

his requiem, and the flowers that he worshiped bloom above him all the year, while his soul has returned to the fountain which gave it existence.

"Why did he drop the harp from fingers cold?—He lived as if his veins pored music: from his lips came words of fire—the voice of Greece the tones of Homer's lyre."  
A. D. A.

### THE REALISM OF HENRY JAMES

The portrayal of things as they are, as opposed to creating them anew, has become a prominent feature in the literary world and has slightly disquieted the public sense of fitness so long left as it were, resting upon its ears.

The plot of the "Europeans" is grandly conceived: the object being to compare European and American customs and characters, as well as to depict the difference in the social atmosphere. The Portrait of a Lady is nearly the counterpart of the "Europeans." In this latter, two individuals brother and sister; Felix and Eugenia, of American parentage but bred in Europe are the central characters. Eugenia has early contracted a morganatic marriage and now has become obnoxious to the family she has entered; and they, regardless of her feelings, are seeking to rid themselves of her. Matters grow so exceedingly unpleasant that she resolves to cast her lot elsewhere, and in company with her brother sails for America, hoping to chance upon relatives living in the neighborhood of Boston. Arriving here they live for some time in an out-of-the-way place, when finally one Sabbath morning Felix goes determined to seek the relatives who are to serve as conveniences for his annoyed and now restless sister. Arriving at the home of his Uncle, Felix meets in the garden his cousin Girtrude,—rather moody. Learning who he is she shows him great attention, even feasting him upon the choice viands prepared for Mr. Brand the especial family favorite and her unaccepted and unacceptable admirer. This repast was no more than completed when the rest of the family returning from devotional exercises, are introduced to him. In his characteristic way, he soon, rather reluctantly, takes his leave, having made quite a favorable impression, and joins his sister, from whom he has promised the family an early visit. Thoroughly infatuated as he is with the loveliness of his relatives and their exquisite surroundings, he still can not create a like sympathy in Eugenia. She is utterly disconsolate, and only feels that all about will be unpleasant for her; and that to be agreeable, a thing highly essential at this stage, will be to her an unending effort. Determined however upon a successful future, she lays many heartless plots whereby at the sacrifice of all else she hopes eventually to return to European society with contentment and satisfaction. Thus it is that her haughty and cold bearing when in company of her relatives and their friends, is sustained with dignity, and actually meets with admiration from them. In depicting these scenes and describing the maneuvers of Eugenie the author is at his best. He has in her the typical European woman: shrewd, deep-plotting, conscienceless, no doubt unconquerable in influence; and well does he execute his conception of the power of such a person upon our quiet, innocent and unambitious American society. She is in fact a perfect enigma

to the ordinary American mind, and all is commotion and excitement about her, when she is ushered into our presence, while she remains and for no short time after her departure. The effect produced by her is far different from that by Felix, the easy-going, indifferent, unsuccessful artist, but conventional European gentleman, who appears upon the scene, plays his important, interesting but unexciting part, makes his exit without creating a ripple, unless it be when he has gained the hand of Girtrude in presence of the whole household. Even this is so nearly in accordance with the course of events in American society that it can scarcely be classed with the ever surprising feats of Eugenia.

While we grant that the author no doubt does himself great credit in this direction, we criticize him, perhaps severely, for the characters he has selected and the plot he has invented. To the American mind it is almost impossible to conceive of a state of society such as Eugenia represents. We must concede that under peculiar social conditions Europe has developed a type of women, who not by integrity and innocence, but by shrewdness, and I may say consciousness of woman's natural power over man, so influence him that they may in all truth be said to have in hand the rudder of the State itself. Along with this concession we should probably, in order to deal fairly with the author, grant also that such characters have more salient points and offer easier subjects to the delineator, as well as greater interest to the reader. But we cannot excuse Mr. James for this selection upon these grounds alone, nor on account of his rare facility with such characters, for this no doubt is rather the grosser and baser part of an author's literary capital.

To portray a character like the even-tempered, peaceful-minded Mr. Wentworth, or the calm, deliberate Mr. Touchette, and do himself and them justice, at once and together, is impossible for Henry James. Notice the "Portrait of a Lady" how in all its ramifications he seems to dote upon its worst characters, and how he lets drop into the background those unusually considered the more enviable and ideal. Isabel Archer a blooming studious American girl, is protected, being parentless, by her brother-in-law and married sister. Her aunt Mrs. Touchette, also of American descent, but for sometime mistress of Gardencourt England, resolves to regain her lapsed social prestige. She accordingly offers this Isabel, as the most attractive of her nieces, a home and protection, and thus secures in return the new prominence she has desired. Her plans meeting with success she returns to her husband as unceremoniously as she had departed.

Now notice carefully the intentions of the author. He would depict Isabel as the typical American woman, pursuing a vague and impossible ideal of love, art and magnificence, and under the influence of the Continental atmosphere notes her development, simple, open, unsuspecting as she is. While we grant that the fate of Isabel is too often repeated in the history of similar characters, we have the same criticism to make on the author's selection and conception that we made in the case of the "Europeans". He would not only have us believe that the young and innocent Isabel is, under these circumstances and amid such surroundings impressionable, but that all Americans, under like circumstances are equally so, a generalization wholly unwarranted.

We have with us women, who, I doubt not could well