men and lawyers hired the sluggers and murderers who put Jesus out of the running. . .

This Jesus was good to look at, smelled good, listened good. He threw out something fresh and beautiful from the skin of his body and the touch of his hands wherever he passed along . . .¹

2. The Use of Direct Quotations

Biblical quotations are used to enforce the arguments for social justice, to express personal moods, or purely as a literary device as in the case of O'Neill.

The following quotations illustrate this:

a. From Social Problems by Henry George:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth.
I came not to send peace but a sword.²

b. From Excursions of an Evolutionist by John Fiske:

. . . day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.³

c. From "Beyond Life" by James Branch Cabell:

All is vanity.⁴

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1. Ibid., p. 886. For other illustrations read Wylie's "The Lion and the Lamb," and Cabell's "Beyond Life,"
ibid., pp. 897, 1029.

2. Ibid., p. 538.

3. Ibid., p. 571.

4. Ibid., p. 1029.

d. From the play "The Rope" by Eugene O'Neill:

The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished,
O daughter of Zion: he will visit thine iniquity,
O daughter of Edom; he will discover thy sins. . .

Behold, everyone that useth proverbs shall
Use this proverb against thee, saying, As is
the mother, so is her daughter. . .

Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know
thee not, and upon the families that call not
on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and
devoured him and consumed him, and made his
habitation desolate. . .

O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong, judge thou
my cause. Thou hast seen all their vengeance
and all their imaginations against me . .

Render unto them a recompense, O Lord, according
to the work of their hands. . .

Give them sorrow of heart, thy curse unto them.
Persecute and destroy them in anger from under
the heavens of the Lord. . .

Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him;
and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:
And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it;
and let us eat and be merry: for this my son
was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is
found.¹

3. Allusions

The new generation of writers have their favorite
Biblical illustrations, some from the character of Christ
and others from historical incident or imagery. These are
illustrated by the following examples:

a. From Social Problems by Henry George:

Christ was born of a woman. And to Mary Magdalen
he turned in tender blessing. But such vermin

.....

1. Ibid., pp. 1054, 1056, 1057, 1061.

have some of these human creatures, made in God's image, become, that we must shovel them off to prison without being too particular.¹

b. From "The Quarry" by William Vaughn Moody:

Or gathered by the daughters when they walked
Eastward in Eden with the Sons of God
Whom love and the deep moon made garrulous.²

c. From "A Municipal Report" by William Sidney Porter:

The mark of the beast is not indelible upon a man
until he goes about with a stubble. . .

But rain and sun and age had so variegated it
that Joseph's coat, beside it, would have faded
to a pale monochrome. . .

What did the noisiest project in the world --
I mean the tower of Babel -- result in finally?
A page and a half of Esperanto in the North
American Review.³

d. From "The Town Down the River" by Edwin Arlington
Washington:

And are ravens there to feed you
In the Town down the River,
Where the gift appalls the giver⁴
And youth hardens day by day.

e. From "Aesthetic Criticism" by George Edward Wood-
berry:

The same phenomenon occurs as characteristically,
though in so contrasted a way, in the Puritan
rehabilitation of the Old Testament at the time
of the Civil War, when Agag and Naboth and their
lives served as the⁵ eternal pattern of the ideal
for the Roundheads.

f. From "The Genius of America" by Stuart Pratt Sherman:

"We shall all die in the desert," he continued . . .
"but let us die like Moses, with a look into the
Promised Land."⁶

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1. Ibid., p. 536.

2. Ibid., p. 730.

3. Ibid., pp. 748, 749, 751.

4. Ibid., p. 852.

5. Ibid., p. 925.

6. Ibid., p. 967.

g. From "Leisure" by Agnes Repplier:

Work is good. No one seriously doubts this truth. Adam may have doubted it when he first took spade in hand, and Eve when she scoured her first pots and kettles.¹

E. Summary

During the last half century America became the foremost leader in world affairs, in scientific research and industrialization, and defense of democratic government and international law. The influence of science had caused much intellectual unrest and spiritual uncertainty. The wars had contributed their share to the testing and revealed the need for moral guidance and religious knowledge so as to adjust the changes in ideas to eternal truths and standards. The literature of the period reflects the life and the struggle. During the period of spiritual depression following close on the peak of spiritual buoyancy, the Bible is not yet absent in the field of literary expression being still the supreme authority in the movement for social justice, for righteousness, and for high thinking as well as the source of apt quotations, imagery, and illustration.

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1. Ibid., p. 1015.

CHAPTER VII
GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Restatement of the Problem

The purpose of this study has been to discover the relation of the Bible to the teaching of a secular subject so as to lead to a desire to study the Bible itself. The Bible is a record of spiritual truths, ideals, standards of conduct, and religious experiences revealing God's character and purpose in His Son Jesus Christ. Literature is the record of the ideals, thoughts, hopes, and fears of the people who produced it. When, as in the case of American literature, these ideals, thoughts, and aspirations bear the direct and distinct influence of the Bible, the relation is clear.

