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A study of hypnotism in the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne

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A STUDY OF HYPNOTISM IN THE WORKS
OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Richmond
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Hypnotism, recognized only in recent years by the public as a healthy branch of modern science, has rooted and flowered in various fields of studies and practices.

It is interesting to note that Nathaniel Hawthorne, one of America's great writers of fiction, should have used hypnotism as one of his artistic techniques to bring out his themes and aspirations.

Throughout the years readers and students of Hawthorne have been awed and delighted by the pure beauty of his style and his deep perception of human nature.¹ To others, he has "the purest style, the finest taste, the most available scholarship, the most delicate humor, the most touching pathos, the most radiant imagination, and the most consummate ingenuity."² To Canby³ Hawthorne's interest is centered in the warped and injured minds.

¹Norman Holmes Pearson, Introduction, The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1937), p. viii.

²Edmund Wilson, ed., The Shock of Recognition, Vol. I (New York, 1943), p. 169.

³Henry Seidel Canby, Classic Americans (New York, 1931), p. 248.

But more important to us is the fact that Hawthorne possesses what one of his friends called "the awful power of insight,"⁴ which penetrates into the essential truth of the human nature.

In recent years, Hawthorne has become more popular with the connecting threads which have been found between him and modern American literature. And Hawthorne's most distinctive characteristics have been thought to be his invention, creation, imagination, and especially his originality--a trait which, in the literature of fiction, is positively worth all the rest.⁵ Often we are charmed when we read in his tales and romances of the half-formed, the reluctant, or the unexpressed fancies of mankind.

It is well known that Hawthorne has many times turned his alienated from the great chain of humanity.

The central theme thus emerges in all of Hawthorne's tales and romances--the problem of the inner and outer world, the inner and outer state of one's self, or as

⁴Ray R. Male, Hawthorne's Tragic Vision (Austin, Texas, 1957), p. 6.

⁵Wilson, p. 166.

stated by Ringe,⁶ the balance between the heart and the head.

The separation of the outer and the inner world leads to self-destruction. In The House of the Seven Gables, the outer world which Judge Pyncheon lives in has work to do, places to go, and people to see. In the beginning of the chapter entitled "Governor Pyncheon," while the reader is quite uncertain about what has become of the judge,--is he dead or alive?--Hawthorne ventures to list all the things the judge has scheduled to do. He is to meet a State Street broker about one favorable investment. He plans to attend an auction of real estate, "including a portion of the old Pyncheon property, originally belonging to Maule's garden ground." Next, he is to buy "a horse for his own driving."⁷ Then he has to attend a meeting of a charitable society, to measure the renewal of Mrs. Pyncheon's tombstone, to order some fruit-trees for his own pleasure, to call on a decayed widow whose daughter and herself have scarcely bread to eat and perhaps to help her with a "bank-note." Afterwards he is

⁶Donald A. Ringe, "Hawthorne's Psychology of the Head and Heart," PMLA, March, 1950, p. 120.

⁷Reference to Hawthorne's original text can be found in Hawthorne's Complete Works, Vol. III, pp. 320-323.

to see his physician about "a disagreeable choking, or stifling, or gurgling, or bubbling, in the region of the thorax" or merely a "dimness of sight and a dizziness of brain." But the most important on his agenda is to attend an excellent dinner party where the candidate for the governor of Massachusetts is to be chosen. Hawthorne assures us that Judge Pyncheon has the ambition of running for the future governor's seat:

The meed for which you have toiled and fought, and climbed, and crept, is ready for your grasp! Be present at this dinner!--drink a glass or two of that noble wine!--make your pledges in as low a whisper as you will!--and you rise up from table virtually governor of the glorious old State! Governor Pyncheon of Massachusetts!⁸

These activities cited in the foregoing paragraph determine the outer world of Judge Pyncheon. In his outer world, he is presumed to be a charitable, kind, and successful person. But as Orel says, "the outer world measures what it seems not what it is."⁹ If we relate Judge Pyncheon's outer world to his inner world, which is the soul within his body, we shall make strange discoveries among reminiscences, projects, hopes, apprehensions, weakness,

⁸Works, III, pp. 324-325.

