

MOM
8 C 12

u.m

REPORT
of
Committee on Thesis

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of
the Graduate School, have read the accompanying
thesis submitted by Mrs Pauline Chesnut
for the degree of Master of Arts
They approve it as a thesis meeting the require-
ments of the Graduate School of the University of
Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts

J. M. Thomas
Chairman

S. F. Patton

Hardman H

June 2 1916.

UNIVERSITY OF
MINNESOTA
LIBRARY

THE GOTHIC ELEMENTS IN SMOLLETT

A Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Minnesota

by

Mae Pauline Chesnut

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

June, 1916

THE GOTHIC ELEMENTS IN SMOLLETT

Since Tobias Smollett in classifications of the eighteenth century fiction writers is always grouped with the realists, Fielding and Richardson, an attempt to associate his novels with the romantic monstrosities of Horace Walpole and his Gothic school will, no doubt, be greeted at least with surprise, if not with incredulity. No one, it is certain, would protest more bitterly against this romantic company than the crusty Scotch doctor himself. Witness in the preface to Roderick Random his vigorous denunciation of romance.¹

In estimating Smollett's place and worth, however, one should not be unduly influenced by these prefaces. For in novel-writing, as in all other forms of human endeavor, there is likely to be a wide discrepancy between the ideal and its execution. Furthermore,

¹ "Romance, no doubt, owes its origin to ignorance, vanity, and superstition. In the dark ages of the world, when a man had rendered himself famous for wisdom or valor, his family and adherents availed themselves of his superior qualities, magnified his virtues, and represented his character and person as sacred and supernatural. The vulgar easily swallowed the bait, implored his protection, and yielded the tribute of homage and praise even to adoration.... As learning advanced, these stories were embellished with the graces of poetry.... When the minds of men were debauched by the imposition of priestcraft to the most absurd pitch of credulity, the authors of romance arose, and losing sight of probability, filled their performances with the most monstrous hyperboles.... They brought necromancy to their aid, and instead of supporting the character of their heroes by dignity of sentiment and practice, distinguished them by their bodily strength, activity, and extravagance of behavior."

2

prefaces have not always been found to be sincere. In his treatment of Count Fathom, Smollett himself illustrates well their unreliability. In the preface to Ferdinand Count Fathom he declares his praiseworthy and moral intentions of deterring people from vice through a picture of its disastrous effect on the participants of it: "while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity may be terrified from plunging into the irremediable gulf, by surveying the deplorable fate of Ferdinand Count Fathom." At the close of the novel, to be sure, the fortunes of the count, as they have been many times before, are at low ebb. But in a subsequent novel, Humphrey Clinker, Smollett has the temerity to re-introduce Ferdinand Count Fathom, reformed and basking in all the comforts of virtue after having first enjoyed all the pleasures of sin. One need not, then, be startled at finding in Smollett romantic tendencies, even though he affirmed himself to be the foe of romance and an apostle of things as they are. He set himself to describe after the manner of Gil Blas, he says, "the knavery and foibles of life, but not, however, as the Frenchmen did to excite mirth" but rather to promote that generous indignation which ought to animate the reader against the sordid and vicious disposition of the world. Several critics and writers on the development of the novel, moreover, have observed and commented on this romantic element of the Gothic type which before the publication of the first Gothic novel, Horace Walpole's The Castle of Otranto, appeared in the works of Smollett.

• Among these writers is David Masson. He says:¹ "Smollett

¹ British Novelists and their Styles: p. 150

has a power of melodramatic effect to which Fielding does not pretend. He was a Scott who might, perhaps, have been a link in North Briton literature between its infancy in Allan Ramsey and its maturity in Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott."

Professor Wilbur L. Cross in the introduction¹ to his volume, The Development of the English Novel, mentions, "the beginnings of the Gothic Romance in Smollett." Again in the same volume, in discussing Smollett's place, he says:² "Finally, Smollett's novels look toward the new romance which was soon to displace the novel of sentiment and ridicule. Smollett's imagination delighted in terror. A tragic gloom colors many a scene on board the Thunder, especially that one where Roderick, chained to the deck on a dark night, lies exposed to the furious broadside of a French man-of-war. It pervades Count Fathom, his most romantic novel; and perhaps above all his scenes of horror arises the midnight the Count passes in the robbers' cave. Here are the shadows, the poniard, the bleeding corpse, the cold sweat, the trance machinery which usher in Gothic Romance."

"For³ the form of the novel, this literary revolution meant that the epistolary and dramatic analogies employed by Richardson and Fielding were to be displaced by the epic narrative; for the content of the novel, it meant the abandonment of analysis and ridicule, and a return to magic, mystery, and chivalry.

"These changes were initiated by Smollett. With the exception of Humphrey Clinker, his novels are loose epics. Realism he carried to that point where by its enormities it becomes Romance. And certain passages in Count Fathom show a revived interest in

¹ p. XVI.

² p. 68-69

³ p. 99

4

superstition as unmistakably as does the poetry of Collins and Gray.... Here is a note that our literature lost with the last of the Elizabethans. Superstition, it is true, was not absent from the Queen Anne writers. But there is a marked contrast between their treatment of it and Smollett's. Defoe, Addison, and Pope described coldly and minutely the devil, the ghost, and the sylph, as if they were tangible realities; Smollett awakened wonder at a mystery, which, however, he finally accounted for. The trick of first exciting fear and then letting it suddenly tumble flat became the usual procedure of Gothic Romance for the next half century."

W. E. Henlet also asserts¹ "There are attempts at terror in Fathom which are unique, so far as I know, in the early English novel. 'The night in a Forest' was long quoted as an example of the Truly-Awful. It is nothing of the kind now. But there is no doubt that the writer... attempted of set purpose to make his reader's flesh creep; and there is none that he succeeded in the endeavor.... All the same it is a lasting testimony to the vivacity, the adventurous apprehensiveness of Smollett's mind; and wooden as it seems to us, and fatuous as we may esteem the writer's treatment of the theory of romance set forth in it, it has a place in the Romantic Revival which is not shared by any book of its time... In 'Ferdinand, Count Fathom' he struck a note and suggested a set of possibilities with which romance yet thrills."

¹ Introduction to the Complete Works of Smollett,
Scribner, 1899.

5

Professor Saintsbury is another who has noted this Gothic tendency in Smollett. He says:¹ "The robber scenes which were, as it seems to us, so extravagantly praised, really deserve, when they are examined with the true historic examination, very considerable applause. Smollett had, no doubt, models for them in his Spanish and French originals, -- most writers have models for most things, and Smollett, in particular, had models for almost everything that he did. But he has really infused a 'browner horror' into his handling -- a frisson nouveau into his style. What is unlucky to him is, that some time after he wrote the Germans took up this style, the English terror mongers, with Mrs. Radcliffe and Monk Lewis at their head, followed the German lead, and the thing became exaggerated and hackneyed."

"The book will always hold a place of positively high interest with those students of the novel from the historical side, who see in it the link, to some extent, between the Spanish-French novel of adventure pure and simple, and the later adventure-novel of Mrs. Radcliffe, of Lewis, of Godwin, of Maturin."

¹ Introduction to Ferdinand Count Fathom, New National Edition of the Works of Tobias Smollett. (Hearts' International Library Co.)

A DEFINITION OF THE GOTHIC ROMANCE

Before proceeding to establish the relationship between Smollett and the Gothic romanticists suggested by the writers just quoted, it may be well to define, or at least to attempt to define, the Gothic romance. In formulating this definition of the term Gothic romance, the significance of the words as they were used in the middle and latter part of the eighteenth century will be considered.

First let us notice the term Gothic. During the first half of the eighteenth century it was a term of reproach and was synonymous with barbaric. The period from the tenth century to the Renaissance was referred to as the Gothic ages, "the tedious years of Gothic darkness" referred to by Cowper, the days when the so-called Gothic architecture flourished in Europe.¹ That feudal age of chivalry, religion, and superstition was much despised² by the practical, straight-forward gazing gentlemen of the eighteenth

¹ In this connection it is curious to note the following citation from Beadley's The Goths: "What we miscall Gothic architecture has no historical connection with the Goths. The few buildings of theirs which are preserved are in a wholly different style."

² John Hughs, editor of the first eighteenth century edition of Spencer's works, 1715, apologizes for the Fairy Queen: "The whole frame of it would appear monstrous, if it were to be examined by the rules of epick poetry, as they have been drawn from the practice of Homer and Virgil.... To compare it with the models of antiquity would be like drawing a parallel between the Roman and the Gothick architecture.... It ought to be considered, too, at the time when our author wrote, the remains of the old Gothick chivalry were not quite abolished."

7

century. Strictly speaking, then, the word referred to time; it meant medieval. Examples of the term Gothic meaning barbarous, lawless, and tawdry are numerous in Addison's writings. He instructs his public that "the taste of most of our English poets, as well as readers, is extremely Gothic." (Spect. 62) "Poets who want this strength of genius, to give that majestic simplicity to nature which we so much admire in the works of the ancients, are forced to hunt after foreign ornaments, and not to let any piece of wit, of what kind soever, escape them. I look upon such writers as Goths in poetry, who, like those in architecture, not being able to come up to the beautiful simplicity of the old Greeks and Romans, have endeavored to supply its place with all the extravagances of an irregular fancy." Again he mentions an "allegorical vision" of the encounter of "True and False Wit" in a very dark grove, a monstrous fabric built after the Gothic manner and covered with innumerable devices in that barbarous kind of sculpture. "This Temple is consecrated to the god of dullness," who is "dressed in the habit of a monk" (No. 63). In his essay On Taste he says, "I have endeavored in several of my speculations, to banish this Gothic taste which has taken possession among us."

It is curious to note, too, that Smollett, in spite of his eligibility to the Gothic school which this paper is endeavoring to establish, shared Addison's contempt for the Gothic.¹

By the middle of the century, a different attitude towards the middle ages began to be manifest. Joseph and Thomas Warton had openly revolted from the strict classicism of Pope and his school. The antiquaries were beginning to delve in the neglected field of the early literature of their own people. In his essay, Gray and

¹ Foot note on next page

¹ "In valuing his work he was obliged to have an eye to the Gothic ignorance of the age in which he lived."

Peregrine Pickle.

"recommended to them unity and concord against the Goths and Vandals of the age, who took all opportunities of ridiculing and discouraging the adherents of knowledge and philosophy."

Peregrine Pickle.

"and you yourself are a Goth, and a Turk and a Tarter."

Peregrine Pickle.

"though in his heart, he blessed himself from such a barbarous Goth." (The squire who painted his Ancestors.)

Peregrine Pickle.

"he called him blasphemous, Goth, Boeatian."

Peregrine Pickle.

"It could not be supposed that I should know anything of an imperfect Gothic dialect that rose on the ruins of the former."

Roderick Random.

In describing the building at Bath, Squire Bramble writes to Dr. Lewis: "They look like the wreck of streets and squares disjoined by an earthquake which hath broken the ground into a variety of holes and hillocks; or as if some Gothic devil had stuffed them all into a bag and left them to stand higgledy-piggledy, just as chance directed."

Humphrey Clinker.

His School,¹ Leslie Stephen says, "It was among the Wartons and their friends that the word, Gothic, used by earlier writers as a simple term of abuse, came to have a more appreciative meaning; they were the originators of the so-called romanticism made popular by Scott.... Gray and his friends were eclectics. This taste for the Gothic was a kind of happy thought made by men feeling round rather vaguely for a new mode of literary and artistic enjoyment -- not quite content with the exceedingly comfortable and respectable century in which they lived, and yet not clearly seeing how to improve upon it.... Horace Walpole had a taste, and money to spend upon it; so he made Gothic chapels and halls of lath and plaster, played with antiquarian researches, and wrote a romance which was made of literary lath and plaster to match the materials of Strawberry hill."²

Concerning the influence of Walpole's experiments with Strawberry Hill, Professor Phelps says:³ "If some middle-class

¹ Hours in a Library, vol. IV p. 33.

² Gray's letter to Thomas Warton dated Sept. 18, 1754 is an interesting example of this revolution of sentiment towards the Gothic. He writes, "I rejoice to find you at last settled to your heart's content, and delight to hear you talk of giving your house some "Gothic ornaments" already I am glad you enter into the spirit of Strawberry Castle. It has a purity and propriety of Gothicism in it (with very few exceptions) that I have not seen elsewhere."

³ The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement, p. 104.

9

wealthy Englishman had for his own amusement built such a Gothic castle as the one called Strawberry Hill, he would probably have been greeted only with ridicule. But when Horace Walpole, the glass of fashion and the mould of form, drew attention to his new-fangled architecture, he carried London society with him. The fame of Strawberry Hill and its curiosities grew apace; and though the real similarity of the building to Gothic architecture would to-day count for nothing, its effect in re-awakening the study and love of Gothicism counted for much in the middle of the eighteenth century.... The craze for Gothic architecture that followed the 'gingerbread' castle at Strawberry Hill had a strong side-influence on the revival of the Romantic spirit in literature."

Before proceeding with the term Gothic as applied to literature, it will doubtless be well to consider the status of the term Romance with people of the middle eighteenth century. Since the term was originally applied to the tales of chivalrous adventure which were the favorite kind of writing in Provencal, Old French, and Spanish, the Romans or corruptions of the Latin, it is not surprising to find it in disrepute among the Augustans. When they referred to a poem or story as "romantic" they meant that it was either wildly improbable and extravagant or else over-sentimental; in either case it deserved unqualified condemnation. Pope chafed a bit under the rigid exclusion of romanticism. He writes to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in 1716, "The more I examine my mind the more romantic¹ I find myself.... Let them say I am romantic; so is everyone said to be who admires a fine thing or praises one."²

¹ Meaning "sentimental."

² Pope's Works, vol. IX. p. 360

10

Like the word "Gothic," however, the word "Romantic" had increased in dignity by the middle of the century. In 1762 appeared a very important work, Letters on Chivalry and Romance. Its author, Bishop Richard Hurd, had the effrontery to announce that if Homer had seen feudal manners, he would certainly have preferred them. "And the grounds of this preference would, I suppose, have been the improved gallantry of the Gothic Knights; and the superior solemnity of their superstitions."

Hurd simply uses Gothic to designate the Middle Ages, the time of feudalism and chivalry. Romance was the term by which he mentioned a tale of feudalism, chivalry, and superstition. The Spirit of Romance¹ which he refers to seems to be something nearly akin in meaning to the adjective romantic as he defines it, -- "the going in quest of adventures," that is, the seeking of occasions to display generous and disinterested valour indifferently to friends or enemies in distress. Romantic, then, meant sentimental, a taste for the unusual and the mysterious. Hurd, then, did more towards changing the attitude towards what the terms Gothic and Romance signified than in actually limiting or extending the terms themselves. The abstract use of the term Romance had not yet come into use. Summing up briefly, in the middle of the eighteenth century, Gothic meant medieval, Romance, a story of the exaggerated and impossible, and Romantic, sentimental and fantastic.

