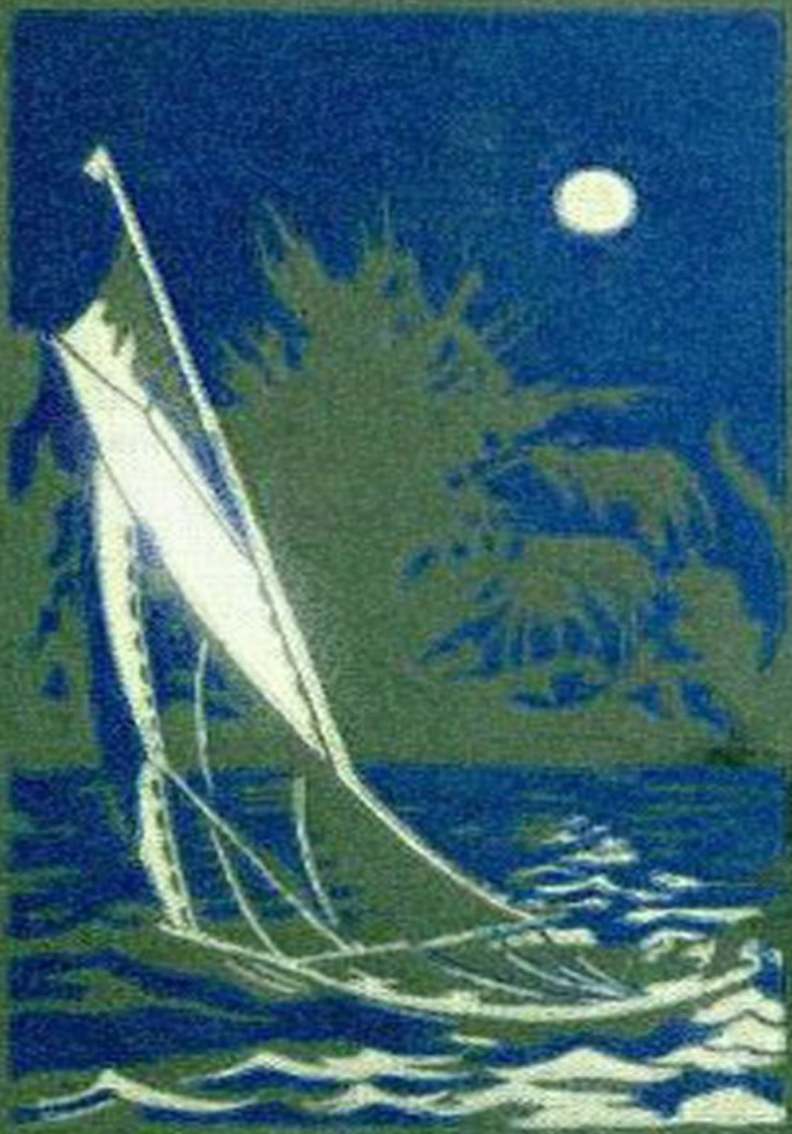
TYPEE

A Romance of the South Seas



BY

HERMAN MELVILLE

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A ROMANCE OF THE SOUTH SEAS

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Herman Melville

1819-1891

Born, in New York City, 1 Aug. 1819. Went to sea, 1836. Schoolmaster, 1837-40. To sea again Jan. 1841. Ran away from ship on Marquesas Islands, 1842. Rescued after four months' captivity among the Typees. For a short time clerk at Honolulu. Returned to Boston, 1844. Married Elizabeth Shaw, 4 Aug. 1847. Lived in New York, 1847-50; at Pittsfield, Mass., 1850-63. Visits to Europe, 1849 and 1856. Frequently lectured in America, 1857-60. Returned to New York, 1863. District Officer, New York Custom House, Dec., 1866-86. Died, in New York, 28 Sept. 1891. Works: "Typee," 1846; "Omoo," 1847; "Mardi," 1849; "Redburn," 1849; "White Jacket" 1850; "Moby Dick," 1851 (English edn., called; "The Whale," same year); "Pierre," 1852; "Israel Potter," 1855 (in 1865 edn. called: "The Refugee"); "Piazza Tales," 1856, "The Confidence Man," 1857; "Battle-Pieces," 1866; "Clarel," 1876; "John Marr and Other Sailors" (priv. ptd.), 1888; "Timoleon" (priv. ptd.), 1891.—Sharp, R. Farquharson, 1897, A Dictionary of English Authors, p. 193.

PERSONAL

Duyckinck, of the Literary World, and Herman Melville are in Berkshire, and I expect them to call here this morning. I met Melville the other day, and liked him so much that I have asked him to spend a few days with me before leaving these parts.—Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 1850, Letter to Horatio Bridge, Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne, p. 123.

His extremely proud and sensitive nature and his studious habits led to the seclusion of his later years. . . . This seclusion endured to the end. He never denied himself to his friends; but he sought no one. I visited him repeatedly in New York, and had the most interesting talks with him. What stores of reading, what reaches of philosophy, were his! He took the attitude of absolute independence towards the world. He said, "My books will speak for themselves, and all the better if I avoid the rattling egotism by which so many win a certain vogue for a certain time." He missed immediate success; he won the distinction of a hermit. It may appear, in the end, that he was right. No other autobiographical books in our literature suggest more vividly than "Typee," "Omoo," "White Jacket," and "Moby Dick," the title of Goethe, "Truth and Beauty from my own life." "Typee," at least, is one of those books that the world cannot let die. — Coan, Titus Munson, 1891, Herman Melville, Literary World, vol. 22, p. 493.