Consideration has been given to the fact that the Filipinos, having been so long under the dogmatic authority of the Roman Catholic Church, have a need for spiritual enlightenment which comes from a knowledge of the Bible. By reason of past political relationship they are open to American influence. Since American literature is one of their required studies and since this subject shows, more than any other, the true source of American ideals, attitudes, and policies which have affected Philippine history, education, and present goals, it is hoped that this study

may point the way by which teachers may utilize the opportunity offered to remove the distrust in the English Bible engendered by ecclesiastical dogmatism, to promote interest in, and to provide a motive for an intelligent attitude toward the Bible.

Each period of the literary history gives the historical background, the literary development of the period, the place of the Bible during the period, and the literary uses that have been made of it.

B. Summary of Findings

To account for the motives, trends, and nature of the settlement of America, a survey was made in the first chapter of this investigation, of the history of England during the sixteenth century. It was found that the main factors or influences had been the intellectual movement called the Renaissance, the religious movement called the Reformation, the political events that had made England a Protestant nation and a world power, and the religious-political movement called Puritanism. The profound influence of the English Bible upon the vision, the life, and the language of the people was also noted.

In the second chapter it was revealed that the Puritan settlers of America based their principles of colonization and government upon the laws of justice and righteousness with the Scriptures as their chief authority.

The earliest records and accounts which comprised the bulk of colonial literature reveal the religious motive of all their plans and actions and the consciousness of God's approval of their objectives and His concern for them as a people. The literature also revealed their familiarity with the Bible in their free use of direct quotations, Biblical allusions, and spiritual tone.

The central event of the third chapter was found to be the Revolutionary War with the consequent separation of America from England. A striking contrast with the intense religiousness of the colonial period was the philosophy of practical common sense best exemplified by Benjamin Franklin. It was found that the movement of humanitarianism engaged the energies of the people, as if it were the application of the theory of the righteous life which had been established by the colonists. Revolutionary literature was found to be characterized by the sense of unity, of bordering horizons, and of practicality. Newspapers and magazines, the early novels, the crude plays, and orations were among the new forms developed. All of these forms and poetry made use of the Bible in their subject matter, use of direct quotations, allusions, and concepts of God and His moral law.

As a consequence of the Revolution and the War of 1812 the first national period reported in the fourth chapter was found to be characterised by a strong national unity, territorial and industrial expansion, and the

progress of the democratic spirit. Literature was characterized by national enthusiasm, originality, love of nature, intense patriotism and strong moral tone. It was found that the numerous reform movements which engaged the energies of the people were all based upon Biblical concepts of what an ideal community should be. The Bible therefore was the authority most quoted, paraphrased, alluded to, and copied as to style. Literary allusions were noted to be the leading form of Biblical usage. In the patriotic songs and poems most writers ascribed the freedom and well-being of America to the special will of God. Several tales and novels were built around Biblical themes. For the first time American literature reached the standard of true creativity.

The fifth chapter dealt with the second national period the chief event of which was found to be the Civil War. An unprecedented crop of great poets and prose writers produced literature that won fame abroad. This major or national literature which dealt with the permanent ideals and interests of the people was characterized by a strong moralistic tendency, a rare national consciousness, a tendency to mysticism, and the outburst of poetic genius. Minor or regional literature dealing with the immediate problems of the period was characterized by sincerity, dedication to a cause, and partisan in tone. It was found that the mental agitation caused by the war expressed itself in the religious movement called Unitarianism, the

philanthropic or humanitarian crusades, the philosophic movement called Transcendentalism, and communistic societies. It was the day of the lecturer and the lyceum. The spiritual idealism of the period was exceptional and the use of the Bible as a source of inspirational teaching, comparisons or contrasts with the existing standards, themes, imagery, and quotations was unprecedented.

The contemporary period treated in the sixth chapter is still too close to be evaluated properly. Its main developments were found to center on the two World Wars and America's position of leadership in the international scheme. In the nation itself it was found that realism tended to replace the idealism of the preceding age and that the influence of science had weakened the hold of established moral standards. Because of this there was found a spirit of depression, agitation, and insecurity. The present generation of writers has been sensitive to the changing currents. Current literature is characterized by strong realism with occasional outcroppings of romanticism, by the development of local-color fiction, devotion to democracy, originality and the conflicting tones of gloom and robust courage. It was found that adjustment is in the process and that religious consciousness has been sharpened by the testing. No Biblical themes have been presented in the textbook material. Quotations and allusions are used in the same way as in the preceding

periods showing that the use of the Bible in secular writings is an abiding characteristic of American literature.

C. Conclusions

This study of the relation of the Bible in teaching American literature has resulted in two significant conclusions:

1. The appeal to Filipino young people of American democratic principles, justice, and mercifulness provides a means of introducing the Bible to them by tracing the history of these admired national qualities to their origin.
2. The natural appeal of literature to the emotions and ideals can be made vital by relating the best principles which the literature upholds to the spiritual truths of the Bible.

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