"What... is more remarkable than the Gothic Chivalry? or than the Spirit of Romance which took its rise from that singular institution?... The spirit of Chivalry was a fire which soon spent itself; but that of Romance, which was kindled at it, burnt long, and continued its light and heat even to the politer ages."

11

Two years after Hurd's revolutionary letters, Horace Walpole published, in 1764, his "Castle of Otranto." In describing this tale I quote Leslie Stephen:¹ "Walpole found out that our old cathedrals were really beautiful. He discovered that a charming toy could be made of medievalism.... He used frowning castles and gloomy monasteries, knights in armour, and ladies in distress and monks and nuns and hermits, all the scenery and the characters that have peopled the imagination of the romantic school.... Walpole tried to combine the charm of the old romance and the modern novel.. .. He wished to relieve the prosaic realism of the school of Fielding and Smollett by making use of the romantic situations without altogether taking leave of the language of common life. He sought to make men and women out of medieval knights and ladies."

Of the eclat which followed the publication of this romance we need say little. Soon Walpole had a host of imitators, all writing what they called Gothic Romances. He called his piece of fiction Gothic because it had to do with medievalism, and spoke of it at different times as a tale, a story, and a romance. Discriminating terms for the literature of fiction were not fixed at that time. The realistic novelists wavered between the terms history and novel. Their works must be called by some name that would distinguish them from the impossible tales that did not "follow nature." Clara Reeves in her Progress of Romance, 1785, tried to fix these terms. She defines them thus: "The Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written. The Romance, in lofty and elevated language, describes

¹ Hours in a Library II. Horace Walpole.

12

what never happened nor is likely to happen." Lofty and elevated language can be boasted of none of these Gothic stories.¹ In this particular they fall short of the definition, or the definition falls short of them. What never happened nor is likely to happen, however, they all abound in. The time in these Gothic novels which followed the Castle of Otranto was not medieval. Their authors were followers of Walpole rather in his attempt to arouse the emotions of terror and pity.² These stories were Gothic, then, because they strove to arouse terror and pity; and these emotions often by means of incantations and supernatural visitations believed in by the people of the Gothic ages. Romances they were because they dealt with what never happened nor was likely to happen. True, Mrs. Reeves and Mrs. Radcliffe revolted against the really supernatural and resorted to the appearance of the supernatural. But Lewis and Maturin gave themselves up quite shamelessly to the flesh and the Devil. The flesh because they sought not only terror but horror by portraying in much detail the revolting and physically disgusting.

Thus, then, a Gothic Romance is a tale of what never happened nor could happen, which seeks to arouse the emotions of horror, terror, and wonder. The devices or machinery employed to arouse these emotions are the ominously mysterious, the supernatural, music, scenic effects of the Salvator Rosa order, medieval architecture, the gruesome and physically revolting, the isolation of sense impressions, and the physical and mental reactions of the characters. The emphasis in these stories falls on plot, with setting secondary; characters and style are subordinated.

¹ Foot note on next page

² " " " " "

¹ Walpole in his preface to the Castle of Otranto even boasts, "There is no bombast, no similes, flowers, digressions or unnecessary descriptions."

²"Terror, the author's principal engine, prevents the story from ever languishing; and it is so often contrasted by pity, that the mind is kept in a constant vicissitude of interesting passions."

SMOLLETT'S USE OF THE GOTHIC

No definite chronological order of Gothic development can be perceived in Smollett's novels. Roderick Random, 1748, and Ferdinand Count Fathom, 1753, the latter particularly, present the most strikingly Gothic characteristics. Humphrey Clinker, 1771, his last novel, and the only one to appear after the publication, in 1764, of The Castle of Otranto, called the "first Gothic Romance," is the least Gothic of any of Smollett's novels in the elements in which The Castle of Otranto is Gothic -- namely the supernatural, the mysterious, and the terror-producing machinery. However, Humphrey Clinker does contain one very striking romantic element much employed by Ann Radcliffe and later disciples of the Gothic school, this is the use of scenic effects; and The Castle of Otranto is lacking in these.

Since Gray's Letters dealing with his travels in the English Lake Country were published shortly before Humphrey Clinker, Smollett was probably influenced by them in his treatment of the Highland scenery. In this connection it is interesting to note Professor Saintsbury's remark that Smollett had models for everything. His sources cannot be discussed at great length here. Certain it is, however, that some very striking bits of what was later known as Gothic machinery appeared at various times in numerous Memoirs and Letters which were being published so profusely in the eighteenth century. In the Memoirs d'un Homme de Qualite published in France in 1759 is an account of a bereaved husband who retired to an isolated cottage and spent most of his time there in a

14

chamber dedicated to his wife. The walls were draped in black, the light of the sun was excluded, torches in iron holders gave the only light, mementos of his deceased wife were everywhere in evidence, a golden casket on a funeral table in the center of the apartment contained her heart.

In Eliza Heywood's Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia, 1738, is an example¹ of the suggested supernatural so frequently employed by Smollett, and the character of Montreville after his sweetheart's death is suggestive of the melancholy, mysterious gentleman of Romance who appears in Smollett and is conspicuous as the villain in later Gothic tales.²

In the present investigation three kinds of the Gothic elements have been found. First there is the real Gothic, that is, passages the Gothic devices of which could not in any way be challenged. Then there are the semi-Gothic instances, material which the Gothic novelists would have handled most effectually, but which Smollett has slighted or only half developed in a Gothic manner. Last there is what I have called the pseudo-Gothic. In this case the reader has already been let into the secret that the apparition or terrible occurrence is a hoax; but the poor characters accept it in perfect faith and experience all manner of physical and mental terrors.

In grouping these examples, however, the above classification has not been adhered to. The basis followed has been Characters, Machinery of Action, and Setting. Different elements cross and overlap to such an extent that it would be impossible completely to isolate them. In instances where the material admitted of several classifications, the predominating characteristic has been the basis used.

14

1 "He... told me that he was strangely uneasy; for he certainly had seen the Appearance of a Man, and that he believ'd a Spirit. -- He then made me acquainted with a long story, which 'till then I had never heard, that having in his Youth fought a Duel with a young Chevalier, he had the Misfortune of wounding him mortally. -- This Suggestion has taken so deep a Root in him, that all I could say was ineffectual to remove it; he steadfastly believes you were the Spirit of that departed Gentleman, and expects no other than that he shall be haunted by this perturb'd Apparition. I could not forbear being surpriz'd at first, that a Man of his good Sense in other things should so unaccountably be possessed of a Whimsey like this; but on second Thoughts was well enough pleased at it; for I fancy it may be of no small Service to the promoting of our Conversation. If he should happen to surprize us, it is but my counterfeiting a prodigious Terror, and crying out, a Ghost! a Ghost! and he will scarce come near enough to distinguish the Flesh from the Spirit." From a Letter of Clione to the Angel of her Wishes, her dear, dear Bellario.

"To hear of so unexpected and so dreadful a Catastrophe, made him ready to do a violence on his own Life; and in so terrible a manner was he afflicted, that to have exchanged Conditions with her, was a woe infinitely short of what he felt -- he saw, or he fancy'd that he saw her ever before his Eyes. -- He neither could sit, walk, nor lie alone, and he became so altered in a short time that he was scarcely to be known. -- His fine and delicate Complexion wore now a death-like Paleness -- his sparkling Eyes were sunk and hollow, and all their shining Radiance extinct, -- his once plump dimpled Cheeks were now fallen in, and lank, and had deep furrows such as Age engraves. -- His ever folded Arms, and drooping Head, seem'd with a weight of Care too heavy for his Body, and bowed it down towards the Earth. -- Nor was his Conversation any more the same -- that gay, etc... In fine, there was nothing remained of the accomplish'd, admir'd Montreville but the Name."

Before citing the instances of the Gothic in Smollett under their several classifications of character, machinery of action, and setting, one whole scene in which the terror and horror-producing machinery abounds and for which nearly every one of the Gothic romances has a parallel scene will be considered. This example is the night in the forest referred to by Henley as an admirable instance of the "truly-awful." Smollett has the distinction of being the first writer of English fiction to introduce the now quite familiar situation of the traveler who is overtaken at nightfall, with a dark storm coming on, in a lonely forest far from town or hamlet and at last finds shelter in a solitary and mysterious house where he encounters some gruesome object and thus discovers that he is among thieves and murderers. In chap. 20 of vol. I of Ferdinand Count Fathom we find the hero traveling through a dense forest with a guide who tells him gruesome tales of wayfarers who had been robbed and murdered by ruffians whose retreat was in the recesses of that very wood. The guide then makes some excuse to drop behind and thus disappears.

"Alarmed at this circumstance, Fathom halted in the middle of the road, and listened with the most fearful attention; but his sense of hearing was saluted with nought but the dismal sighing of the trees, that seemed to foretell an approaching storm. Accordingly, the heavens contracted a more dreary aspect, the lightning began to gleam, and the thunder to roll, and the tempest, raising its voice to a tremendous roar, descended in a torrent of rain.

"In this emergency, the fortitude of our hero was almost quite overcome.... He persuaded himself that his guide had deserted him for the present, in order to give intelligence of a traveler to

16

some gang of robbers with whom he was connected; and that he must of necessity fall a prey to those banditti, unless he should have the good fortune to elude their search, and disentangle himself from the mazes of the wood.

"Harrowed with these apprehensions, he resolved to commit himself to the mercy of the hurricane... and penetrate straight-forwards through some devious opening, until he should be delivered from the forest. For this purpose he turned his horse's head in a line quite contrary to the direction of the high road which he had left, on the supposition that the robbers would pursue that track in quest of him, and that they would never dream of his deserting the highway, to traverse an unknown forest, amidst the darkness of such a boisterous night. After he had continued in this progress through a succession of groves, and bogs, and thorns, and brakes, by which not only his clothes, but also his skin suffered... while every nerve quivered with eagerness and dismay, he at length reached an open plain, and pursuing his course, in full hope of arriving at some village, where his life would be safe, he descried a rushlight at a distance, which he looked upon as the star of his good fortune, and riding toward it at full speed, arrived at the door of a lone cottage, into which he was admitted by an old woman, who, understanding he was a bewildered traveler, received him with great hospitality."

The Count learns from the apparently naive beldame that her husband is a faggot-cutter, and on account of the tempest, probably will not return until morning. She gives her guest a good supper and conducts him up to the loft where he is to pass the night. Cautioning him against letting the candle approach combustion, she takes her leave and locks the door behind her.

"With this instance of her care in confining her guest to his chamber, he began to be seized with strange fancies, when he observed that there was no bolt on the inside of the door, by which he might secure himself from intrusion.... He proposed to take an accurate survey of every object in the apartment, and, in the course of his inquiry, had the mortification to find the dead body of a man, still warm, who had been lately stabbed, and concealed beneath several bundles of straw.

"Such a discovery could not fail to fill the breast of our hero with unspeakable horror; for he concluded that he himself would undergo the same fate before morning, without the interposition of a miracle in his favor. In the first transports of his dread, he ran to the window, with a view to escape by that outlet, and found his flight effectually obstructed by divers strong bars of iron. Then his heart began to palpitate, his hair to bristle up, and his knees to totter; his thoughts teemed with the presages of death and destruction; his conscience rose up in judgment against him, and he underwent a severe paroxysm of dismay and distraction. His spirits were agitated into a state of fermentation that produced a species of resolution akin to that which is inspired by brandy and other strong liquors, and, by an impulse that seemed supernatural, he was immediately hurried into measures for his own preservation....

"He undressed the corpse that lay bleeding among the straw, and, conveying it to the bed in his arms, deposited it in the attitude of a person who sleeps at his ease; then he extinguished the light, took possession of the place from whence the body had been removed, and holding a pistol ready cocked in each hand, waited for the sequel with that determined purpose which is often the immediate production of despair. About midnight he heard the sound

of feet ascending the ladder; the door was softly opened; he saw the shadow of two men stalking towards the bed, a dark lanthorn being unshrouded, directed their aim to the supposed sleeper, and he that held it thrust a poniard to his heart; the force of the blow made a compression on the chest, and a sort of groan issued from the wind-pipe of the defunct; the stroke was repeated, without producing a repetition of the note, so that the assassins concluded the work was effectually done, and retired for the present with a design to return and rifle the deceased at their leisure.

"Never had our hero spent a moment in such agony as he felt during this operation; the whole surface of his body was covered with a cold sweat, and his nerves were relaxed with a universal palsy. In short he remained in a trance that, in all probability, contributed to his safety; for, had he retained the use of his senses, he might have been discovered by the transports of his fear."

When the Count recovered his senses he discovered that the robbers had quitted the room leaving the door unlocked. He was about to attempt his escape, when he heard them in the room below planning to set forth shortly in search of more prey. Ferdinand waited until they were well on their way before he sauntered downstairs and revealed himself to the ancient beldame who, of course, mistook him for the ghost of one of the murdered travelers.

"Accustomed as she was to the trade of blood, the hoary hag did not behold this apparition without giving signs of infinite terror and astonishment, believing it was no other than the spirit of her second guest, who had been murdered; she fell upon her knees and began to recommend herself to the protection of the saints, crossing herself with as much devotion as if she had been entitled to the particular care and attention of Heaven."

Even when she discovered that Fathom was no ghost she was still in great fear. The Count profited by this and commanded her to convey him to the nearest town. They set out on the same horse, the Count with a drawn pistol superintending the old woman's conduct. "It is not to be supposed that he passed his time in the most agreeable reverie, while he found himself involved in the labyrinth of those shades, which he considered as the haunts of robbery and assassination.

"Common fear was a comfortable sensation to what he felt in this excursion. The first steps he had taken for his preservation were the effects of mere instinct, while his faculties were extinguished or suppressed by despair; but now, as his reflection began to recur, he was haunted by the most intolerable apprehensions. Every whisper of the wind through the thickets was swelled into the hoarse menaces of murder, the shaking of the boughs was construed into the branding of poniards, and every shadow of a tree became the apparition of a ruffian eager for blood. In short, at each of the occurrences he felt what was infinitely more tormenting than the stab of a real dagger; and at every fresh fillip of his fear, he acted as a remembrancer to his conductress....

"Human nature could not longer subsist under such complicated terror. At last he found himself clear of the forest, and was blessed with the distant view of an inhabited place."

Thus in this novel, Ferdinand Count Fathom, which appeared in 1753, eleven years before the Castle of Otranto, "the first Gothic novel," we have, crudely handled to be sure, yet not more crudely than in the "first Gothic novel" itself -- that could not be -- some of the most effective terror-producing devices of the Gothic writers. The most important, perhaps, because it is new in English fiction, is the use of landscape and weather, the terrifying effects

of the storm on the traveler. Then we have, so familiar to all readers of Gothic romance that they seem conventional, the bloody corpse, the murderous robbers with daggers, the physical horrors of the hero exhibited in a palpitating heart, bristling hair, tottering knees, ahe breaking out of a cold sweat, and the relaxing of the nerves into a universal palsy, not to mention his terrible mental reflections. The door bolted by some person on the outside and the prisoner within with no bolt or means whereby he may secure himself against intrusion from without, is familiar to the readers of Mrs. Radcliffe.