As Borrow possessed the secret of winning the confidence of the gipsies, so Melville, by the same talisman of utter simplicity and naturalness, was able to fraternise in perfect good fellowship with the so-called savages of the Pacific.— Salt, Henry S., 1892, "Marquesan Melville," Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 272, p. 251.

GENERAL

We first examined its merits ["Omoo"] as a piece of description, then considered it more especially with reference to its spirit, in what it leaves us to infer of the writer's intercourse with the natives, and what he tells us of their religious condition. . . . "Omoo" is a book one may read once with interest and pleasure, but with a perpetual recoil. It is poetically written, but yet carelessly, and in a

bad spirit.— Peck, G. W., 1847, Omoo, American Review, vol. 6, p. 45.

Mr. Melville lived for four months, absolutely like a primitive man, in Noukahiva, a Polynesian island, and it is his adventures while there that form the subject of his first books, the narratives of his actual voyages. . . . Unfortunately, Mr. Melville's style is so ornate, his Rubens-like tints are so vivid and warm, and he has so strong a predilection for dramatic effects, that one does not know exactly how much confidence to repose in his narrative. We do not take except *cum grano salis*, his florid descriptions. —Chasles, Philarète, 1852, Anglo-American Literature and Manners, p. 118.

"Typee" told nothing. It had no antecedents. It might have been an animal, or it might have been a new game, or it might have been a treatise on magic. Did they open the book, and look over the chapters, they were not much wiser. Barbarous congregations of syllables, such as Kory Kory, Nukuheva, Moa Artua, met their eyes. The end of it was, that the whole tribe of London and American critics had to sit down and read it all, before they dared speak of a book filled with such mysterious syllables. From reading they began to like it. There was a great deal of rich, rough talent about it. The scenes were fresh, and highly colored; the habits and manners described had the charm of novelty; and the style, though not the purest or most elegant, had a fine narrative facility about it, that rendered it very pleasurable reading. . . . "Typee," the first and most successful of Mr. Melville's books, commands attention for the clearness of its narrative, the novelty of its scenery, and the simplicity of its style, in which latter feature it is a wondrous contrast to "Mardi," "Moby Dick," and "Pierre."— O'Brien, Fitz-James, 1853, Our Young Authors, Putnam's Magazine, vol. 1, pp. 155, 160.

Melville's own adventures had been those of a modern Captain John Smith in the Pacific islands and waters; so that the *pars magna fui* of his lively books gave them the needed fillip of personality, and duly magnified their elements of wonder. That brilliant power of delineation which, in Melville's conversation, so charmed his warm friends the Hawthornes, is apparently not heightened in his books, but would seem to be rather diminished by the exigencies of writing. But the personal narrative or fiction of "Typee," "Omoo," and "Moby Dick," with their adventurous rapidity of description of Pacific seas, ships, savages and whales, represented the restless facility which has always been an American trait, and which occasionally develops into some enduring literary success. — Richardson, Charles F., 1888, American Literature, 1607-1885, vol. n, p. 404.

There was a wealth of imagination in the mind of Mr. Melville, but it was an untrained imagination, and a world of the stuff out of which poetry is made, but no poetry, which is creation and not chaos. He saw like a poet, felt like a poet, thought like a poet, but he never attained any proficiency in verse, which was not among his natural gifts. His vocabulary was large, fluent, eloquent, but it was excessive, inaccurate and unliterary. He wrote too easily, and at too great length, his pen sometimes running away with him, and from his readers. There were strange, dark, mysterious elements in his nature, as there were in Hawthorne's, but he never learned to control them, as Hawthorne did from the beginning, and never turned their possibilities into actualities.— Stoddard, Richard Henry, 1891, The Mail and Express.

"Typee" and "Omoo," mistaken by the public for fiction, were, on the contrary, the most vivid truth expressed in the

most telling and poetic manner. My father, the Rev. Titus Coan, went over Melville's ground in 1867, and while he has criticized the topography of "Typee" as being somewhat exaggerated in the mountain distances, a very natural mistake, he told me that the descriptions were admirably true and the characterizations faultless in the main. The book is a masterpiece, the outcome of an opportunity that will never be repeated. Melville was the first and only man ever made captive in a valley full of Polynesian cannibals, who had the genius to describe the situation, and who got away alive to write his book.—Coan, Titus Munson, 1891, Herman Melville, Literary World, vol. 22, p. 493.