⁹Harold Orel, "The Double Symbol," American Literature, March, 1951, p. 1.

and strong points, which he has heretofore shared with nobody. Hawthorne calls him "worldly, selfish, iron-hearted hypocrite"¹⁰ to mock him for the presentation he makes of himself in the outer world. For it is Hawthorne's belief that there is sin at the base of Judge Pyncheon's being. The outer world of goodness dissolves; only the inner world of evil remains. Though he may present to others an aspect of honor, the sin in his soul has driven him to his end.

Hawthorne is here, as in many other instances, concerned with the separation of the individual's outer and inner state. Destruction and unhappiness are usually the result when these two worlds are not balanced.

Hawthorne's theme of the relation of head and heart, which takes so many forms in his work is present almost everywhere in some form. It is, as Hyatt H. Waggoner observes, the relation of knowledge to action, of knowledge to emotion, of knowledge to will, of science to wisdom, of fact to value.¹¹ Or as Matthiessen points out,

¹⁰ Works, III, p. 334.

¹¹ Hyatt H. Waggoner, Hawthorne, A Critical Study (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), p. 261.

it is the relation between thought and emotion; or reason and passion.¹² Lady Eleanor's pride becomes sin, for it tramples on human sympathies and the kindred nature. Thus, she is isolated from the brotherhood of mankind,¹³ and is unable to associate with the sunshine of humanity. The scientist, Rappaccini, who lives isolated from his colleagues because of his scientific zeal is "so ruthless that he shows no regard for human considerations when he wishes to obtain scientific results."¹⁴ He uses science as his medium to control man's mind, being, and action. In the utterance of his daughter, we perceive his ruthlessness:

"I see it! I see it!" shrieked Beatrice. "It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart; for Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food. But my father,--he has united us in this fearful sympathy. Yes; spurn me, tread upon me, kill

¹²Ringe, p. 120.

¹³Waggoner, pp. 174-187.

¹⁴Jane Lundblad, Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Tradition of Gothic Romance (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), p. 52.

me! But it was not I. Not for a world of bliss would I have done it."¹⁵

Rappaccini spreads death around him because in his search for knowledge and power he has lived by reason alone.¹⁶ His scientific experiment estranges his daughter from all society of her kind and severs her likewise from all the warmth of life:

My science and the sympathy between thee and him have so wrought within his system that he now stands apart from common men, as thou dost, daughter of my pride and triumph, from ordinary women.¹⁷

Abundance of either heart or head, to Hawthorne's way of thinking, does not in itself guarantee happiness. When the heart becomes completely withered, the intellect assumes complete control and thereby "destroys all possibility of the individual's achieving remorse and insight through human understanding."¹⁸ The sin therefore lies in the fact that the intellect is elevated to a triumphant position over the heart. These and other recurrent examples, where all values are sacrificed to a single over-

¹⁵Waggoner, p. 297.

¹⁶Ibid., p. x.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 298.

¹⁸Ringe, p. 122.

ruling purpose, reveal and typify Hawthorne's overwhelming interest and belief in the working-together of heart and head to attain human health and happiness.

Studying more closely Hawthorne's theme of the heart and the head, we find that he means by the term roughly "what psychiatrists mean when they talk about the conscious and the unconscious minds."¹⁹

The principles of hypnotism had long been in practice among the Oriental peoples before they came into notice in Europe. Originally, hypnotism was associated with "religious and mystical"²⁰ practices. In the faith of Buddhism, for example, the practice of hypnotism usually played an important role. Often when a follower of Buddha wanted to see his ancestors who had been dead for a long, long time to ask for their blessings and good fortune, he would be led to certain priests who had the "magic" power of "hypnotizing" people of the same faith. The naive subject was always asked to close his eyes and to listen to what the priest murmured to him. Through suggestibility, the naive

¹⁹Waggoner, p. ix.