Let us now turn to the following parallel passages from the tales of the later English terror-mongers.

In Mrs. Radcliffe's The Italian there is an incident of the same nature. An old peasant is relating the story of a man, a peasant, who is lost in the forest at nightfall in a terrible storm. He sees a man going along the beach with a mysterious bag slung over his shoulder. He follows the man to the place previously described in the story. "On the shore of the Adriatic in the province of Apulia is a house... It is a lonely dwelling on the beach, and concealed from travelers among the forests which spread for many miles along the coast." The peasant after much foreboding goes to the door and asks for shelter. He finds the stranger, who has called to him to enter, cooking some food in an open fire place. This meal the man hospitably invites the peasant to sit down to, and bidding him warm and dry himself before the fire, leaves the room to get another plate. On looking about him during his host's absence the peasant discovered the mysterious bag in a corner. He crosses the room to examine its contents. "He untied the string, signor, that held the sack, and opened the cloth a little way; but think, signor, what he must have thought, when he

felt -- cold flesh! O Signor! and when he saw by the light of the fire the face of a corpse within." The peasant flees from the hut before the return of his host.

In the famous Monk by Matthew Gregory Lewis, regarded as one of the most Gothic of the Gothic stories, we find an incident in the History of Don Raymond, Marquis de las Cisternas very similar to Smollett's 'the night in the forest.'

"I resumed my journey, intending to reach Strasbourg that night. My hopes, however, were frustrated by the breaking down of my chaise; the accident happened in the middle of a thick forest, and I was not a little embarrassed as to means of proceeding. It was the depth of winter; the night was already closing round us; and Strasbourg, which was the nearest town, was still distant from us several leagues. It seemed to me that my only alternative to passing the night in the forest was to take my servant's horse and ride on to Strasbourg; an undertaking at that season very far from agreeable.... On mentioning my design of proceeding by myself to Strasbourg, the postillion shook his head in disapprobation.... Said he ..., 'If I am not mistaken, we are scarcely five minutes' walk from the cottage of my old friend Baptiste; he is a woodcutter, and a very honest fellow. I doubt not but he will shelter you for the night with pleasure'..... It was a small but neat building; as we drew near it, I rejoiced at observing through the window the blaze of a comfortable fire. Our conductor knocked at a door; it was some time before any one answered; the people within seemed in doubt whether we should be admitted.... Soon after the bolts were drawn back, the door was unclosed, and a man presented himself to us with a lamp in his hand; he gave the guide a hearty reception, and then addressed himself to me.... He ushered me into the room where I had observed the fire. I was immediately placed in an easy-

chair which stood close to the hearth. A female, whom I supposed to be the wife of my host, rose from her seat upon my entrance, and received me with a slight and distant reverence. She made no answer to my compliment, but, immediately reseating herself, continued the work on which she had been employed. Her husband's manners were as friendly as hers were harsh and repulsive." One of the woodcutter's sons was about to conduct Don Raymond to the chamber he was to occupy for the night. The unpleasant wife of the woodcutter, Marguerite, hovered near the guest as by accident. "Marguerite seized the moment when we were unobserved; she caught my hand and pressed it strongly.

"'Look at the sheets!' she said, as she passed me and immediately resumed her former occupation.

"Startled by the abruptness of her action, I remained as if petrified. Robert's voice desiring me to follow him recalled me to myself. I ascended the staircase. My conductor ushered me into a chamber where an excellent fire was blazing upon the hearth. He placed the light upon the table, inquired whether I had any further commands, and on my replying in the negative, left me to myself. You may be certain that the moment when I found myself alone, was that on which I complied with Marguerite's injunction. I took the candle hastily, approached the bed and turned down the coverture. What was my astonishment, my horror, at finding the sheets crimsoned with blood!

"At that moment a thousand confused ideas passed before my imagination. The robbers who infested the wood, Marguerite's exclamations respecting her children, the arms and appearance of the two young men, and the various anecdotes which I had heard related respecting the secret correspondence which frequently exists between banditti and postillions; all these circumstances flashed upon my

mind, and inspired me with doubt and apprehension. I ruminatèd on the most probable means of ascertaining the truth of my conjectures. Suddenly I was aware of someone below pacing hastily backwards and forwards. Everything now appeared to me an object of suspicion. With precaution I drew near the window which, as the room had long been shut up, was left open in spite of the cold. I ventured to look out. The beams of the moon permitted me to distinguish a man, whom I had no difficulty to recognize as my host. I watched his movements. He walked swiftly, then stopped and seemed to listen; he stamped upon the ground, and beat his stomach with his arms, as if to guard himself from the inclemency of the season; at the least noise, if a voice was heard in the lower part of the house, if a bat flitted past him, or the wind rattled amidst the leafless boughs, he started and looked round with anxiety.

"'Plague take him!'" said he at length, with extreme impatience; 'what can he be about?'

"He spoke in a low voice; but as he was just below my window, I had no difficulty to distinguish his words."

Don Raymond then heard steps approaching; Baptiste went towards the sound; he joined a man, who proved to be the postillion of Don Raymond and who his master supposed was well on his way toward Strasbourg for aid. Thus Don Raymond by a series of accidents strikingly similar to those in Count Fathom's adventure discovered himself to be among robbers. Later, in the kitchen, while pretending to be in a drunken torpor he heard the rest of the robber band approaching.

"At this moment I heard a trampling of horses. Oh! how dreadful was the sound to my ears! A cold sweat flowed down my forehead, and I felt all the terrors of impending death. I was by

no means re-assured by hearing the compassionate Marguerite exclaim in the accents of despair, --

"'Almighty God! they are lost'....

"'But first,' said Jacques, taking up his arms, 'first let me despatch these sleepers'....

"I heard him approach a small cupboard which was fixed up in a distant part of the room and unlock it. At this moment I felt myself shaken gently.

"'Now! Now!' whispered Marguerite.

"I opened my eyes. Baptiste stood with his back towards me. The villain had taken a dagger from the cupboard, and seemed examining whether it was sufficiently sharp.... I sprang from my seat, darted suddenly upon Baptiste, and clasping my hands round his throat, pressed it so forcibly as to prevent his uttering a single cry.... I threw him upon the ground; I grasped him still tighter and while I fixed him without motion upon the floor, Marguerite, wresting the dagger from his hand, plunged it repeatedly in his heart till he expired.

"No sooner was this horrible but necessary act perpetrated, than Marguerite called upon me to follow her.

"'Flight is our only refuge,' said she, 'quick! quick! away!'

"I hesitated not to obey her.... The horses of the banditti were fastened near the door. My conductress sprang upon one of them. I followed her example... Our only hope was to reach Strasbourg, which was much nearer than the perfidious Claude had assured me. Marguerite was well acquainted with the road.... We were obliged to pass by the barn, where the robbers were slaughtering our domestics. The door was open; we distinguished the shrieks of the dying, and imprecations of the murderers. What I felt at

that moment language is unable to describe.

"Jacques heard the trampling of our horses, as we rushed by the barn. He flew to the door with a burning torch in his hand, and easily recognized the fugitives.

"'Betrayed! betrayed!' he shouted to his companions.

"Instantly they left their bloody work and hastened to regain their horses. We heard no more. I buried my spurs in the sides of my courser, and Marguerite goaded on hers with the poniard which had already rendered us such good service. We flew like lightning, and gained the open plains. Already was Strasbourg's steeple in sight, when we heard the robbers pursuing us. Marguerite looked back, and distinguished our followers descending a small hill at no great distance. It was vain that we urged on our horses; the noise approached nearer every moment....

"We redoubled our exertions, and were soon aware of a numerous band of cavaliers who came towards us at full speed." Thus were Don Raymond and his guide rescued.

Closely akin to these adventures, although presented from the stand-point of the guests already assembled in the inn, is the initial appearance of Sir Launcelot Greaves in the novel that bears his name.

"It was on the great northern road from York to London, about the beginning of the month of October, and the hour of eight in the evening, that four travelers were, by a violent shower of rain, driven for shelter into a little public-house on the side of the highway, distinguished by a sign which was said to exhibit the figure of a black lion." The travelers entered and proceeded to make themselves comfortable and to get acquainted. One of these in the midst of a harangue most pleasing to himself, "was interrupted

by a noise that alarmed the whole company. The rain had been succeeded by a storm of wind that howled around the house with the most savage impetuosity, and the heavens were overcast in such a manner that not one star appeared, so that all without was darkness and uproar. This aggravated the horror of divers loud screams, which even the noise of the blast could not exclude from the ears of our astonished travelers. Captain Crowe called out, 'Avast, avast!' Tom Clarke sat silent, staring wildly, with his mouth still open; the surgeon himself seemed startled, and Ferret's countenance betrayed evident marks of confusion. The hostler moved nearer the chimney, and the good woman of the house, with her two daughters, crept closer to the company.

"After some pause, the captain starting up, 'These,' said he, 'be signals of distress. Some poor souls in danger of foundering -- let us bear up a-head, and see if we can give them any assistance.' The landlady begged him, for Christ's sake, not to think of going out, for it was a spirit that would lead him astray into fens and rivers, and certainly do him a mischief. Crowe seemed to be staggered by this remonstrance, which his nephew reinforced, observing, that it might be a stratagem of rogues to decoy them into the fields, that they might rob them under the cloud of night."

The company then settled back again and Mr. Ferret continued for some time with his discourse. "His lecture was suddenly suspended by a violent knocking at the door, which threatened the whole house with inevitable demolation." The landlady and her children retreated to the cellar and the rest of the party armed themselves with convenient kitchen utensils for defense.

"The outward door of the Black Lion had already sustained two dreadful shocks, but at the third it flew open, and in stalked an apparition that smote the hearts of our travelers with fear and

trepidation. It was the figure of a man armed cap-a-pie, bearing on his shoulders a bundle dropping with water, which afterwards appeared to be the body of a man that seemed to have been drowned, and fished up from the bottom of the neighboring river.

"Having deposited his burden carefully on the floor he addressed himself to the company." He explained how in crossing the river his squire had been swept off his feet, and how he had rescued him and brought him hither.

To be sure, there are no corpses, bloody poniards, or murderous robbers here. But we have the stormy night, the general foreboding atmosphere, the lost travelers calling without in the storm and the terrified guests within. The knight when he does appear proves to be, to those already assembled in the inn at least, a person of awe and mystery. Although the passage is handled in a satiric manner which characterizes many of the pseudo-Gothic passages, it cannot be classed as pseudo-Gothic, because the emotions of the characters are not consciously played upon by any other members of the party, nor is the reader yet acquainted with the fact that Sir Launcelot Greaves is a mere harmless, altruistic fanatic. The passage is an admirable example of that "trick," referred to by Cross, "of first exciting fear and then letting it tumble flat which became the usual procedure of the Gothic Romance for the next half century."

28

CHARACTERS

In considering the characters presented by Smollett one finds several instances of the mysterious and distinctly Gothic gentleman. In Smollett's novels, however, he is usually a minor character, not the hero. There are in these novels, as in the romances of the writers of the Gothic school, two variations of him. First there is the man with a past, the gloomy, mysterious person, who stands apart from other men and who cherishes a dark sorrow in his heart. He is the villain of Mrs. Radcliffe and is also supposed to be the model Lord Byron used for Lara and Manfred. In Smollett's novels, however, this unhappy man is never the villain. The other variation is the Gothic hero, the remarkably gallant and engaging young man of humble circumstances with whom the heroine falls in love. He is continually giving hints, in his manner and his speech, that he is something more than he appears to be. These suggestions give him, too, an air of mystery. He finally rewards her attachment and justifies his hints by turning out to be a person of high degree who for various reasons has been compelled or has chosen to travel in disguise.

Father Shedoni in Mrs. Radcliffe's The Italian is, perhaps, the best example of the Byronic type. He is described thus:

"There lived in the Dominican convent of Spirito Santo at Naples, a man called Father Shedoni; an Italian as his name imported but whose family was unknown, and from some circumstances it appeared that he wished to throw an impenetrable veil over his origin. For whatever reason, he was never heard to mention a relative, or the place of his nativity, and heartfully eluded inquiry that approached the subject which the curiosity of his

2

associates had occasionally prompted. There were circumstances which appeared to indicate him to be a man of birth and of fallen fortune; his spirit, as it sometimes looked forth from under the disguise of manners, seemed lofty; it showed, not, however, the aspirings of a generous mind, but rather the gloomy pride of a disappointed one. Some ... believed that the peculiarities of his manner, his severe reserve and unconquerable silence, his solitary habits and frequent penances, were the effect of misfortune preying upon a haughty and disordered spirit; others conjectured that the consequence of some hideous crime gnawing upon an awakened conscience His figure was striking, but not from grace; it was tall, and though extremely thin, his limbs were large and uncouth, and as he stalked along, wrapt in the black garments of his order, there was something terrible in its air, something almost superhuman. His cowl, too, as it threw a shade of livid paleness over his face, increased its severe character and gave an effect to his large melancholy eye which approached to horror."

Compared with this terrible Dominican, Smollett's mysterious gentlemen are pale; nevertheless, they possess several marked characteristics of the type. Don Rodrigo, the "melancholy Spaniard" of Roderick Random, is the most conspicuous of these.

"He was a tall man, remarkably well shaped, of a fine mien and appearance, commanding respect, and seemed to be turned forty; the features of his face were saddened with a reserve and gravity which in other countries would have been thought the effect of melancholy, but here appeared to have been contracted by his commerce with the Spaniards, who are remarkable for that severity of countenance. Understanding from Don Antonio that we were his countrymen, he saluted us all round very complaisantly, and fixing

3

his eyes very attentively on me, uttered a depp sigh. I had been struck with a profound veneration for him at his first coming into the room; and no sooner observed this expression of his sorrow, directed, as it were, in a particular manner to me,¹ than my heart took part in his grief. I sympathized involuntarily, and sighed in my turn.... His name was Don Rodrigo, ... he had lived fifteen or sixteen years in these parts, was reputed rich, and supposed to have been unfortunate in his younger years, because he was observed to nourish a pensive melancholy, even from the time of his first settlement among them; but nobody had ventured to inquire into the cause of his sorrow, in consideration of his peace, which might suffer in the recapitulation of his misfortunes."

In Ferdinand Count Fathom, Don Zelos, the noble Castilian disguised as a Persian, also belongs in the group of melancholy, mysterious gentlemen.

"His (Count Fathom's) curiosity was attracted by certain peculiarities in the appearance of a man who lived in one of the upper apartments belonging to the house in which he himself had fixed his habitation.

"This was a tall, thin, meager figure, with a long black beard, an aquiline nose, a brown complexion, and a most piercing vivacity in his eyes. He seemed to be about the age of fifty, wore the Persian habit, and there was a remarkable severity in his aspect and demeanor."

¹ Cf. the attitude of Joseph Howell (The Old English Baron) toward Edmund: "This old man would fix his eyes upon Edmund whenever he could do so without observation. Sometimes he would sigh deeply, and a tear would start from his eye, which he strove to conceal from observation."