Melville's most artistic work is to be found in "Typee," the first blossom of his youthful genius. This idyl, which set all the world to talking, undoubtedly will hold a permanent position in American literature, and most people will wish to read its sequel, "Omoo." The character of "Fayaway" and, no less, William S. Mayo's "Kaloolah," the enchanting dreams of many a youthful heart, will retain their charm; and this in spite of endless variations by modern explorers in the same domain. . . . The events of the Civil War gave a strong lyrical movement to Melville's pen, which had rested for nearly ten years when the volume of "Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War" appeared in 1866. Most of these poems originated, according to the author, "in an impulse imparted by the fall of Richmond," but they have as subjects all the chief incidents of the struggle. The best of them are "The Stone Fleet," "In the Prison Pen," "The College Colonel," "The March to the Sea," "Running the Batteries," and "Sheridan at Cedar Creek." Some of these had a wide circulation in the press, and were preserved in various anthologies. Mr. Stoddard has called "Sheridan" the "second best cavalry poem in the English language, the first being Browning's, 'How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix.'" There are in this poem lines as lofty in

sentiment and expression as Bryant, or the author of "Lines on a Bust of Dante," or Mr. Stoddard himself could have written.—Stedman, Arthur, 1891, Melville of Marquesas, Review of Reviews, American Ed., vol. 4, p. 429.

In spite of all the obscurities and mannerisms which confessedly deform his later writings, it remains true that naturalness is, on the whole, Melville's prime characteristic, both in the tone and in the style of his productions. His narratives are as racy and vigorous as those of Defoe or Smollett or Marryat; his character-sketches are such as only a man of keen observation, and as keen a sense of humour, could have realised and depicted. His seamen and his sea captains all, his savages ashore and aboard, from the noble unsophisticated Mehevi in "Typee" to the semi-civilised comical Queequeg in "The Whale," are admirably vivid and impressive, and the reader who shall once have made their acquaintance will thenceforward in no wise be persuaded that they are not real and living personages. Moreover, there is a large-souled humanity in Melville— the direct outcome of his generous, emotional, yet uniformly sane temperament— which differentiates him entirely from the mere artist or litterateur.—Salt, Henry S., 1892, "Marquesan Melville," Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 272, p. 254.

His masterpiece, "Moby Dick, or the White Whale." If it were not for its inordinate length, its frequently inartistic heaping up of details, and its obvious imitation of Carlylean tricks of style and construction, this narrative of tremendous power and wide knowledge might be perhaps pronounced the greatest sea story in literature. The breath of the sea is in it and much of the passion and charm of the most venturous callings plied upon the deep. It is a cool reader that does not become almost as eager as the terrible Captain Ahab in his demoniacal pursuit of Moby Dick, the

invincible whale, a creation of the imagination not unworthy of a great poet—Trent, William P., 1903, A History of American Literature, p. 390.

"And after one Breathless Instant, fell."—P. 71.

PREFACE

MORE than three years have elapsed since the occurrence of the events recorded in this volume. The interval, with the exception of the last few months, has been chiefly spent by the author tossing about on the wide ocean. Sailors are the only class of men who now-a-days see anything like stirring adventure; and many things which to fire-side people appear strange and romantic, to them seem as common-place as a jacket out at elbows. Yet, notwithstanding the familiarity of sailors with all sorts of curious adventure, the incidents recorded in the following pages have often served, when 'spun as a yarn,' not only to relieve the weariness of many a night-watch at sea, but to excite the warmest sympathies of the author's shipmates. He has been, therefore, led to think that his story could scarcely fail to interest those who are less familiar than the sailor with a life of adventure.

In his account of the singular and interesting people among whom he was thrown, it will be observed that he chiefly treats of their more obvious peculiarities; and, in describing their customs, refrains in most cases from entering into explanations concerning their origin and purposes. As writers of travels among barbarous communities are generally very diffuse on these subjects, he deems it right to advert to what may be considered a culpable omission. No one can be more sensible than the author of his deficiencies in this and many other respects; but when the very peculiar circumstances in which he was placed are understood, he feels assured that all these omissions will be excused.

In very many published narratives no little degree of attention is bestowed upon dates; but as the author lost all knowledge of the days of the week, during the occurrence of the scenes herein related, he hopes that the reader will charitably pass over his shortcomings in this particular.

In the Polynesian words used in this volume,—except in those cases where the spelling has been previously determined by others,—that form of orthography has been employed, which might be supposed most easily to convey their sound to a stranger. In several works descriptive of the islands in the Pacific, many of the most beautiful combinations of vocal sounds have been altogether lost to the ear of the reader by an over-attention to the ordinary rules of spelling.

There are a few passages in the ensuing chapters which may be thought to bear rather hard upon a reverend order of men, the account of whose proceedings in different quarters of the globe—transmitted to us through their own hands—very generally, and often very deservedly, receives high commendation. Such passages will be found, however, to be based upon facts admitting of no contradiction, and which have come immediately under the writer's cognizance. The conclusions deduced from these facts are unavoidable, and in stating them the author has been influenced by no feeling of animosity, either to the individuals themselves, or to that glorious cause which has not always been served by the proceedings of some of its advocates.

The great interest with which the important events lately occurring at the Sandwich, Marquesas, and Society Islands, have been regarded in America and England, and indeed throughout the world, will, he trusts, justify a few otherwise unwarrantable digressions.