²⁰Clark L. Hull, Hypnosis and Suggestibility (New York, 1933), p. 1.

subject would gradually lose his intellectual perception, and be led into his spiritualized perception. Only then could the priest have the full control over his body, his action, his mind, and his thinking. The priest was able to make the subject do whatever he wanted him to do. Even when the subject woke up from his trance, he would be able to tell exactly what he saw and what he heard in the "other" world. Hypnotism was then, used as a medium through which Buddhists could get a glimpse into the spiritual world.

Hypnotic methods and practices differ widely, but the key device is based on the principle of one's control over another and the isolation of heart and head.

I propose in this study to examine the uses of hypnotism in two of Hawthorne's tales: "Ethan Brand" and "The Prophetic Pictures"; and three of Hawthorne's romances: Fanshawe, The House of the Seven Gables, and The Blithedale Romance. My aims are generally these: to investigate Hawthorne's interest in hypnotism with reference to the manifested popularity of hypnotism in his time; to identify Hawthorne's implication of hypnotism in the above tales and romances; and to analyze

Hawthorne's art of interweaving his themes with the practice of hypnosis.

CHAPTER II
PRESENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES
OF HYPNOTISM

Although little more than a century has passed since the word "hypnotism" was first used, the history of this art extends to very ancient times. There are ample reasons to believe that the art, though never called hypnotism, had been practised by the ancient Egyptians, the Syrians, Babylonians, Hebrews, Indians, Chinese, Greeks, and Romans.²¹

In ancient Greece, at the temple of the God of Medicine in Epidaurus, the sick were put into a "hypnotic" trance by priests, and through suggestion saw visions of the gods, with resulting cure.

The ceremonies of crystal gazing in the Egyptian religions are deeply bound with hypnotism.²² The priests of the Orient are especially familiar with the practice of hypnotism. It is even described in some ancient works written in Sanskrit in India. The knowle-

²¹J. Louis Orton, Hypnotism Made Practical (London, 1956), p. 16.

²²Ibid.

dge of hypnotism has long been generally known among the Mongols, Tibetan, and the Chinese.²³

The more modern study of hypnotism is usually said to begin with the Viennese physician, Franz Anton Mesmer, who wrote his medical thesis in 1776 on the influence of the planets upon the bodies of men. He claimed that the "animal magnetism" in man could be aroused and could put man into a hypnotic state. The investigation of the principle of the magnet with its two poles was then just begun. The human body, with its two sides, was like a magnet, with its two poles. Mesmer reported that disease was caused by "an improper distribution of the magnetic fluid," and the only way to cure it was "to restore the balance."²⁴ To an age when the germ theory was still yet one hundred years in the future and when insanity was considered the work of the devil, Mesmer was rejected and pronounced a fraud.

Followers and students, among whom was Lafayette, kept Mesmer's theories alive, and the name "mesmerism"

²³Leslie M. LeCron and Jean Bordeaux, Hypnotism Today (New York, 1949), p. 17.

²⁴G. H. Estabrook, Hypnotism (Richmond, Virginia, 1943), p. 121.

and "animal magnetism" came to be applied to them.

Animal magnetism created quite a stir in the scientific world, attracting a great number of followers in France, Germany, Austria, and eventually in the United States. In America, Grimes had earlier tried to give magnetism a new slant by calling it "electrobiology." Later Beard became one of the leading hypnotic practitioners and even more famous was Phineas Quimby.²⁵

When animal magnetism was at its height, there appeared out of the East, a "strange and mysterious wise man," the Abbe Faria. He was a Portuguese who had spent many years in the Orient and had probably come into close contact with hypnotism during his travels in that land. Faria knew the value of showmanship, and always appeared in a gorgeous robe before the audience. According to his theories, the major force in hypnotism depended entirely upon suggestion. Fixation of the gaze on the eye of the operator offered the advantage of quicker result.

In 1784, one of Mesmer's pupils, the Marquis de

²⁵ LeGron and Bordeaux, p. 22.

Puysegur, applied this method of mesmerism to a young shepherd and "magnetized" him into a quiet trance.