The Count questioned the landlord concerning this mysterious guest. "All he learned was, that the Persian went by the name of Ali Beker, and that he had lived in the house for the space of four months, in a most solitary and parsimonious manner, without being visited by one living soul; that, for some time after his arrival, he had been often heard to groan dismally in the night, and even to exclaim in an unknown language, as if he had labored under some grievous affliction; and though the first transports of his grief had subsided, it was easy to perceive he still indulged a deep-rooted melancholy; for the tears were frequently observed to trickle down his beard. The commissaire of the quarter had at first ordered this Oriental to be watched in his outgoings, according to the maxims of the French police, but his life was found so regular and inoffensive that this precaution was soon set aside."

Sir Launcelot Greaves, the English Don Quixote, although a poor burlesque, does, at his first appearance, display some Gothic characteristics. He is almost Pseudo-Gothic. As far as the author's attitude toward him is concerned he is Pseudo-Gothic, but because his romantic grief is sincere and has a truly romantic cause, he cannot be included in that group. Therefore he must be classified as Semi-Gothic. Thus we see him:

"He had taken off his helmet, and now displayed a very engaging countenance. His age did not seem to exceed thirty. He was tall, and seemingly robust; his face long and oval, his nose aquiline, his mouth furnished with a set of elegant teeth, white as the drifted snow, his complexion clear, and his aspect noble. His chestnut hair loosely flowed in short natural curls; and his gray eyes shone with such vivacity as plainly showed that his reason was a little discomposed."

57

"Later, when one of the company while discoursing on love declared that it was the soul of chivalry, the knight started at this discourse. He turned his eyes on the surgeon with a fixed regard; his countenance changed; a torrent of tears gushed down his cheeks; his head sunk upon his bosom; he heaved a profound sigh and remained in silence with all the external marks of unutterable sorrow. The company were, in a measure, infected by his despondence, concerning the cause of which, however, they would not venture to inquire."¹

Ferret, too, in this initial scene of Sir Launcelot Greaves presents two Gothic possibilities. However, any suspicion of Romanticism is quickly removed from him. Thus he is first presented:

"The solitary guest had something very forbidding in his aspect, which was contracted by an habitual frown. His eyes were small and red, and so deep set in their sockets that each appeared like the unextinguished snuff of a farthing candle, gleaming through the horn of a dark lantern. His nostrils were elevated in scorn, as if his sense of smelling had been perpetually offended by some unsavory odor; and he looked as if he wanted to shrink within himself from the impertinence of society.... His name was Ferret, and his character distinguished by three peculiarities. He was never seen to smile; he was never heard to speak in praise of any person whatsoever; and he was never known to give a direct answer to any question that was asked."

¹Mr. Clarke, in recounting the knight's previous history to the other guests in the inn, after the knight himself had retired, described him thus: "When the son, now Sir Launcelot, came home, he appeared so meagre, wan, and hollow-eyed that the servants hardly knew their young master."

Renoldo, (Ferdinand Count Fathom), when he has learned of the fate of Monimia, also presents some external characteristics which are common to this melancholy type. To be sure, there is no mystery about the cause of his grief, yet it is the same cause, the unhappy fate of a dearly loved one, which is always sooner or later discovered to have produced the Byronic hero's habitual melancholy.

"They saw his face distorted and his eyes glaring with frenzy; they heard him invoke the name of Monimia with a tenderness of accent which even the impulse of madness could not destroy. Then with sudden transition of tone and gesture, he denounced vengeance against her betrayer, and called upon the north wind to cool the fervor of his brain. His hair hung in disheveled parcels, his cheeks were wan, his looks ghastly, his vigor was fled, and all the glory of his youth faded."

The second variety of the mysterious hero is Wilson in Humphrey Clinker. He is the romantic young strolling actor with whom Squire Bramble's niece, Miss Lydia Medford, is in love. He insists that he is a gentleman, but refuses to explain himself further. He turns out to be young George Dennison, son of Squire Bramble's old friend, Squire Dennison. His counterpart is found in the mysterious young peasant in The Castle of Otranto, in Valancourt of The Mysteries of Udolpho, and in the disguised Marquis Raymond De Las Cisternas in The Monk, who as an adventurer inserts himself into the Castle of Lindenberg and wins the affections of Agnes. Again, in the Old English Baron of Clara Reeves, there is the attractive Edmund Twyford, who waits on Lord Fitz-Owen's sons and who later turns out to be the rightful heir of the house.

The unfortunate Celinda in Ferdinand Count Fathom possesses in a marked degree some of the most striking physical and

35

spiritual graces of the ethereal heroine of the Gothic romance. She is described as "a very beautiful young creature about the age of fifteen."

"Particular attention had been bestowed upon the education of the child, whom we shall distinguish by the name of Celinda. Their liberality in this particular had not been misapplied; for she not only gave marks of uncommon capacity, but, as she grew up, became more and more amiable in her person, and was now returned from the boarding school possessed of every accomplishment that could be acquired by one of her age and opportunities.... She was particularly fond of music, in which she had made some progress; but so delicate was the texture of her nerves, that one day, while Fathom entertained the company with a favorite air, she actually swooned with pleasure."

Compare this description with that of Emily in Mrs. Ann Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho.

"She had discovered in her early years uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections, and ready benevolence; but with these was observable a degree of susceptibility too exquisite to admit of lasting peace. As she advanced in youth, this sensibility gave a pensive tone to her spirits, and a softness to her manners, which added grace to beauty, and rendered her a very interesting object to persons of a congenial disposition.... St. Aubert cultivated her understanding with the most scrupulous care. He gave her a general view of the sciences, and an exact acquaintance with every part of elegant literature. He taught her Latin and English, chiefly that she might understand the sublimity of their best poets. She discovered in her early years a taste for works of genius."

One cardinal characteristic of these Gothic heroines,

however, Celinda lacked; her virtue was not uncorruptable. But Monimia, the mysterious and beautiful orphan, described in the second volume of Ferdinand Count Fathom, possessed in addition to her enchanting beauty and delicate sensibility a soul, perfect, and a virtue impregnable.

"She seemed to be about the age of eighteen. Her stature was tall; her motion graceful. A knot of artificial flowers restrained the luxuriancy of her fine black hair, that flowed in shiny ringlets adown her snowy neck. The contour of her face was oval; her forehead remarkably high; her complexion clean and delicate, though not florid; and her eyes were so piercing, as to strike the soul of every beholder. Yet, upon this occasion, one half of their vivacity was eclipsed by a languishing air of melancholy concern; which, while it in a manner sheathed the edge of her beauty, added a most engaging sweetness to her looks.¹ In short, every feature was elegantly perfect; and the harmony of the whole ravishing and delightful."

Besides a "superior understanding" she was endowed with lofty "sentiments of honor, virtue, gratitude, religion, and pride of birth."

The vicissitudes of Aurelia in Sir Launcelot Greaves and her imprisonments by her guardian and usurper uncle are also not unsimilar to these which Emily in The Mysteries of Udolpho undergoes at the hands of her step uncle. Emily's adventures are, of course, the more romantic. But both are heroines of the same type, and both are separated from gentle and romantic lovers. On one occasion Aurelia, disguised as Miss Meadows and accompanied by her maid, flits through an inn kitchen. One of Sir Launcelot's attendants, happening to be there, recognizes in the maid an old

¹ Foot note on next page

¹ Cf. the description of Adeline in The Romance of the Forest: "Her beauty touched with the languid delicacy of illness gained from sentiment what it lost in bloom." Cf. also Walter Pater's remark that the romantic character in art consists in "the addition of strangeness to beauty"; also Bacon's, "There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion."

acquaintance, and describes the lady thus: "As for the other, she's a very genteel woman, but whether old or young, ugly or handsome, I can't pretend to say, for she was masked. I had just time to salute Dolly, and ask a few questions; but all she could tell me was, that the masked lady's name was Miss Meadows; and, that she, Dolly, was hired as her waiting woman." ¹

The description of Miss Meadows which the landlady at the inn gives, on this occasion, to Sir Launcelot Greaves suggests at once the mild, gentle, and pensive heroine of the Gothic Romance.

"I have had the honor to accommodate many ladies of the first fashion at the White Hart, both young and old, proud and lowly, ordinary and handsome; but such a miracle as Miss Meadows I never yet did see. -- Lord, let me never thrive but I think she is something more than a human creature! -- Oh! had your honor but set eyes on her, you would have said it was a vision from heaven, a cherubim of beauty: -- For my part, I can hardly think it was anything but a dream -- then so meek, so mild, so good-natured and generous! I say blessed is the young woman who tends upon such a heavenly creature: -- And poor dear young lady! She seems to be under grief and affliction, for the tears stole down her lovely cheeks, and looked for all the world like orient pearl."

¹ This mysterious, masked young woman is faintly suggestive of Ellena as first beheld by Vivaldi, in The Italian. "The sweetness and fine expression of her voice attracted his attention to her figure, which had a distinguished air of delicacy and grace; but her face was concealed in her veil. So much, indeed, was he fascinated by the voice, that a most painful curiosity was excited as to her countenance, which he fancied must express all the sensibility of character that the modulation of her tones indicated."

3

The masked Aurelia, the lady in a mask whom Peregrine Pickle beheld in a passing coach and noticed was "of the exact size, shape, and air of Emilia," and the beautiful young French woman accompanied by a Capuchin guardian, her father confessor, whom Peregrine meets in his journeys, are good examples of the semi-Gothic in Smollett; i.e., Gothic material handled in an un-Gothic manner. For although they are the type of characters one meets in the Gothic novels, they are merely mentioned by Smollett in a prosaic, matter-of-fact way as he would mention a tinker, a hostler or a cook maid.

The Capuchin mentioned above, the priest, and merry Capuchin in Roderick Random are mere harmless rogues quite unlike the awesome and terrible religious persons who stalk through The Italian, The Monk, and Melmoth the Wanderer. They have none of the mystery and terror-producing traits of the priests who were such favorites with the Gothic writers.

Another mysterious character introduced by Smollett is described by a porter who delivered an ominous letter to Sir Launcelot Greaves but "could give no other information, except that it was put into his hand with a shilling, by a man muffled up in a great-coat, who stopped him for the purpose, in his passing through Queen Street."¹

Many highwaymen and robbers are encountered in the pages of Smollett's novels. Scarcely any one makes a journey by coach without being either upset or attacked by some of these gentlemen of

¹ Cf. the mysterious messenger who warns Vivaldi, The Italian. "When he emerged from the dark arch of a ruin that extended over the road, his steps were crossed by a person in the habit of a monk whose face was shrouded by his cowl still more than by the twilight. The stranger, addressing him by his name, said, 'Signor, your steps are watched; beware how you visit Altieri!' Having uttered this, he disappeared."

the road. With the exception, however, of "a bloody highwayman loaded with pistols" whom Strap, the trusty follower of Roderick Random, discovered in the next room when he looked, at midnight, through the chink in the wall of his inn-bedroom, and the robbers already described in Count Fathom's adventure in the forest, they are not capable of causing cold sweat, goose-flesh, or bristling hair. They are but the conventional robbers of the rogue novel who are there, not to produce delightful, aesthetic shudders for the readers, but to introduce hearty, virile adventure involving much firing of pistols and manly fighting for the sake of fighting. They have, therefore, no place in this thesis.

The unfortunate inmates of prisons and madhouses afford opportunities for thrills of horror and pity which the Gothic romantics were not backward about utilizing. Yet Smollett before them had revelled in these gruesome possibilities. When Sir Launcelot Greaves was cast into prison he demanded the name of "the worthy magistrate, who had been so premature in the execution of his office. This request was no sooner signified, than a crew of naked wretches crowded around him, and, like a congregation of rooks, opened their throats all at once, in accusation of Justice Gobble." One of these miserable wretches, Mrs. Oakley, is quite Gothic.

"A stout squat fellow, rattling with chains, had just taken up the ball of accusation, when Sir Launcelot was startled with the appearance of a woman, whose looks and equipage indicated the most piteous distress. She seemed to be turned of middle age, was of a lofty carriage, tall, thin, weather-beaten, and wretchedly attired; her eyes were inflamed with weeping, and her looks displayed that wildness and peculiarity which denote distraction. Advancing to Sir Launcelot, she fell upon her knees, and clasping her

hands together, uttered the following rhapsody in the most vehement tone of affliction: -

"Thrice potent, generous, and august emperor; here let my knees cleave to the earth, until thou shalt do me justice on that inhuman caitiff Gobble. Let him disgorge my substance which he hath devoured; let him restore to my widowed arms my child, my boy, the delight of my eyes, the prop of my life, the staff of my sustenance, whom he hath torn from my embrace, stolen, betrayed, sent into captivity, and murdered! Behold these bleeding wounds upon his lovely breast! See how they mangle his lifeless corpse! Horror! give me my child, barbarians! his head shall lie on his Suky's bosom -- she will embalm him with her tears. Ha! plunge him in the deep -- shall my boy then float in a watery tomb? Justice, most mighty emperor! justice upon the villain who hath ruined us all! May Heaven's dreadful vengeance overtake him! May the keen storm of adversity strip him of all his leaves and fruit! May peace forsake his mind, and rest be banished from his pillow, so that all his days shall be filled with reproach and sorrow, and all his nights be haunted with horror and remorse! May he be stung by jealousy without cause, and maddened by revenge without the means of execution! May all his offspring be blighted and consumed, like the mildewed ears of corn, except one that shall grow up to curse his old age, and bring his hoary head with sorrow to the grave, as he himself has proved a curse to me and mine!" "

The above description of Mrs. Oakley is suggestive in some parts of the unfortunate nun, Agnes, described in The Monk.

Lorenzo was examining the convent dungeons. "The frequent groans still engaged him to move forwards. He turned towards them, and by the lamp's glimmering beams beheld in a corner

#0

of this loathsome abode a creature stretched upon a bed of straw, so wretched, so emaciated, so pale, that he doubted to think her a woman. She was half naked; her long dishevelled hair fell in disorder over her face, and almost entirely concealed it. One wasted arm hung listlessly upon a tattered rug, which covered her convulsed and shivering limbs; the other was wrapped round a small bundle, and held it closely to her bosom. A large rosary lay near her; opposite to her was a crucifix, on which she bent her sunk eyes fixedly, and by her side stood a basket and a small earthen pitcher.

"Lorenzo stopped: he was petrified with horror. He gazed upon the miserable object with pity and disgust....

"As she spoke, her voice was hollow, and rattled in her throat; she sighed bitterly.

"'Two days! two long, long days, and yet no food, and yet no hope, no comfort! Foolish woman! how can I wish to lengthen a life so wretched! Yet such a death! O God! to perish by such a death! to linger out such ages in torture! Till now, I knew not what it was to hunger. Hark! No! no one comes; they will come no more'....

"She wiped her eyes with a tress of her hair. She put out her hand for the pitcher, and reached it with difficulty. She cast into it a look of hopeless inquiry. She sighed, and replaced it upon the ground.

"'Quite void! not a drop! not a drop left to cool my scorched-up, burning palate! Now would I give treasures for a draught of water! And they are God's servants who make me suffer thus! They think themselves holy, while they torture me like fiends! They are cruel and unfeeling; and 'tis they who bid me repent; and 'tis they who threaten me with eternal perdition!