There are some things related in the narrative which will be sure to appear strange, or perhaps entirely incomprehensible, to the reader; but they cannot appear more so to him than they did to the author at the time. He has stated such matters just as they occurred, and leaves every one to form his own opinion concerning them; trusting that his anxious desire to speak the unvarnished truth will gain for him the confidence of his readers. 1846.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EDITION OF 1892

By Arthur Stedman

OF the trinity of American authors whose births made the year 1819 a notable one in our literary history,—Lowell, Whitman, and Melville,—it is interesting to observe that the two latter were both descended, on the fathers' and mothers' sides respectively, from have families of British New England and Dutch New York extraction. Whitman and Van Velsor, Melville and Gansevoort, were the several combinations which produced these men; and it is easy to trace in the life and character of each author the qualities derived from his joint ancestry. Here, however, the resemblance ceases, for Whitman's forebears, while worthy country people of good descent, were not prominent in public or private life. Melville, on the other hand, was of distinctly patrician birth, his paternal and maternal grandfathers having been leading characters in the Revolutionary War; their descendants still maintaining a dignified social position.

Allan Melville, great-grandfather of Herman Melville, removed from Scotland to America in 1748, and established

himself as a merchant in Boston. His son, Major Thomas Melville, was a leader in the famous 'Boston Tea Party' of 1773 and afterwards became an officer in the Continental Army. He is reported to have been a Conservative in all matters except his opposition to unjust taxation, and he wore the old-fashioned cocked hat and knee-breeches until his death, in 1832, thus becoming the original of Doctor Holmes's poem, 'The Last Leaf'. Major Melville's son Allan, the father of Herman, was an importing merchant,—first in Boston, and later in New York. He was a man of much culture, and was an extensive traveller for his time. He married Maria Gansevoort, daughter of General Peter Gansevoort, best known as 'the hero of Fort Stanwix.' This fort was situated on the present site of Rome, N.Y.; and there Gansevoort, with a small body of men, held in check reinforcements on their way to join Burgoyne, until the disastrous ending of the latter's campaign of 1777 was insured. The Gansevoorts, it should be said, were at that time and subsequently residents of Albany, N.Y.

Herman Melville was born in New York on August 1,1819, and received his early education in that city. There he imbibed his first love of adventure, listening, as he says in 'Redburn,' while his father 'of winter evenings, by the well-remembered sea-coal fire in old Greenwich Street, used to tell my brother and me of the monstrous waves at sea, mountain high, of the masts bending like twigs, and all about Havre and Liverpool.' The death of his father in reduced circumstances necessitated the removal of his mother and the family of eight brothers and sisters to the village of Lansingburg, on the Hudson River. There Herman remained until 1835, when he attended the Albany Classical School for some months. Dr. Charles E. West, the well-known Brooklyn educator, was then in charge of the school, and remembers the lad's deftness in English composition, and his struggles with mathematics.

The following year was passed at Pittsfield, Mass., where he engaged in work on his uncle's farm, long known as the 'Van Schaack place.' This uncle was Thomas Melville, president of the Berkshire Agricultural Society, and a successful gentleman farmer.

Herman's roving disposition, and a desire to support himself independently of family assistance, soon led him to ship as cabin boy in a New York vessel bound for Liverpool. He made the voyage, visited London, and returned in the same ship. 'Redburn: His First Voyage,' published in 1849, is partly founded on the experiences of this trip, which was undertaken with the full consent of his relatives, and which seems to have satisfied his nautical ambition for a time. As told in the book, Melville met with more than the usual hardships of a sailor-boy's first venture. It does not seem difficult in 'Redburn' to separate the author's actual experiences from those invented by him, this being the case in some of his other writings.

A good part of the succeeding three years, from 1837 to 1840, was occupied with school-teaching. While so engaged at Greenbush, now East Albany, N.Y., he received the munificent salary of 'six dollars a quarter and board.' He taught for one term at Pittsfield, Mass., 'boarding around' with the families of his pupils, in true American fashion, and easily suppressing, on one memorable occasion, the efforts of his larger scholars to inaugurate a rebellion by physical force.

I fancy that it was the reading of Richard Henry Dana's 'Two Years Before the Mast' which revived the spirit of adventure in Melville's breast. That book was published in 1840, and was at once talked of everywhere. Melville must have read it at the time, mindful of his own experience as a

sailor. At any rate, he once more signed a ship's articles, and on January 1, 1841, sailed from New Bedford harbour in the whaler Acushnet, bound for the Pacific Ocean and the sperm fishery. He has left very little direct information as to the events of this eighteen months' cruise, although his whaling romance, 'Moby Dick; or, the Whale,' probably gives many pictures of life on board the Acushnet. In the present volume he confines himself to a general account of the captain's bad treatment of the crew, and of his non-fulfilment of agreements. Under these considerations, Melville decided to abandon the vessel on reaching the Marquesas Islands; and the narrative of 'Typee' begins at this point. However, he always recognised the immense influence the voyage had had upon his career, and in regard to its results has said in 'Moby Dick,'—

'If I shall ever deserve any real repute in that small but high hushed world which I might not be unreasonably ambitious of; if hereafter I shall do anything that on the whole a man might rather have done than to have left undone... then here I prospectively ascribe all the honour and the glory to whaling; for a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard.'

The record, then, of Melville's escape from the Dolly, otherwise the Acushnet, the sojourn of his companion Toby and himself in the Typee Valley on the island of Nukuheva, Toby's mysterious disappearance, and Melville's own escape, is fully given in the succeeding pages; and rash indeed would he be who would enter into a descriptive contest with these inimitable pictures of aboriginal life in the 'Happy Valley.' So great an interest has always centred in the character of Toby, whose actual existence has been questioned, that I am glad to be able to declare him an authentic personage, by name Richard T. Greene. He was enabled to discover himself again to Mr. Melville through

the publication of the present volume, and their acquaintance was renewed, lasting for quite a long period. I have seen his portrait,—a rare old daguerrotype,—and some of his letters to our author. One of his children was named for the latter, but Mr. Melville lost trace of him in recent years.

With the author's rescue from what Dr. T. M. Coan has styled his 'anxious paradise,' 'Typee' ends, and its sequel, 'Omoo,' begins. Here, again, it seems wisest to leave the remaining adventures in the South Seas to the reader's own discovery, simply stating that, after a sojourn at the Society Islands, Melville shipped for Honolulu. There he remained for four months, employed as a clerk. He joined the crew of the American frigate United States, which reached Boston, stopping on the way at one of the Peruvian ports, in October of 1844. Once more was a narrative of his experiences to be preserved in 'White Jacket; or, the World in a Man-of-War.' Thus, of Melville's four most important books, three, 'Typee,' 'Omoo,' and 'White-Jacket,' are directly auto biographical, and 'Moby Dick' is partially so; while the less important 'Redburn' is between the two classes in this respect. Melville's other prose works, as will be shown, were, with some exceptions, unsuccessful efforts at creative romance.

Whether our author entered on his whaling adventures in the South Seas with a determination to make them available for literary purposes, may never be certainly known. There was no such elaborate announcement or advance preparation as in some later cases. I am inclined to believe that the literary prospect was an after-thought, and that this insured a freshness and enthusiasm of style not otherwise to be attained. Returning to his mother's home at Lansingburg, Melville soon began the writing of 'Typee,' which was completed by the autumn of 1845.

Shortly after this his older brother, Gansevoort Melville, sailed for England as secretary of legation to Ambassador McLane, and the manuscript was intrusted to Gansevoort for submission to John Murray. Its immediate acceptance and publication followed in 1846. 'Typee' was dedicated to Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of Massachusetts, an old friendship between the author's family and that of Justice Shaw having been renewed about this time. Mr. Melville became engaged to Miss Elizabeth Shaw, the only daughter of the Chief Justice, and their marriage followed on August 4, 1847, in Boston.

The wanderings of our nautical Othello were thus brought to a conclusion. Mr. and Mrs. Melville resided in New York City until 1850, when they purchased a farmhouse at Pittsfield, their farm adjoining that formerly owned by Mr. Melville's uncle, which had been inherited by the latter's son. The new place was named 'Arrow Head,' from the numerous Indian antiquities found in the neighbourhood. The house was so situated as to command an uninterrupted view of Greylock Mountain and the adjacent hills. Here Melville remained for thirteen years, occupied with his writing, and managing his farm. An article in Putnam's Monthly entitled 'I and My Chimney,' another called 'October Mountain,' and the introduction to the 'Piazza Tales,' present faithful pictures of Arrow Head and its surroundings. In a letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, given in 'Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife,' his daily life is set forth. The letter is dated June 1, 1851.

'Since you have been here I have been building some shanties of houses (connected with the old one), and likewise some shanties of chapters and essays. I have been ploughing and sowing and raising and printing and praying, and now begin to come out upon a less bristling time, and to enjoy the calm prospect of things from a fair piazza at

the north of the old farmhouse here. Not entirely yet, though, am I without something to be urgent with. The 'Whale' is only half through the press; for, wearied with the long delays of the printers, and disgusted with the heat and dust of the Babylonish brick-kiln of New York, I came back to the country to feel the grass, and end the book reclining on it, if I may.'

Mr. Hawthorne, who was then living in the red cottage at Lenox, had a week at Arrow Head with his daughter Una the previous spring. It is recorded that the friends 'spent most of the time in the barn, bathing in the early spring sunshine, which streamed through the open doors, and talking philosophy.' According to Mr. J. E. A. Smith's volume on the Berkshire Hills, these gentlemen, both reserved in nature, though near neighbours and often in the same company, were inclined to be shy of each other, partly, perhaps, through the knowledge that Melville had written a very appreciative review of 'Mosses from an Old Manse' for the New York Literary World, edited by their mutual friends, the Duyckincks. 'But one day,' writes Mr. Smith, 'it chanced that when they were out on a picnic excursion, the two were compelled by a thundershower to take shelter in a narrow recess of the rocks of Monument Mountain. Two hours of this enforced intercourse settled the matter. They learned so much of each other's character,... that the most intimate friendship for the future was inevitable.' A passage in Hawthorne's 'Wonder Book' is noteworthy as describing the number of literary neighbours in Berkshire:—

'For my part, I wish I had Pegasus here at this moment,' said the student. 'I would mount him forthwith, and gallop about the country within a circumference of a few miles, making literary calls on my brother authors. Dr. Dewey would be within ray reach, at the foot of the Taconic. In Stockbridge, yonder, is Mr. James [G. P. R. James],

conspicuous to all the world on his mountain-pile of history and romance. Longfellow, I believe, is not yet at the Oxbow, else the winged horse would neigh at him. But here in Lenox I should find our most truthful novelist [Miss Sedgwick], who has made the scenery and life of Berkshire all her own. On the hither side of Pittsfield sits Herman Melville, shaping out the gigantic conception of his 'White Whale,' while the gigantic shadow of Greylock looms upon him from his study window. Another bound of my flying steed would bring me to the door of Holmes, whom I mention last, because Pegasus would certainly unseat me the next minute, and claim the poet as his rider.'