4

Saviour! Saviour! You think not so!

"She again fixed her eyes upon the crucifix, took her rosary, and, while she told her beads, the quick motion of her lips declared her to be praying with fervency."

The two necromancers introduced by Smollett together with their respective backgrounds have a decided kinship to the Jewish astronomer and his apartment as described by Maturin in Melmoth The Wanderer.

"It was a large apartment, hung with dark-coloured baize within four feet of the floor. . . . In the centre of the room stood a table covered with black cloth; it supported an iron lamp of an antique and singular form, by whose light I had been directed, and was now enabled to descry furniture that appeared sufficiently extraordinary. There were, amid maps and globes, several instruments, of which my ignorance did not permit me then to know the use, -- some, I have since learned were astronomical; there was an electrifying machine, and a curious model of a rack in ivory; there were few books, but several scrolls of parchment, inscribed with large characters in red and ochre-coloured ink; and around the room were placed four skeletons, not in cases, but in a kind of upright coffin, that gave their bony emptiness a kind of ghastly and imperative prominence, as if they were the real and rightful tenants of that singular apartment. Interspersed between them were the stuffed figures of animals I knew not then the names of, -- an alligator, -- some gigantic bones, which I took for those of Sampson, but which turned out to be the fragments of those of the Mammoth, -- and antlers, which in my terror I believed to be those of the devil, but which I afterwards learned to be those of the Elk. Then I saw figures smaller, but not less horrible, -- human and brute abortions, in all their states of anomalous and deformed

43
construction, not preserved in spirits, but standing in the ghastly nakedness of their white diminutive bones; these I conceived to be the attendant imps of some infernal ceremony, which the grand wizard, who now burst on my sight, was to preside over.

"At the end of the table sat an old man, wrapped in a long robe; his head was covered with a broad border of furs, his spectacles were of such a size as almost to hide his face, and he turned over some scrolls of parchment with an anxious and trembling hand; then seizing a skull that lay on the table, and grasping it in fingers hardly less bony, and not less yellow, seemed to apostrophize it in the most earnest manner."

The two similar characters from Sir Launcelot Greaves and Peregrine Pickle are both pseudo-Gothic and are, therefore, handled in a satiric manner. We find in the description of them, nevertheless, all the terror-producing machinery of the passage just cited.

Timothy Crabshaw and Captain Crowe, becoming alarmed at the disappearance of Sir Launcelot Greaves, resolve -- upon the advice of the cook maid -- to seek the advice of a cunning man whom she recommends.

"She introduced them into a parlor, where they saw no other furniture than a naked bench, and some frightful figures on the bare walls, drawn or rather scrawled with charcoal.

"Here she left them locked in, until she should give the doctor notice of their arrival: and they amused themselves with deciphering these characters and hieroglyphics. The first figure that engaged their attention was that of a man hanging upon a gibbet, which both considered an unfavorable omen, and each endeavored to avert from his own person. The old sibyl, ... coming into the parlor, intimated that the doctor waited for them

42
above. She likewise told them, that he never admitted more than one at a time. This hint occasioned a fresh contest.... The old gentlewoman abridged the ceremony by leading out Crabshaw with one hand, and locking up Crowe with the other.

"The former was dragged upstairs like a bear to the stake, not without reluctance and terror, which did not at all abate at sight of the conjurer, with whom he was immediately shut up by his conductress, after she had told him in a whisper, that he must deposit a shilling in a little black coffin, supported by a human skull and thigh-bones crossed, on a stool covered with black baize, that stood in one corner of the apartment. The squire, having made this offer with fear and trembling, ventured to survey the objects around him which were very well calculated to augment his confusion. He saw divers skeletons hung by the head, the stuffed skin of a young alligator, a calf with two heads, and several snakes suspended from the ceiling, with the jaws of a shark, and a starved weasel. On another funeral table he beheld two spheres, between which lay a book open, exhibiting outlandish characters, and mathematical diagrams. On one side stood an ink-standish with paper; and behind this desk appeared the conjurer himself, in sable vestments, his head so overshadowed with hair, that, far from contemplating his features, Timothy could distinguish nothing but a long white beard, which, for aught he knew, might have belonged to a four-legged goat, as well as a two-legged astrologer.

"This apparition, which the squire did not eye without manifest discomposure, extending a white wand, made certain evolutions over the head of Timothy, and having muttered an ejaculation, commanded him in a hollow tone, to come forward and declare his name."

4

In the following passage from Peregrine Pickle, the hero's misanthropic old friend, Cadwallader, has been persuaded by Peregrine to set himself up as a conjurer lately arrived from the Mogul's empire.

Two ladies who came to consult him "were admitted by our hero's valet-de-chambre, whose visage, being naturally meager and swarthy, was adorned with artificial whiskers; so that he became the Persian dress which he wore, and seemed a very proper master of the ceremonies to an Oriental necromancer. Having crossed his arms on his breast, with an inclination of the head, he stalked in solemn silence before them into the penetralia of the temple, where they found the conjurer sitting at a table, provided with pen, ink, and paper, divers books, mathematical instruments, and a long white wand lying across the whole. He was habited in a black gown and fur cap. His countenance, over and above a double proportion of philosophic gravity, which he had assumed for the occasion, was improved by a thick beard, white as snow, that reached to his middle, and upon each shoulder sat a prodigious large black cat which had been tutored for the purpose....

"The philosopher, without lifting up his eyes to view the person in whose behalf he was consulted, turned his ear to one of his sable familiars that purred upon his shoulder, and taking up the pen, wrote on a detached slip of paper these words... 'Her destiny will, in a great measure, depend upon what happened to her about nine-o'clock in the morning on the third day of last December.'

"This sentence was no sooner pronounced than the counterfeit lady screamed, and ran into the ante-chamber, exclaiming 'Christ have mercy upon us! Sure he is the devil incarnate!'"

The old witch in Humphrey Clinker whom Win, Jenkins

45
describes in her letter to Mary Jones, her sister serving maid at Brambleton Hall, deserves mention with this group of necromancers:

"And I was shown an old vitch, called Elspath Ringavey, with a read petticoat, bleared eyes, and a mold of gray bristles on her skin. That she mought do me no harm I crossed her hand with a taster, and bid her tell my fortune; and she told me such things -- describing Mr. Clinker to a hair.... As I was troubled with fits, she advised me to bathe in the loff, which was holy water, and so I went in the morning."

MACHINERY OF ACTION

Dreams, apparitions, mysterious music, mysterious groans, and other manifestations of supernatural or apparently supernatural agencies are prominent pieces of machinery in the hands of the writers of the romances of terror. And into this decidedly romantic field of material, Smollett, the scorner of romance and superstition, made numerous expeditions. The following premonition, Lorenzo's dream in the first part of The Monk, is not unlike the dream of Roderick Random's mother before the birth of her first child. But the strangest manifestation of Smollett's interest in the supernatural is the account given of the Scottish gentleman's premonition of his approaching guests and the seriousness with which the dream is taken by the host and his guests. Squire Bramble, to be sure, suggests that a psychological explanation of this mental phenomenon is highly possible. None is attempted however, and the incident is only followed with a still more startling tale by one of the guests, of an apparition seen lately in the neighborhood.

This is Lewis' account of Lorenzo's dream:

"He still fancied himself to be in the church of the Capuchins; but it was no longer dark and solitary. Multitudes of silver lamps shed splendor from the vaulted roofs, accompanied by the captivating chant of distant choristers; the organ's melody swelled through the church; the altar seemed decorated as for some distinguished feast; it was surrounded by a brilliant company, and near it stood Antonia arrayed in bridal white, and blushing with all

the charms of virgin modesty.

"Half-hoping, half-fearing, Lorenzo gazed upon the scene before him. Suddenly the door leading to the abbey unclosed, and he saw, attended by a long train of monks, the preacher advance, to whom he had just listened with so much admiration. He drew near Antonia.

"'And where is the bridegroom?' said the imaginary friar.

"Antonia seemed to look round the church with anxiety. Involuntarily the youth advanced a few steps from his concealment. She saw him; the blush of pleasure glowed upon her cheek; with a graceful motion of her hand she beckoned to him to advance. He disobeyed not the command; he flew towards her, and threw himself at her feet.

"She retreated for a moment; then gazing upon him with unutterable delight, 'Yes,' she exclaimed, 'my bridegroom! My destined bridegroom!'

"She hastened to throw herself into his arms; but before he had time to receive her, an unknown rushed between them; his form was gigantic; his complexion was swarthy; his eyes fierce and terrible; his mouth breathed out volumes of fire; and on his forehead was written in legible characters -- 'Pride! Lust! Inhumanity!'

Antonia shrieked. The monster clasped her in his arms, and springing with her upon the altar, tortured her with his odious caresses. She endeavored in vain to escape from his embrace. Lorenzo flew to her succor; but, ere he had time to reach her a loud burst of thunder was heard. Instantly the cathedral seemed crumbling into pieces; the monks betook themselves to flight, shrieking fearfully; the lamps were extinguished; the altar sank

4

down, and in its place appeared an abyss vomiting forth clouds of flame. Uttering a loud and terrible cry, the monster plunged into the gulf, and in his fall, attempted to drag Antonia with him. He strove in vain. Animated by supernatural powers, she disengaged herself from his embrace; but her white robe was left in his possession. Instantly a wing of brilliant splendor spread itself from either of Antonia's arms. She darted upwards, and while ascending cried to Lorenzo, 'Friend! we shall meet above!'

"At the same moment the roof of the cathedral opened; harmonious voices pealed along the vaults; and the glory into which Antonia was received, was composed of rays of such dazzling brightness, that Lorenzo was unable to sustain the gaze. His sight failed, and he sank upon the ground.

"When he awoke...."

From Roderick Random: "During her pregnancy, a dream discomposed my mother so much that her husband, tired with her importunity, at last consulted a Highland seer, whose favorable interpretation he would have secured beforehand by a bribe, but found him incorruptible. She dreamed she was delivered of a tennis-ball, which the devil (who, to her great surprise, acted the part of a midwife) struck so forcibly with a racket, that it disappeared in an instant; and she was for some time so inconsolable for the loss of her offspring; when all of a sudden she beheld it return with equal violence, and enter the earth beneath her feet, whence immediately sprung up a goodly tree covered with blossoms, the scent of which operated so strongly on her nerves, that she awoke. The attentive sage, after some deliberation, assured my parents, that their firstborn would be a great traveler; that he would undergo many dangers and difficulties, and at last return to

his native land, where he would flourish in happiness and reputation. How truly this was foretold, will appear in the sequel."

In Humphrey Clinker Squire Bramble and his party, during their tour of the highlands of Scotland, go to visit an old friend of the squire, who resides in a remote part of the country. They carry some provision with them from the nearest market town, lest they find him unprepared for their reception. "The roads being bad we did not arrive at the house till two o'clock in the afternoon, and were agreeably surprised to find a very good dinner ready in the kitchen, and the cloth laid with six covers. My friend himself appeared in his best apparel at the gate, and received us with open arms, telling me he had been expecting me these two hours. Astonished at this declaration, I asked who had given him intelligence of our coming, and he smiled without making any other reply. However, presuming upon our former intimacy, I afterwards insisted upon knowing; and he told me, very gravely, he had seen me in a vision of the second sight: nay, he called in the evidence of his steward, who solemnly declared, that his master had the day before apprised him of my coming, with four other strangers, and ordered him to provide accordingly; in consequence of which intimation, he had prepared the dinner which we were now eating, and laid the covers according to the number foretold.

"The incident we all owned was remarkable, and I endeavored to account for it by natural means....

"Another gentleman of the company, addressing himself to me, 'Without all doubt,' said he, 'a diseased imagination is very apt to produce visions; but we must find some other method to account for something of this kind that happened within these eight days in my neighborhood. A gentleman of a good family, who cannot

5

be deemed a visionary in any sense of the word, was, near his own gate, in the twilight, visited by his grandfather, who has been dead these fifteen years. The specter was mounted, seemingly, on the very horse he used to ride, with an angry and terrible countenance, and said something, which his grandson, in the confusion of his fear, could not understand. But this was not all -- he lifted up a huge horsewhip, and applied it with great violence to his back and shoulders, on which I saw the impression with my own eyes. The apparition was afterwards seen by the sexton of the parish, hovering about the tomb where his body lies interred, as the man declared to several persons in the village, before he knew what had happened to the gentleman; nay, he actually came to me, as a justice of the peace, in order to make oath of these particulars, which, however, I declined administering.... It is now the common discourse of the country that this appearance and behavior of the old man's spirit portends some great calamity to the family, and the good woman has actually taken to her bed in this apprehension."

The above two incidents are given in the matter-of-fact manner of legal evidence and not in the portentous way in which the Gothic romantisists treated such omens and apparitions. And though the squire, as has been stated before, is firmly persuaded that some purely material explanation is possible, none is given. Whether Smollett merely introduced these accounts because he found that his readers were beginning to have a taste for the occult, or he himself was being affected by the Renaissance of Wonder, it is impossible to determine. Certain it is, however, that it was from such stuff as this that the Gothic writers made their romances.

Another mysterious instance, at least bordering on the supernatural, is given in Sir Launcelot Greaves. Curiously too,

there is no explanation given to the incident.

"Crabshaw had been, in the preceding evening, encountered by three persons on horseback, with Venetian masks on their faces, which he mistook for their natural features, and was terrified accordingly. That they not only presented pistols to his breast, and led his horse out of the highway; but pricked him with goads, and pinched him, from time to time, till he screamed with the torture. That he was led through unfrequented places across the country, sometimes at an easy trot, sometimes at a full gallop, and tormented all night by those hideous demons, who vanished at day-break, and left him lying on the spot where he was found by his master."

Somewhat akin to this strange encounter of poor Crabshaw's is the incident related by the inn-keeper about Commodore Trunnion in the first volume of Peregrine Pickle.

"He (Commodore Trunnion) is... exceedingly afflicted with goblins that disturb his rest, and keep such a racket in his house, that you would think, God bless us! all the devils in hell had broke loose upon him. It was no longer ago than last year about this time, that he was tormented the livelong night by two mischievous spirits that got into his chamber, and played a thousand pranks about his hammock.... Well, sir, he rung his bell, called up all his servants, got lights and made a thorough search; but the devil a goblin was to be found. He had no sooner turned in again than the foul fiends began their game anew. The commodore got up in the dark, drew his cutlass, and attacked them both so manfully, that, at five minutes, everything in the apartment went to pieces.... The hubbub continued till morning, when the parson being sent for, conjured the spirits into the Red Sea; and the house has been pretty

quiet ever since."

Unlike Crabshaw's diabolical tormentors, however, the Commodore's goblins are finally accounted for in a natural manner. The landlord continues his tale:

"True it is, Mr. Hatchway makes mock of the whole affair; and told his commander in this very blessed spot, that the two goblins were no other than a couple of jackdaws which had fallen down the chimney, and made a flapping with their wings up and down the apartment. But the commodore... stormed like a perfect hurricane, swearing that he knew a devil from a jackdaw as well as e'er a man in the three kingdoms. He owned, indeed, that the birds were found, but denied that they were the occasion of the uproar."¹

Strap's and Roderick Random's encounter with the idiot old man and his pet raven is another example of the apparently supernatural with a natural explanation. Like the two preceding examples it deserves to be classed as semi-Gothic rather than as real Gothic.