While at Pittsfield, Mr. Melville was induced to enter the lecture field. From 1857 to 1860 he filled many engagements in the lyceums, chiefly speaking of his adventures in the South Seas. He lectured in cities as widely apart as Montreal, Chicago, Baltimore, and San Francisco, sailing to the last-named place in 1860, by way of Cape Horn, on the Meteor, commanded, by his younger brother, Captain Thomas Melville, afterward governor of the 'Sailor's Snug Harbor' at Staten Island, N.Y. Besides his voyage to San Francisco, he had, in 1849 and 1856, visited England, the Continent, and the Holy Land, partly to superintend the publication of English editions of his works, and partly for recreation.

A pronounced feature of Melville's character was his unwillingness to speak of himself, his adventures, or his writings in conversation. He was, however, able to overcome this reluctance on the lecture platform. Our author's tendency to philosophical discussion is strikingly set forth in a letter from Dr. Titus Munson Coan to the latter's mother, written while a student at Williams College over thirty years ago, and fortunately preserved by her. Dr. Coan enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Mr. Melville

during most of his residence in New York. The letter reads: —

'I have made my first literary pilgrimage, a call upon Herman Melville, the renowned author of 'Typee,' etc. He lives in a spacious farmhouse about two miles from Pittsfield, a weary walk through the dust. But it as well repaid. I introduced myself as a Hawaiian-American, and soon found myself in full tide of talk, or rather of monologue. But he would not repeat the experiences of which I had been reading with rapture in his books. In vain I sought to hear of Typee and those paradise islands, but he preferred to pour forth his philosophy and his theories of life. The shade of Aristotle arose like a cold mist between myself and Fayaway. We have quite enough of deep philosophy at Williams College, and I confess I was disappointed in this trend of the talk. But what a talk it was! Melville is transformed from a Marquesan to a gypsy student, the gypsy element still remaining strong within him. And this contradiction gives him the air of one who has suffered from opposition, both literary and social. With his liberal views, he is apparently considered by the good people of Pittsfield as little better than a cannibal or a 'beach-comber.' His attitude seemed to me something like that of Ishmael; but perhaps I judged hastily. I managed to draw him out very freely on everything but the Marquesas Islands, and when I left him he was in full tide of discourse on all things sacred and profane. But he seems to put away the objective side of his life, and to shut himself up in this cold north as a cloistered thinker.'

I have been told by Dr. Coan that his father, the Rev. Titus Coan, of the Hawaiian Islands, personally visited the Marquesas group, found the Typee Valley, and verified in all respects the statements made in 'Typee.' It is known that Mr. Melville from early manhood indulged deeply in

philosophical studies, and his fondness for discussing such matters is pointed out by Hawthorne also, in the 'English Note Books.' This habit increased as he advanced in years, if possible.

The chief event of the residence in Pittsfield was the completion and publication of 'Moby Dick; or, the Whale,' in 1851. How many young men have been drawn to sea by this book is a question of interest. Meeting with Mr. Charles Henry Webb ('John Paul') the day after Mr. Melville's death, I asked him if he were not familiar with that author's writings. He replied that 'Moby Dick' was responsible for his three years of life before the mast when a lad, and added that while 'gamming' on board another vessel he had once fallen in with a member of the boat's crew which rescued Melville from his friendly imprisonment among the Typees.

While at Pittsfield, besides his own family, Mr. Melville's mother and sisters resided with him. As his four children grew up he found it necessary to obtain for them better facilities for study than the village school afforded; and so, several years after, the household was broken up, and he removed with his wife and children to the New York house that was afterwards his home. This house belonged to his brother Allan, and was exchanged for the estate at Pittsfield. In December, 1866, he was appointed by Mr. H. A. Smyth, a former travelling companion in Europe, a district officer in the New York Custom House. He held the position until 1886, preferring it to in-door clerical work, and then resigned, the duties becoming too arduous for his failing strength.

In addition to his philosophical studies, Mr. Melville was much interested in all matters relating to the fine arts, and devoted most of his leisure hours to the two subjects. A

notable collection of etchings and engravings from the old masters was gradually made by him, those from Claude's paintings being a specialty. After he retired from the Custom House, his tall, stalwart figure could be seen almost daily tramping through the Fort George district or Central Park, his roving inclination leading him to obtain as much out-door life as possible. His evenings were spent at home with his books, his pictures, and his family, and usually with them alone; for, in spite of the melodramatic declarations of various English gentlemen, Melville's seclusion in his latter years, and in fact throughout his life, was a matter of personal choice. More and more, as he grew older, he avoided every action on his part, and on the part of his family, that might tend to keep his name and writings before the public. A few friends felt at liberty to visit the recluse, and were kindly welcomed, but he himself sought no one. His favorite companions were his grandchildren, with whom he delighted to pass his time, and his devoted wife, who was a constant assistant and adviser in his literary work, chiefly done at this period for his own amusement. To her he addressed his last little poem, the touching 'Return of the Sire de Nesle.' Various efforts were made by the New York literary colony to draw him from his retirement, but without success. It has been suggested that he might have accepted a magazine editorship, but this is doubtful, as he could not bear business details or routine work of any sort. His brother Allan was a New York lawyer, and until his death, in 1872, managed Melville's affairs with ability, particularly the literary accounts.

During these later years he took great pleasure in a friendly correspondence with Mr. W. Clark Russell. Mr. Russell had taken many occasions to mention Melville's sea-tales, his interest in them, and his indebtedness to them. The latter felt impelled to write Mr. Russell in regard

to one of his newly published novels, and received in answer the following letter:

July 21, 1886.

MY DEAR Mr. MELVILLE, Your letter has given me a very great and singular pleasure. Your delightful books carry the imagination into a maritime period so remote that, often as you have been in my mind, I could never satisfy myself that you were still amongst the living. I am glad, indeed, to learn from Mr. Toft that you are still hale and hearty, and I do most heartily wish you many years yet of health and vigour.

Your books I have in the American edition. I have 'Typee, 'Omoo,' 'Redburn,' and that noble piece 'Moby Dick.' These are all I have been able to obtain. There have been many editions of your works in this country, particularly the lovely South Sea sketches; but the editions are not equal to those of the American publishers. Your reputation here is very great. It is hard to meet a man whose opinion as a reader is worth leaving who does not speak of your works in such terms as he might hesitate to employ, with all his patriotism, toward many renowned English writers.

Dana is, indeed, great. There is nothing in literature more remarkable than the impression produced by Dana's portraiture of the homely inner life of a little brig's forecastle.

I beg that you will accept my thanks for the kindly spirit in which you have read my books. I wish it were in my power to cross the Atlantic, for you assuredly would be the first whom it would be my happiness to visit.

The condition of my right hand obliges me to dictate this to my son; but painful as it is to me to hold a pen, I cannot suffer this letter to reach the hands of a man of so admirable genitis as Herman Melville without begging him to believe me to be, with my own hand, his most respectful and hearty admirer, W. Clark Russell.

It should be noted here that Melville's increased reputation in England at the period of this letter was chiefly owing to a series of articles on his work written by Mr. Russell. I am sorry to say that few English papers made more than a passing reference to Melville's death. The American press discussed his life and work in numerous and lengthy reviews. At the same time, there always has been a steady sale of his books in England, and some of them never have been out of print in that country since the publication of 'Typee.' One result of this friendship between the two authors was the dedication of new volumes to each other in highly complimentary terms—Mr. Melville's 'John Marr and Other Sailors,' of which twenty-five copies only were printed, on the one hand, and Mr. Russell's 'An Ocean Tragedy,' on the other, of which many thousand have been printed, not to mention unnumbered pirated copies.

Beside Hawthorne, Mr. Richard Henry Stoddard, of American writers, specially knew and appreciated Herman Melville. Mr. Stoddard was connected with the New York dock department at the time of Mr. Melville's appointment to a custom-house position, and they at once became acquainted. For a good many years, during the period in which our author remained in seclusion, much that appeared in print in America concerning Melville came from the pen of Mr. Stoddard. Nevertheless, the sailor author's presence in New York was well known to the literary guild. He was invited to join in all new movements, but as often felt obliged to excuse himself from doing so.

The present writer lived for some time within a short distance of his house, but found no opportunity to meet him until it became necessary to obtain his portrait for an anthology in course of publication. The interview was brief, and the interviewer could not help feeling although treated with pleasant courtesy, that more important matters were in hand than the perpetuation of a romancer's countenance to future generations; but a friendly family acquaintance grew up from the incident, and will remain an abiding memory.

Mr. Melville died at his home in New York City early on the morning of September 28, 1891. His serious illness had lasted a number of months, so that the end came as a release. True to his ruling passion, philosophy had claimed him to the last, a set of Schopenhauer's works receiving his attention when able to study; but this was varied with readings in the 'Mermaid Series' of old plays, in which he took much pleasure. His library, in addition to numerous works on philosophy and the fine arts, was composed of standard books of all classes, including, of course, a proportion of nautical literature. Especially interesting are fifteen or twenty first editions of Hawthorne's books inscribed to Mr. and Mrs. Melville by the author and his wife.

The immediate acceptance of 'Typee' by John Murray was followed by an arrangement with the London agent of an American publisher, for its simultaneous publication in the United States. I understand that Murray did not then publish fiction. At any rate, the book was accepted by him on the assurance of Gansevoort Melville that it contained nothing not actually experienced by his brother. Murray brought it out early in 1846, in his Colonial and Home Library, as 'A Narrative of a Four Months' Residence among the Natives of a Valley of the Marquesas Islands; or, a Peep

at Polynesian Life,' or, more briefly, 'Melville's Marquesas Islands.' It was issued in America with the author's own title, 'Typee,' and in the outward shape of a work of fiction. Mr. Melville found himself famous at once. Many discussions were carried on as to the genuineness of the author's name and the reality of the events portrayed, but English and American critics alike recognised the book's importance as a contribution to literature.

Melville, in a letter to Hawthorne, speaks of himself as having no development at all until his twenty-fifth year, the time of his return from the Pacific; but surely the process of development must have been well advanced to permit of so virile and artistic a creation as 'Typee.' While the narrative does not always run smoothly, yet the style for the most part is graceful and alluring, so that we pass from one scene of Pacific enchantment to another quite oblivious of the vast amount of descriptive detail which is being poured out upon us. It is the varying fortune of the hero which engrosses our attention. We follow his adventures with breathless interest, or luxuriate with him in the leafy bowers of the 'Happy Valley,' surrounded by joyous children of nature. When all is ended, we then for the first time realise that we know these people and their ways as if we too had dwelt among them.