"In a short time he (Strap) returned in a great hurry, with his hair standing on end, and a look betokening horror and astonishment! Without speaking a word, he set down the light, and jumped into bed behind me, where he lay and trembled with great violence. When I asked him what was the matter he replied with broken accents, 'God have mercy on us! -- I have seen the devil!' Though my prejudice was not quite so strong as his, I was not a little alarmed at this exclamation; and much more so, when I heard the sound of bells approaching our chamber, and felt my bedfellow cling close to me, uttering these words, 'Christ have mercy upon us! there he comes!'

"At that instant a monstrous overgrown raven entered our chamber, with bells at his feet, and made directly towards our bed.

1- See foot note on next page

57

1 "'Please you, my young master,' said Peter, who was waiting in the room, 'we were frightened enough the first night we came here, and I myself, God forgive me! thought the place was inhabited by devils, but they were only owls and such like, after all.'" The Romance of the Forest, Mrs. Ann Radcliffe.

53

As this creature is reckoned in our country a common vehicle for the devil and witches to play their pranks in, I verily believed we were haunted, and, in a violent fright, shrunk under the bedclothes. This terrible apparition leapt upon the bed, and after giving us several severe dabs with its beak through the blankets, hopped away and vanished. Strap and I recommended ourselves to the protection of Heaven with great devotion; and, when we no longer heard the noise, ventured to peep up and take breath. But we had not been long freed from this phantom, when another appeared, that had well-nigh deprived us both of our senses. We perceived an old man enter the room with a long white beard that reached to his middle; there was a certain wild peculiarity in his eyes and countenance that did not savor of this world; and his dress consisted of a brown stuff coat, buttoned behind and at the wrists, with an odd-fashioned cap of the same stuff upon his head. I was so amazed, that I had not power to move my eyes from such a ghastly object, but lay motionless, and saw him come straight up to me. When he reached the bed, he wrung his hands, and cried, with a voice that did not seem to belong to a human creature, 'Where is Ralpho?' I made no reply; upon which he repeated, in an accent still preternatural, 'Where is Ralpho?' He had no sooner pronounced these words, than I heard the sound of the bells at a distance; which the apparition having listened to tripped away and left me almost petrified with fear. It was a good while before I could recover myself so far as to speak; and when at length I turned to Strap, I found him in a fit, which, however, did not last long. When he came to himself, I asked his opinion of what had happened; and he assured me, that the first must certainly be the soul of some person damned, which appeared by the chains about his legs, (for his fears had magnified the creature to

54

the bigness of a horse, and the sound of small morrice bells to the clanking of massy chains.) As for the old man, he took it to be the spirit of somebody murdered long ago in this place, which had power granted to it to torment the assassin in the shape of a raven, and that Ralpho was the name of the said murderer. Although I had not much faith in this interpretation, I was too much troubled to enjoy any sleep... In the morning... Joey... explained... the old man was the landlord's father, who had been an idiot some years, and diverted himself with a tame raven, which, it seems, had hopped away from his apartment in the night, and induced him to follow it to our chamber, where he had inquired after it, under the name of Ralpho."

The most striking use of the supernatural in Smollett, however, is the account in Ferdinand Count Fathom of Renaldo's second visit to the tomb of his deceased Monimia.

"About midnight, they reached the place, where they found the sexton in waiting, according to the orders he had received. The door was opened, and the mourner conducted to the tomb, and left, as before, to the gloom of his own meditations. Again he laid himself on the cold ground; again he renewed his lamentable strain; his imagination began to be heated into an ecstasy of enthusiasm, during which he again fervently invoked the spirit of his deceased Monimia.

"In the midst of these invocations, his ear was suddenly invaded with the sound of some few solemn notes issuing from the organ, which seemed to feel the impulse of an invisible hand.

"At this awful salutation, Melvil was roused to the keenest sense of surprise and attention. Reason shrunk before the thronging ideas of his fancy, which represented this music as the

5

prelude to something strange and supernatural; and, while he waited for the sequel, the place was suddenly illuminated, and each surrounding object brought under the cognizance of his eye.

"What passed within his mind on this occasion is not easy to be described. All his faculties were swallowed up by those of seeing and hearing. He had mechanically raised himself upon one knee, with his body advancing forwards; and in this attitude he gazed with a look through which his soul seemed eager to escape. To his view, thus strained upon vacant space, in a few minutes appeared the figure of a woman arrayed in white, with a veil that covered her face, and flowed down upon her back and shoulders. The phantom approached him with an easy step, and lifting up her veil, discovered (believe it, O reader!) the individual countenance of Monimia.

"At sight of these well-known features, seemingly improved with new celestial graces, the youth became a statue, expressing amazement, love, and awful adoration. He saw the apparition smile with meek benevolence, divine compassion, warm and intendered by that fond pure flame which death could not extinguish. He heard the voice of his Monimia call Renaldo! Thrice he essayed to answer; as oft his tongue denied its office. His hair stood upright, and a cold vapor seemed to thrill through every nerve. This was not fear, but the infirmity of human nature, oppressed by the presence of a superior being.

"At length his agony was overcome. He recollected all his resolution, and, in a strain of awestruck rapture, thus addressed the heavenly visitant: 'Hast thou then heard, pure spirit! the wailings of my grief? hast thou descended from the realms of bliss, in pity to my woe? and art thou come to speak the words of peace to

56

my desponding soul? To bid the wretched smile, to lift the bond of misery and care from the afflicted breast; to fill thy lover's heart with joy and pleasing hope, was still the darling task of my Monimia, ere yet refined to that perfection which mortality can never attain.... Doth that enlightened bosom feel a pang of soft regret, when thou recallest our fatal separation? Sure that meekened glance bespeaks thy sympathy! Ah! how that tender look o'erpowers me! Sacred Heaven! the pearly drops of pity trickle down thy cheeks! Such are the tears that angels shed o'er man's distress! -- Turn not away -- Thou beckonest me to follow. Yes, I will follow thee, ethereal spirit, as far as these weak limbs, encumbered with mortality, will bear my weight; and, would to Heaven! I could, with ease, put off these vile corporeal shackles, and attend thy flight.'

"So saying, he started from the ground, and, in a transport of eager expectation, at awful distance, traced the footsteps of the apparition, which, entering a detached apartment, sunk down upon a chair, and with a sigh exclaimed, 'Indeed, this is too much!' What was the disorder of Renaldo's mind, when he perceived this phenomenon! Before reflection could perform its office, moved by a sudden impulse, he sprung forwards, crying, 'If it be death to touch thee, let me die!' and caught in his arms, not the shadow, but the warm substance of the all-accomplished Monimia."

In using music to herald the approach of some supernatural visitant, Smollett has superseded the Gothic romanticists in the use of one of their most effective bits of machinery.¹

To be sure, Monimia does not turn out to be a wraith. But she has all the appearance of one and is described in a manner that could not have been made more romantic by the pen of one of the Gothic writers himself.²

1--Foot note on next page

1 Compare the strange music which always preceded the appearance of the terrible stranger in Melmoth the Wanderer: "Before he had well recovered, a strain of music, soft, solemn, and delicious, breathed round him audibly ascending from the ground, and increasing in sweetness and power till it seemed to fill the whole building.... He remembered that night in Spain, when the same sweet and mysterious sounds were heard only by the young bridegroom and bride, of whom the latter perished on that very night." Stanton later in the evening comes face to face with the supernatural Wanderer.

2 Compare this with the visit of Antonia's deceased mother to her daughter in The Monk. "It was the dead of night; she was alone in the chamber once occupied by her deceased mother. The weather was comfortless and stormy; the wind howled around the house, the doors rattled in their frames, and the heavy rain pattered against the windows. No other sound was heard. The taper, now burnt down to the socket, sometimes flaring upwards, shot a gleam of light through the room, then sinking again seemed upon the point of expiring. Antonia's heart throbbed with agitation; her eyes wandering fearfully over the objects around her, as the trembling flame illuminated them at intervals. She attempted to rise from her seat, but her limbs trembled so violently that she was unable to proceed.... Her reflections were interrupted by a voice at the door scarcely audible; it seemed as if somebody was whispering.... Presently the latch was lifted up softly, and the door moved with caution backwards and forwards. Excess of terror now supplied Antonia with that strength of which she had till then been deprived. She started from her place.... Scarcely had she reached the middle of the room, when the latch was lifted a second time. An involuntary movement obliged her to turn her head. Slowly and gradually the door turned on its hinges, and standing upon the threshold she beheld a tall thin figure, wrapped in a white shroud which covered it from head to foot.

"This vision arrested her feet; she remained as if petrified in the middle of the apartment. The stranger, with measured and solemn steps drew near the table. The dying taper darted a blue and melancholy flame as the figure advanced towards it. Over the table was fixed a small clock; the hand of it was upon the stroke of three. The figure stopped opposite to the clock; it raised its right arm, and pointed to the hour, at the same time looking earnestly upon Antonia, who waited for the conclusion of this scene, motionless and silent.

"The figure remained in this posture for some moments. The clock struck. When the sound had ceased, the stranger advanced yet a few steps nearer Antonia.

"'Yet three days,' said a faint voice, hollow and sepulchral; 'yet three days and we meet again!'

"Antonia shuddered at the words.

"'We meet again?' she pronounced at length with difficulty; 'Where shall we meet? Whom shall I meet?'

"The figure pointed to the ground with one hand and with the other raised the linen which covered its face.

"'Almighty God! My mother?'

"Antonia shrieked and fell lifeless upon the floor."

The fact that Smollett's spectre turns out to be not a ghost at all but a breathing corporeal woman, does not make the passage less Gothic. For it must be remembered that Clara Reeves and Ann Radcliffe always insisted on accounting for their mysterious groans and visions in a natural manner. The terrible object which keeps the reader of The Mysteries of Udolpho in suspense for three volumes is finally discovered to be a wax figure.

No Gothic novel was complete without the mysterious hollow groan uttered at midnight generally and in some remote place where the auditor was the only human person present. This groan also, though pseudo-Gothic, Smollett introduces in Ferdinand Count Fathom. The Count had begun playing upon the delicate sensibilities of the superstitious Colinda. He was favored in his designs by the "solitary situation of her chamber, that stood at the end of a long gallery scarce within hearing of an inhabited part of the house." The Gothic heroine was quite likely to occupy a room in a remote quarter of the house or castle, at the end of a gloomy gallery; for example, the chamber of Emily in the melancholy and ruinous Castle of Udolpho. Fathom, having already by dismal stories of omens, portents, prophecies, and apparitions, filled the imagination of Colinda with unceasing terrors, "stole at midnight from his apartment which was in another story, and approaching her door, there uttered a piteous groan."¹

Next Fathom resorted to music to harrow the emotions of the lonely girl.

¹ Cf. the following passage from The Old English Baron:
"At the hour of twelve they heard the same groans as the night before."

"Some years ago, a twelve-stringed instrument was contrived by a very ingenious musician, by whom it was aptly entitled the 'Harp of AEolus,' because, being properly applied to a stream of air, it produces a wild irregular variety of harmonious sounds, that seem to be the effect of enchantment, and wonderfully dispose the mind for the most romantic situations. Fathom, who was really a virtuoso in music, had brought one of those new-fashioned guitars into the country, and as the effect of it was still unknown in the family, he that night converted it to the purposes of his amour, by fixing it in the casement of a window belonging to the gallery, exposed to the west wind, which then blew in a gentle breeze. The strings no sooner felt the impression of the balmy zephyr, than they began to pour forth a stream of melody more ravishingly delightful than the song of Philomel, the warbling brook, and all the concert of the wood. The soft and tender notes of peace and love were swelled up with the most delicate and insensible transition into a loud hymn of triumph and exultation, joined by the deep-toned organ, and a full choir of voices, which gradually decayed upon the ear, until it died away in a distant sound, as if a flight of angels had raised the song in their ascent to heaven. Yet the chords hardly ceased to vibrate after the expiration of this overture, which ushered in a composition in the same pathetic style; and this again was succeeded by a third, almost without pause or intermission, as if the artists had been indefatigable; and the theme never to be exhausted.

"His heart must be quite callous, and his ear lost to all distinction, who could hear such harmony without emotion; how deeply, then, must it have affected the delicate Celinda, whose sensations, naturally acute, were whetted to a most painful keenness

by her apprehension; who could have no previous idea of such entertainment; and was credulous enough to believe the most improbable tale of superstition! She was overwhelmed with awful terror, and never doubting that the sounds were more than mortal, recommended herself to the care of Providence in a succession of pious ejaculations."

This instance of the use of strange, mysteriously beautiful music is, of course, pseudo-Gothic. But the ominous use of music, as has already been stated, is one of the favorite devices of the terror-mongers.¹

Smollett, particularly in Peregrine Pickle, is fond of employing this pseudo-Gothic supernatural machinery for purposes of humor. It is broad slap-stick comedy in which one group of persons terrify some superstitious person by a series of Hallowe'en-like pranks.

¹ Compare the above instance with the following use from The Mysteries of Udolpho: "But hark! -- it comes again; listen to that voice!" They were all silent.... In a few moments the voice died into air, and the instrument, which had been heard before sounded in low symphony. St. Aubert now observed, that it produced a tone much more full and melodious than that of a guitar, and still more melancholy and soft than the lute. They continued to listen but the sounds returned no more.... 'It is now about eighteen years since I first heard that music,' said La Voison; 'I remember it was on a fine summer's night, much like this, but later, that I was walking in the woods, and alone. I remember, too, that my spirits were very low, for one of my boys was ill, and we feared we should lose him.... As I walked under the shades and mused, I heard music at a distance.... When I came to a place, where the trees opened, (I shall never forget it!) and stood looking up at the north-lights, which shot up the heaven to a great height. I heard all of a sudden such sounds! -- they came so as I cannot describe. It was like the music of angels, and I looked up again almost expecting to see them in the sky.'"

6

From the above mentioned novel one example of this comic use of the pseudo-Gothic supernatural will be sufficient for the purposes of this paper, for all the instances -- there are no fewer than five -- bear the same characteristics.

"The next enterprise in which this triumvirate engaged, was a scheme to frighten Trunnion with an apparition, which they prepared and executed in this manner: to the hide of a large ox, Pipes fitted a leathern vizor of a most terrible appearance, stretched on the jaws of a shark, which he had brought from sea, and accommodated with a couple of broad glasses instead of eyes. On the inside of these he placed the two rushlights, and, with a composition of sulphur and saltpeter, and made a pretty large fuse, which he fixed between two rows of the teeth. This equipage being finished, he, one dark night chosen for the purpose, put it on, and following the commodore into a long passage, in which he was preceded by Perry with a light in his hand, kindled his fire-work with a match, and began to bellow like a bull. The boy, as it was concerted, looking behind him, screamed aloud, and dropped the light, which was extinguished in the fall; when Trunnion, alarmed at his nephew's consternation, exclaimed, 'Zounds! what's the matter?' And, turning about to see the cause of his dismay, beheld a hideous phantom vomiting blue flame,¹ which aggravated the horrors of its

¹ Cf. the following passage from Melmoth the Wanderer:
"I awoke one night, and saw my cell in flames; I started up in horror, but shrunk back on perceiving myself surrounded by demons, who, clothed in fire, were breathing forth clouds of it around me. Desperate with horror, I rushed against the wall, and found what I touched was cold. My recollection returned, and I comprehended, that these were hideous figures scrawled in phosphorus, to terrify me. I returned to my bed and as daylight approached observed these figures gradually decline."

aspect. He was instantly seized with an agony of fear.... pronounced aloud 'By the Lord! Jack.... It was Davy Jones himself. I knew him by his saucer-eyes, his three rows of teeth, his horns and tail, and the blue smoke that came out of his nostrils.' This same Davy Jones, according to the mythology of sailors, is the fiend that presides over all the evil spirits of the deep, and is often seen in various shapes, perching among the rigging on the eve of hurricanes, shipwrecks, and other disasters, to which a seafaring life is exposed; warning the devoted wretch of death and woe. No wonder then that Trunnion was disturbed by a supposed visit of this demon, which in his opinion foreboded some dreadful calamity."

Of a similar consistency are the ghosts which Captain Crowe, the would-be knight errant, in Sir Launcelot Graves beholds at midnight in the dark church where he is watching by his armor.

"The triumvirate having taken their station with a large pew in their front, the two ghosts uncovered their heads, which by the help of the phosphorus exhibited a pale and lambent flame, extremely dismal and ghastly to the view; then Ferret in a squeaking tone, exclaimed, 'Samuel Crowe! Samuel Crowe!' The captain hearing himself accosted in this manner, at such a time, and in such a place, replied, 'Hilloah;' and turning his eyes towards the quarter whence the voice seemed to proceed, beheld the terrible apparition. This no sooner saluted his view than his hair bristled up, his knees began to knock, and his teeth to chatter, while he cried aloud, 'In the name of God, where are you bound, ho?' To this hail the misanthrope answered 'We are the spirits of thy grandmother Jane and thy aunt Bridget.'"

Under the supernatural, two instances of Smollett's very Gothic use of music have been mentioned. In Roderick Random the

62

insane aunt of Narcissa could be quieted only by the music of her niece. "In a little time my ears were ravished with the effects of her skill. She accompanied the instrument with a voice so sweet and melodious that I did not wonder at the surprising change it produced on the spirits of my mistress, which were soon composed to peace and sober reflection."

Again in Roderick Random: "I betook myself to the fields, where I wandered about like one distracted, till my spirits were quite exhausted, and I was obliged to throw myself down at the root of a tree, to rest my wearied limbs. Here I relapsed into silent sorrow and melancholy reflection.... As I lay in this manner groaning over my hapless fate, I heard the sound of a violin, and raising my head, perceived a company of men and women dancing on the grass at some distance from me."

In a similar state of pensive melancholy the unhappy Adeline in The Romance of the Forest wanders early on a summer morning into the forest. Beside a stream "she seated herself at the foot of a tree to contemplate its beauty.

"These images insensibly soothed her sorrow, and inspired her with that soft and pleasing melancholy, so dear to the feeling mind. For some time she sat lost in a reverie, while the flowers that grew on the banks beside her seemed to smile in a new life, and drew from her a comparison with her own condition. She mused and sighed, and then in a voice, whose charming melody was modulated by the tenderness of her heart, she sang....

"A distant echo lengthened out her tones, and she sat listening to the soft response, till repeating the last stanza of the sonnet, she was answered by a voice almost as tender, and less distant. She looked round in surprise, and saw a young man in a

6

hunter's dress, leaning against a tree, and gazing on her with that deep attention which marks an enraptured mind."

Sir Launcelot Greaves, while confined in a madhouse through the treachery of Aurelis's guardian, recognizes his sweetheart by her singing.

"This uncomfortable reverie was interrupted by a very unexpected sound that seemed to issue from the other side of a thick party-wall. It was a strain of vocal music, more plaintive than the widowed turtle's moan, more sweet and ravishing than Philomel's love-warbled song. Through his ear it instantly pierced his heart; for at once he recognized it to be the voice of his adored Aurelia. Heavens! what was the agitation of his soul, when he made this discovery! how did every nerve quiver! how did his heart throb with the most violent emotion.... He placed his ear to the partition, and listened as if his whole soul was exerted in his sense of hearing. When the sound ceased to vibrate on his ear, he threw himself on the bed; he groaned with anguish, he exclaimed in broken accents; and in all probability his heart would have burst, had not the violence of his sorrow found vent in a flood of tears."

Compare the above passage with the account in The Mysteries of Udolpho in which Emily, a prisoner in the gloomy castle, hears at midnight the familiar songs of her native Gascony.

"She once more rested on her dark and desolate couch,... The profound stillness, that now reigned, was propitious to the musing sorrow of her mind.

"While she thus remained, her ear suddenly caught the notes of distant music, to which she listened attentively, and, soon perceiving this to be the instrument she had formerly heard at midnight, she rose, and stepped softly to the casement, to which the sounds appeared to come from a lower room.

6.

"In a few moments, their soft melody was accompanied by a voice so full of pathos, that it evidently sang not of imaginary sorrows. Its sweet and peculiar tones she thought she had somewhere heard before; yet, if this was not fancy, it was at most, a very faint recollection. It stole over her mind, amidst the anguish of her present suffering, like a celestial strain soothing, and reassuring her....

"But her emotion can scarcely be imagined, when she heard sung, with the taste and simplicity of true feeling, one of the popular airs of her native province, to which she had so often listened with delight, when a child, and which she had so often heard her father repeat! ...

"Her sighs were deep and convulsed; she could no longer listen to the strain that had so often charmed her to tranquillity, and she withdrew from the casement to a remote part of the chamber. But she was not yet beyond the reach of the music; she heard the measure change, and the succeeding air called her again to the window, for she immediately recollected it to be the same she had formerly heard in the fishing-house in Gascony."

Mystery, another important element in the Gothic romance, has already been suggested in the characters discussed, for example, the strange, sad beauty of Monimia, the sighs and occasional tears trickling down the cheek indicating secret sorrow. For mystery in the Gothic novel is more significant than the usual element of suspense which any piece of fiction possesses; it conveys with it a sense of foreboding; it is ominous. In Roderick Random the strange conduct of Thomson is another example of this element: "Thomson listened attentively to what we said, and at last, shedding a flood of tears, shook his head, and left us without making reply. About

eleven at night he came to see us again, with a settled gloom on his countenance, and gave us to understand that he had undergone excessive toil since he saw us and in recompense had been grossly abused by the doctor.... After some time spent in mutual exhortation, he got up, and squeezing me by the hand with an uncommon fervor, cried, 'God bless you both;' and left us to wonder at his singular manner of parting with us, which did not fail to make a deep impression on us. Next morning, when the hour of visitation came round, this unhappy young man was missing, and, after strict search, supposed to have gone overboard in the night; and this was certainly the case."

The incident in Roderick Random where the hero leaves his miniature on a stone table in a summer-house and conceals himself to watch the lovely Narcissa's reception of it, though pseudo-Gothic, nevertheless introduces a much used feature of the Gothic romances, the mysterious miniature. Narcissa and her duenna approached the summer-house. "I observed an air of melancholy in the countenance of Narcissa blended with such unspeakable sweetness, that I could scarce refrain from flying into her arms, and kissing away the pearly drop that stood collected in each bewitching eye.

"According to my expectation she entered the alcove, and perceiving something on the table, took it up. No sooner did she cast her eye upon the features, than, startled at the resemblance, she cried, 'Good God!' and the roses instantly vanished from her cheeks. Her confidant, alarmed at this exclamation, looked at the picture, and, struck with the likeness exclaimed, 'O Jesus! the very features of Mr. Random.' Narcissa having recollected herself a little, said, 'Whatever angel brought it hither as a comfort to me in my affliction, I am thankful for the benefit.... Miss Williams

observed that the picture could not transport itself hither, and that she could not help thinking I was not far off."

As has been mentioned earlier in this paper, horror as well as terror was the endeavor of the Gothic romanticists. Lewis and Maturin were especially proficient in suggesting it by picturing in detail the gruesome, the disgusting, and the physically revolting. Smollett too was a master at this. In his case, however, it was probably, as Mr. Cross suggests, "realism carried to that point where its enormities become romance."

The bleeding corpse in the straw, which Fathom discovered, has been already mentioned. Many of the scenes on board the Thunder in Roderick Random are full of this revolting horror. One example will be sufficient. Roderick for some offense has been chained to the deck of the Thunder. About nightfall a French man-of-war approaches. The two ships begin with fury to bombard each other.

"The reader may guess how I passed my time, lying in this helpless situation, amidst the terrors of a sea-fight, expecting every moment to be cut asunder, or dashed in pieces by the enemy's shot!... I concealed my agitation as well as I could, till the head of the officer of the marines, who stood near me, being shot off, bounced from the deck athwart my face, leaving me well-nigh blinded with brains. I could contain myself no longer, but began to bellow with all the strength of my lungs; when a drummer coming towards me, asked if I was wounded? and before I could answer received a shot in the belly which tore out his entrails, and he fell flat on my breast. This accident entirely bereft me of all discretion: I redoubled my cries, which were drowned in the noise of battle; and finding myself disregarded, lost all patience and became frantic: I vented my rage in oaths and execrations, 'till

6

my spirits being quite exhausted, I remained quiet and insensible of the load that oppressed me.... Morgan ascending first, and seeing my face almost covered with brains concluded I was no longer a man for this world, and calling to Thomson with great emotion, bade him come up, and take his last farewell of his comrade and countryman.... After I had got myself disentangled from the carnage in which I wallowed --"

A sample of corresponding gruesomeness, although the subjects are not parallel, is found in the description of the two lovers incarcerated in the convent dungeon in Melmoth the Wanderer. The monk who had stationed himself outside the nailed door to gloat over their dying torments recites the story. "It was on the fourth night that I heard the shriek of the wretched female, -- her lover, in the agony of hunger, had fastened his teeth in her shoulder;...

"On the sixth day all was still. The door was unnailed, we entered, -- they were no more. They lay far from each other.... She lay contracted in a heap, a lock of her long hair in her mouth. There was a slight scar on her shoulder, -- the rabid despair of famine had produced no further outrage. He lay extended at his length, -- his hand was between his lips; it seemed as if he had not strength to execute the purpose for which he brought it there."

The nun, Agnes, in the Monk, in describing her prison mentions the "reptiles of every description, which as the torches advanced toward them I descried hurrying to their retreats."

Less loathesome, perhaps, is the description in Peregrine Pickle which the prisoner in the Bastille gives of his familiarity with the spiders in his cell. Nevertheless the account is repulsive and deserves mention in this group.

"I was fain to unbend the severity of my thoughts by a

6

correspondence with some industrious spiders, who had hung my
dungeon with their ingenious labors....

"Although I presided with absolute power over this
long-legged community, and distributed rewards and punishments to
each, according to his deserts, I grew impatient of my situation
... I wreaked the fury of my indignation upon my innocent sub-
jects, and in a twinkling destroyed the whole race. While I was
employed in this general massacre, the turnkey who brought the
food, opened the door, and perceiving my transport, shrugged his
shoulders and leaving my allowance went out pronouncing, La pauvre
diable! la tete lui tourne."

Another bit of Gothic machinery is sense isolation, a
person in a dark place hearing suddenly a sound in the stillness; or
seeing, perhaps, some awful apparition or light; or touching some-
thing of which he is ignorant; or smelling a strange odor. It
is a situation in which only one of the five senses is able to
receive impressions. In the instances of Captain Crowe's and
Commodore Trunnion's apparitions we have examples of the sense
isolation of sight. Renold's first visit to the tomb of
Monimia is a series of isolated sense impressions.

"During this pause the soul of Melvil was wound up to
the highest pitch of enthusiastic sorrow. The uncommon darkness
of the night, the solemn silence and lonely situation of the
place, conspired with the occasion of his coming, and the dismal
images of his fancy, to produce a real rapture of gloomy expec-
tation, which the whole world would not have persuaded him to
disappoint. The clock struck twelve, the owl screeched from the
ruined battlement, the door was opened by the sexton, who, by

the light of a glimmering taper conducted the despairing lover to a dreary aisle, and stamped upon the ground with his foot, saying, "Here the young lady lies interred." Thus in the darkness and solemn silence of the night, the clock striking midnight, the owl's screech, and the glimmering light follow in quick succession."

Three further instances of sound isolation are:

"About two or three o'clock in the morning, I was waked out of a very profound sleep, by a dreadful noise in the chamber which did not fail to throw me into an agony of consternation, when I heard these words pronounced with a terrible voice: 'Blood and wounds! run the halbert into the guts of him that's next you, and I'll blow the other's brains out presently.'"

Roderick Random.

"This dreadful note, the terror of which was increased by the silence and darkness of the night, as well as the echo of the passage through which it was conveyed."

Peregrine Pickle

While Sir Launcelot Greaves was sitting in an inn parlor he heard cries of horror from without. He hastily went to the stable and mounted the first horse which he found saddled. In the darkness of the night he rode full speed to the spot whence the cries seemed to proceed; but they sounded more remote as he advanced. Nevertheless, he followed them a considerable distance; and at last came so near, that he could plainly distinguish the voice of his own squire, Timothy Crabshaw, bellowing for mercy, with hideous vociferation.... All night he continued the chase; the voice which was repeated at intervals, still retreating be-

fore him, till the morning began to appear in the east."

Sir Launcelot Greaves

A pseudo-Gothic instance of touch isolation is found in Peregrine Pickle. While prowling about in the darkness of the night in a strange inn, the painter, Pallet, and a Capuchin priest unexpectedly stumble upon one another. The Capuchin is carefully creeping on his hands and knees. The painter "chanced to lay his hand upon the shaven crown of the father's head, which by a circular motion, the priest began to turn round in his grasp, like a ball in a socket, to the surprise and consternation of poor Pallet, who, having neither penetration to comprehend the case, nor resolution to withdraw his fingers from this strange object of his touch, stood sweating in the dark, and venting ejaculations with great devotion."

The effect which all these strange and ominous encounters and circumstances have upon the characters in the romances is made stock of by the Gothic for exciting the emotions of the reader. Reflection, the mental state and its physical reaction, the cold sweat, trembling, etc. are the manifestations of these effects. Physical reaction is the most frequently used Gothic device in Smollett. In many of the instances already cited this element has been present. A few others will, however, be given. There are many, many more, but as they are very similar the following dozen will be sufficient.

"Alarmed by this phenomenon, I jogged my companion whom to my no small amazement, I found drenched in sweat, and quaking through every limb."

"With his hair standing on end, and a look betokening

horror and astonishment."