I do not believe that 'Typee' will ever lose its position as a classic of American Literature. The pioneer in South Sea romance—for the mechanical descriptions of earlier voyagers are not worthy of comparison—this book has as yet met with no superior, even in French literature; nor has it met with a rival in any other language than the French. The character of 'Fayaway,' and, no less, William S. Mayo's 'Kaloolah,' the enchanting dreams of many a youthful heart, will retain their charm; and this in spite of endless variations by modern explorers in the same domain. A faint

type of both characters may be found in the Surinam Yarico of Captain John Gabriel Stedman, whose 'Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition' appeared in 1796.

'Typee,' as written, contained passages reflecting with considerable severity on the methods pursued by missionaries in the South Seas. The manuscript was printed in a complete form in England, and created much discussion on this account, Melville being accused of bitterness; but he asserted his lack of prejudice. The passages referred to were omitted in the first and all subsequent American editions. They have been restored in the present issue, which is complete save for a few paragraphs excluded by written direction of the author. I have, with the consent of his family, changed the long and cumbersome sub-title of the book, calling it a 'Real-Romance of the South Seas,' as best expressing its nature.

The success of his first volume encouraged Melville to proceed in his work, and 'Omoo,' the sequel to 'Typee,' appeared in England and America in 1847. Here we leave, for the most part, the dreamy pictures of island life, and find ourselves sharing the extremely realistic discomforts of a Sydney whaler in the early forties. The rebellious crew's experiences in the Society Islands are quite as realistic as events on board ship and very entertaining, while the whimsical character, Dr. Long Ghost, next to Captain Ahab in 'Moby Dick,' is Melville's most striking delineation. The errors of the South Sea missions are pointed out with even more force than in 'Typee,' and it is a fact that both these books have ever since been of the greatest value to outgoing missionaries on account of the exact information contained in them with respect to the islanders.

Melville's power in describing and investing with romance scenes and incidents witnessed and participated in by himself, and his frequent failure of success as an inventor of characters and situations, were early pointed out by his critics. More recently Mr. Henry S. Salt has drawn the same distinction very carefully in an excellent article contributed to the Scottish Art Review. In a prefatory note to 'Mardi' (1849), Melville declares that, as his former books have been received as romance instead of reality, he will now try his hand at pure fiction. 'Mardi' may be called a splendid failure. It must have been soon after the completion of 'Omoo' that Melville began to study the writings of Sir Thomas Browne. Heretofore our author's style was rough in places, but marvellously simple and direct. 'Mardi' is burdened with an over-rich diction, which Melville never entirely outgrew. The scene of this romance, which opens well, is laid in the South Seas, but everything soon becomes overdrawn and fantastical, and the thread of the story loses itself in a mystical allegory.

'Redburn,' already mentioned, succeeded 'Mardi' in the same year, and was a partial return to the author's earlier style. In 'White-Jacket; or, the World in a Man-of-War' (1850), Melville almost regained it. This book has no equal as a picture of life aboard a sailing man-of-war, the lights and shadows of naval existence being well contrasted.

With 'Moby Dick; or, the Whale' (1851), Melville reached the topmost notch of his fame. The book represents, to a certain extent, the conflict between the author's earlier and later methods of composition, but the gigantic conception of the 'White Whale,' as Hawthorne expressed it, permeates the whole work, and lifts it bodily into the highest domain of romance. 'Moby Dick' contains an immense amount of information concerning the habits of the whale and the methods of its capture, but this is characteristically

introduced in a way not to interfere with the narrative. The chapter entitled 'Stubb Kills a Whale' ranks with the choicest examples of descriptive literature.

'Moby Dick' appeared, and Melville enjoyed to the full the enhanced reputation it brought him. He did not, however, take warning from 'Mardi,' but allowed himself to plunge more deeply into the sea of philosophy and fantasy.

'Pierre; or, the Ambiguities' (1852) was published, and there ensued a long series of hostile criticisms, ending with a severe, though impartial, article by Fitz-James O'Brien in Putnam's Monthly. About the same time the whole stock of the author's books was destroyed by fire, keeping them out of print at a critical moment; and public interest, which until then had been on the increase, gradually began to diminish.

After this Mr. Melville contributed several short stories to Putnam's Monthly and Harper's Magazine. Those in the former periodical were collected in a volume as Piazza Tales (1856); and of these 'Benito Cereno' and 'The Bell Tower' are equal to his best previous efforts.

'Israel Potter: His Fifty Years of Exile' (1855), first printed as a serial in Putnam's, is an historical romance of the American Revolution, based on the hero's own account of his adventures, as given in a little volume picked up by Mr. Melville at a book-stall. The story is well told, but the book is hardly worthy of the author of 'Typee.' 'The Confidence Man' (1857), his last serious effort in prose fiction, does not seem to require criticism.

Mr. Melville's pen had rested for nearly ten years, when it was again taken up to celebrate the events of the Civil War. 'Battle Pieces and Aspects of the War' appeared in 1866.