"My hair bristled up, and I was seized with a violent fit of trembling."

"He no sooner beheld me than he was seized with a violent fit of shaking."

Roderick Random

"His dread returned with double terror, a cold sweat bedewed his limbs, his knees knocked together, his hair bristled up, and the remains of his teeth were shattered to pieces in the convulsive vibrations of his jaws."

"They found Commodore Trunnion in a cold sweat on the floor, his features betokening horror and confusion."

"His knees began to shake, his teeth to chatter, and he uttered a most doleful lamentation."

"Pallet stared like a Gorgan's head, with mouth wide open and each particular hair crawling and twining like an animated serpent."

Peregrine Pickle

"Our adventurer, who overheard the conversation was immediately seized with a palsy of fear. He trembled at every joint, the sweat trickled down his forehead, his teeth began to chatter, his hair to stand on end."

Ferdinand Count Fathom

"He ran around the room in distraction foaming like a lion in the toil."¹

Sir Launcelot Greaves

"When the doctor came forth, he looked wild and haggard as if he had seen a ghost, his face as white as paper, and his

¹ Foot note on next page

1 "The servant... came running back breathless, in a
frantic manner, his eyes staring, and foaming at the mouth."

(Castle of Otranto)

lips trembling like an aspen-leaf."

"He ran into the kitchen, his hair standing on end, staring wildly and deprived of utterance."

Humphrey Clinker

Reflection or mental reaction as employed by Smollett is illustrated in the following passages:

"He peeped through the hole, and was so terrified with what he saw, that falling down on his bare knees, he put up a long petition to Heaven to deliver him from the hands of the ruffian."

"I awoke in the horrors, and found my imagination haunted with such dismal apparitions that I was ready to despair."

Roderick Random

"To such a degree did my terror avail that I actually believed I was in danger of being poisoned."

Peregrine Pickle

The following examples of reflection from Ferdinand Count Fathom are particularly romantic. Renaldo's sad thoughts are said to be "like the unwearied wave that beats upon the bleak inhospitable Greenland shore." "And every evening he (Renaldo) went forth alone to some solitary place, where he could unperceived give a loose to the transports of his sorrow." "Her (Monimia's) aim was to find a sequestered corner, in which she could indulge her sorrow." The remnants of virtue in Celinda are "like some scattered hyacinths shooting up among the weeds of a ruined garden."¹

¹ Cf. this passage from The Italian: "Her heart was possessed by evil passions, and all her perceptions were distorted and discolored by them, like a dark magician, and had power to change the fairest scenes into those of gloom and desolation."

SETTING

The romantic and Salvator Rosa-like setting, which is a conspicuous element in the Gothic romances, has numerous and remarkable instances in Smollett. Medieval castles and churches or their picturesque ruins, dungeons and charnel houses, caves and subterranean passages, shipwrecks, lonely plains, deep forest glades, lofty and impressive mountains, the subtle witchery of moonlight,¹ the low clouds and foreboding hush which herald a storm, the crash and fury of the tempest itself,- all these in various combinations made up this background and aided the Gothic romanticists in creating delightful, aesthetic thrills and shudders for their readers. This adaptation of scenery for heightening the effects of fiction was an innovation with the Gothic school of writers. To be sure dreary woods and frowning castles had always been present in romances; but they aroused no emotions in the breasts of the characters, and there was no word painting for pictorial effects. The growing "love of nature" which was manifesting itself in the middle of the eighteenth century is, of course, responsible for its appearance in fiction.

¹ Moonlight is slighted by Smollett. There are but two instances of its use in the many volumes of his five novels. He favored the terrible possibilities of an inky black night to the enchantment of a moonlit one. The two incidents merely mention the moonlight but make no use of its effects. In Peregrine Pickle, the "lady of quality" traveled the wilds of Lincolnshire and "by the help of a guide and moonlight arrived at Dover." Roderick Random speaks of walking along a road for about a mile in the moonlight with a male companion.

This symptom of the romantic movement is evident in two ways in Smollett's novels. First, he makes use of setting purely and simply as terror-producing machinery. Secondly, he introduces scenery and has his characters discuss it for the pure love of it.

Scenery and the weather as terror-producing machinery are the most important. For in this, Smollett precedes the Gothic school, and, as Henley says, strikes a new note in English fiction. Fathom's night in the forest is, of course, the best and most remarkable instance in Smollett's novels. Here are all the elements of terror -- Fathom benighted in the midst of a forest, far from the habitations of men -- darkness -- silence and solitude -- dismal sighings of the trees that seemed to foretell an approaching storm -- heavens more dreary -- lightning, thunder, tempest -- stationed himself under tuft of tall trees -- rush light at a distance -- every whisper of the wind through the thickets swelled into the hoarse menaces of murder -- images of trees roused his imagination -- the shaking of the boughs construed into the brandishing of poniards -- and every shadow of a tree became the apparition of a ruffian eager for blood. Again we find in Fathom that "it was not without emotion that he (Fathom) found himself benighted upon the great deep." Again in Sir Launcelot Greaves, the tempest is employed with evident conscious effort to arouse the reader's emotions. "The rain had been succeeded by a storm of wind, that howled around the house with the most savage impetuosity; and the heavens were overcast in such a manner that not one star appeared, so that all without was darkness and uproar. This aggravated the horror of divers loud screams, which even the noise of the blast of the tempest could not exclude from the astonished ears of our travellers."

In Roderick Random occurs the following description of a sea-storm.

"Next night our main-top sail was split by the wind, which in the morning increased to a hurricane. I was wakened by a most horrible din occasioned by the craking of the cabins, the howling of the wind through the shrouds... Morgan who had never been at sea before, turned out in a great hurry, crying 'God have mercy and compassion on us!' ... while poor Thomson lay quaking in his hammock putting up petitions to heaven for our safety.... The sea swelled into billows mountain high, on the top of which our ship sometimes hung as if it was about to be precipitated to the abyss below! Sometimes we sunk between two waves that rose on either side higher than our topmast head, and threatened, by dashing together, to overwhelm us in a moment! Of all our fleet consisting of a hundred and fifty sail, scarce twelve appeared, and these driving under their bare poles, at the mercy of the tempest. At length the mast of one of them gave way, and tumbled overboard with a hideous crash! Nor was the prospect in our own ship more agreeable; a number of officers and sailors ran backward and forward with distraction in their looks, hallooing to one another, and undetermined what they should attend to first. Some clung to the yards, endeavoring to unbend the sails that were split into a thousand pieces flapping in the wind; others tried to furl those which were yet whole, while the masts, at every pitch bent and quivered like twigs, as if they would have shivered into innumerable splinters! While I considered this scene with equal terror and astonishment, one of the main braces broke, by the shock whereof two sailors were flung from the yard's arm into the sea,

7

where they perished, and poor Jack Rattlin was thrown down upon the deck at the expense of a broken leg." Roderick on going in search of the surgeon finds him in his apartment "on his knees, before something that very much resembled a crucifix." This scene is another instance of the "tragic gloom" referred to by Cross.

In Renoldo's visit to Monimia's tomb, we have the charnel house background. And although the necromancer that Timothy Crabshaw and Captain Crowe visited was a hoax; nevertheless the dark drapings of the rooms and "the divers skeletons hung by the head, the stuffed skins of a young alligator, a calf with two heads, and several snakes suspended from the ceiling, with the jaws of a shark and a starved weasel" which hung about the room, are suggestive of Salvator Rosa's picture of Democritus surrounded by various portions of anatomy as he seeks to find the seat of black bile or Melancholia. At any rate, Smollett's setting in this instance belongs to that group of charnel house horrors which resulted some years later in Frankenstein.

Whether or not Smollett himself sympathized with the romantic and sentimental attitude towards nature which was becoming the vogue among the elite, he at least introduces characters who do. It is very likely that he did approve; for his characters who indulge their emotions in this regard are treated by the author with every courtesy due to sincere and sane people. And it is certain that if Smollett disapproved of enjoying the beauties of nature, he would have treated with vicious satire any of his characters who were so inclined. In Peregrine Pickle is the picturesque group of dejected English exiles in Calais who went daily to the seaside, "in order to indulge their long-

ing eyes with a prospect of the white cliffs of Albion, which they must never more approach." Again in Peregrine Pickle we have a group of sight seers "who walked up hill to visit the castle, where they repeated Shakespeare's description, while they surveyed the chalky cliffs on each side, and cast their eyes toward the city of Calais, that was obscured by a thick cloud." The recitation of lines from Shakespeare in the vicinity which they described reminds one of Leslie Stephen's¹ remark that in the middle of the eighteenth century, people quoted Ossian in the presence of mountains as they later quoted Byron, and now quote Ruskin.

. Indeed, in Humphrey Clinker young Medford in a letter to his college chum at Oxford writes thus: "We had princely sport in hunting the stag on these mountains. These are the lonely hills of Morvan, where Fingal and his heroes enjoyed the same pastime. I feel an enthusiastic pleasure when I survey the brown heath that Ossian was wont to tread; and hear the wind whistle through the bending grass. When I enter our landlord's hall, I look for the suspended harp of that divine bard, and listen in hopes of hearing the aerial sound of his respected spirit. The poems of Ossian are in every mouth." It is appropriate too that Smollett has represented this enthusiasm as coming from a young Oxford man of that period.

The entire part of this novel covering Squire Bramble's tour of the Highlands with his household is filled with enthusiastic nature descriptions that would have done credit to Mrs.

¹ Hours in a Library, Vol. IX. Gray and His School.

² In Mrs. Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho the following quotation from Ossian is inserted in a description of Emily's emotions on hearing a familiar song: "Pleasant as the gale of spring, that sighs on the hunter's ear, when he awakens from the dreams of joy, and has heard the music of the spirits of the hill."

71

Radcliffe. Of course Gray's letters from the Lake Country had preceded Humphrey Clinker, and, as has been said, probably influenced it. The country is described as "wild and savage" - "the West Highlands appear in the form of dusky mountains piled one over the other;" again, "this country is amazingly wild, especially toward the mountains, which are heaped upon the backs of one another, making a stupendous appearance of savage nature with hardly any signs of cultivation, or even population. All is sublimity, silence and solitude." "Above the house is a romantic glen or cleft of a mountain covered with hanging woods, having at bottom a stream of fine water that forms a number of cascades in its descent to join the seven; so that the scene is quite enchanting." Loch Lomond also is described as "one of the most enchanting spots in the whole world."

Thus in the appreciation of wild and eerie scenery Smollett earns for himself a place among the Romanticists. It is significant, too, that though The Castle of Otranto, 1764, was published seven years before Humphrey Clinker, 1771, the "first Gothic Romance" contains none of these scenic effects. Curiously, too, the distinctly Gothic elements which Smollett's earlier novels possessed, and which are the stock and stuff of which Walpole's romance is made, are conspicuously absent in Humphrey Clinker. It was not until the appearance of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, 1789-97, that this phase of the Romantic Revival again appeared in English fiction.

1- Foot note on next page

¹ Cf. the following description of mountain scenery by Mrs. Radcliffe: "Her young fancy, struck with the grandeur of the objects around, gradually yielded to delightful impressions. The road now descended into glens, confined by stupendous walls of rock, grey and barren, except where shrubs fringed their summits, or patches of meagre vegetation tinted their recesses, in which the wild goat was frequently brousing. And now, the way led to the lofty cliffs from whence the landscape was seen extending in all magnificence."

Mysteries of Udolpho.

CONCLUSION.

These preceding selections from Smollett's novels, because of their remarkable similarity to the Gothic romances, are credentials which unquestionably entitle him to a place among the romancers of the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Precisely what, however, is his status in this group? For it must not be forgotten that the usual classification of Smollett with such a realist as Fielding is by no means incorrect. Predominantly his novels are, as he designed them to be, realistic in that they present without gloss contemporary life and manners. And from all biographical accounts he seems himself to have been almost an incarnation of the eighteenth century in its merits and its defects, in its vigor and in its shrewdness, its zest and relish of such life as it understood, of the things that are seen, combined with a surprising blindness and deafness to the more sublime things which are not seen. Thus typical of his century though he was in lacking the finer aspirations which distinguished the Romantic movement proper, Smollett possessed, nevertheless, one decidedly romantic characteristic - a love of the picturesque. In contrasting Fielding and Smollett in this regard, Professor Saintsbury says, "Fielding inclines more to the classical, to the sculptured, to the epic; his forte lies in proportion, design, keeping truth. Smollett is more romantic and more pictorial; he abounds in luxuriance of detail and fantastic particular. The work of one is a temple or a portico; that of the other a bazaar."

This latter term is, indeed, an appropriate name for the strange amalgamation of Realism and Romanticism which one finds in Smollett's novels. He claimed Le Sage for his model as Fielding did Cervantes. Thus Fielding and Smollett have much in common. But the latter brought to his task a quality which the former did not possess, or, at any rate, did not display. Whence and how

this romantic element came into Smollett's works, it is impossible certainly to say. Probably his natural love for the picturesque rendered him very susceptible to the romantic impulses which were beginning to be felt in the middle of the eighteenth century. These impulses seem to have come to Smollett from divers sources. For the fact that they appear so erratically in his novels suggests accidental and occasional influences rather than a cultivated interest or a gradual evolution of sentiment. The decidedly new turn of his interest in the picturesque as displayed in Humphrey Clinker, which novel appeared in the wake of the interest in landscape stimulated by Gray's letters, is further evidence in favor of this theory. It is quite probable from all this, too, that if Smollett had written after Lewis, Maturin, Godwin, and Scott, his works would have been entirely romantic. As it is, his novels, particularly Ferdinand Count Fathom, may be regarded as transitions between the Spanish-French novel of adventure pure and simple and the later adventure-novel of the Gothic romancers.

8

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Beers, H. A.: A History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century, New York 1899
- Cross, Wilbur L.: The Development of the English Novel, MacMillan Co., New York, 1899
- Hurd, Richard: Letters of Chivalry and Romance, London, 1738
- Lewis, Matthew Gregory: Rosario, or The Female Monk, Waterford Series
- Masson, David: British Novelists, Boston, 1859
- Maturin, Chas. Robt.: Melmoth The Wanderer, Richard Bentley & Son, London 1892
- Memoirs et Aventures d'un Homme de Qualite, 1759
- Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia, 1738
- Phelps, Wm. Lyon: The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement, Ginn & Co.
- Radcliffe, Ann: The Mysteries of Udolpho, London, 1794
The Romance of the Forest, Dutton & Co., New York, 1904
The Italian, Ballantyne's Novelist's Library, vol. X. Edinburgh, 1824
- Raleigh, Walter: The English Novel, Scribner, New York, 1911
- Reeve, Clara: The Old English Baron, Cassell's National Library, 1888
- Shelley, Mary: Frankenstein, Routledge's Pocket Library, 1888
- Smollett, Tobias: Works, ed. by George Saintsbury, New National Library, New York
- Stephen, Leslie: Hours in a Library, Essays, vol. IV. Gray and His School, vol. II. Horace Walpole, G. P. Putnam & Sons.
- Walpole, Horace: Castle of Otranto, Cassell's National Library, 1888