The word "hypnotism," derived from the Greek word "hypnos," meaning "sleep," was first coined by James Braid, a Scottish physician in the early 1840's. On November 13, 1841, Braid, for the first time, was present at a mesmeric seance; the operator was Lafontaine. After making a series of experiments, Braid discovered that a trance-like state could be induced by "holding any bright object above and in front of the subject's head."²⁶

A succession of similar experiments clearly indicated two things: first, that a mesmerized individual would do what he was told to do; second, that things done when in that state were remembered only when the same condition was resumed.

However, after Braid's death, the practice of hypnotism declined. It was a French physician in the middle of the nineteenth century, A. A. Liebeault, who ended the investigation and became the real father of modern hypnotism.²⁷

²⁶Ibid., p. 22.

²⁷Estabrook, p. 125.

By 1825, hypnotism had developed into a hallucination of "seeing things which are present; being functionally blind to things present; hypnotic anesthetics, and insensibility to pains."²⁸

The hypnotic methods used by these men were numerous, but there was one element which appeared in all. Mesmer's followers made it a practice "to stare intently into the eyes of their subjects,"²⁹ concentrating and willing them to go to sleep. The Marquis de Puységur believed in the effect of magnets on the body. Braid's subject was always told "to look steadily at a bright object."³⁰ Liebeault not only requested the fixation of the eyes but also repeated the following suggestions: "Your eyelids are getting heavy, your limbs feel numb, you are becoming more and more drowsy," "You are resting placidly. You attend to nothing but my voice."³¹ As a rule, suggestions began by stating what had occurred, and gradually led to what had not occurred

²⁸Hull, p. 9.

²⁹LeCron and Bordeaux, p. 20.

³⁰J. Milne Bramwell, Hypnotism (New York, 1956), p. 41.

³¹Orton, p. 75.

and what was expected to occur.

With this "fixation of the eyes" and "suggestibility" as mediums, the hypnotist opened the door to the inner world of the subject. In the normal state one's conscious mind would have control over the body. He would act, think, and talk as he pleased. In deep hypnosis this conscious mind was dethroned. Actions were now under the will of the hypnotist, who controlled all the activities of the subject.³² While under the hypnotist's control, LeCron said, strange hallucinations could be created by suggestion, and the subject would accept any suggestion the hypnotist gave.

Today, after almost two centuries since Mesmer, hypnotism has reached its height of popularity. It has been used not only in physical healing but also in mental disorders, crimes, warfare, and education. Research groups have been organized to study hypnotism. There are even courses held in some of the leading colleges and universities.³³ Yet strangely enough, we find that the hypnotic methods still remain the same.

³²Estabrook, p. 14.

³³Robert Coughlan, "Pathway into the Mind," Life, March 7, 1960, pp. 106-122.

The word "look into my eyes" coupled with suggestions are still the key devices in the hypnotic practice.

After this brief discussion of the development and the general principles of hypnotism, we are now ready to examine the reception of hypnotism in Hawthorne's time.

"Mesmerism" or "animal magnetism," as these two terms were used interchangeably, had achieved great notice throughout Europe and the United States by the nineteenth century.

In Russia, a commission was appointed in 1815 to investigate "animal magnetism" with even the establishment of a "magnetical" clinic near Moscow. In Prussia and Denmark, physicians were authorized to submit their findings to royal commissions in 1817. By 1835, clinics and research units were widely encouraged in Holland and Sweden.³⁴ Meanwhile in Calcutta, India, a mesmeric hospital was established under the direction of Dr. James Esdalle. It is obvious that the extent of interest in "mesmerism" had become wider and deeper.

In the United States, the interest in mesmerism

³⁴Sidney E. Lind, "Poe and Mesmerism," PMLA, December, 1947, p. 1077.

had become just as intense. During June and July of 1841 a committee consisting of "prominent citizens, clergymen, and doctors" was organized in Boston for the purpose of witnessing a series of experiments performed by Dr. Robert H. Collyer.³⁵ Periodicals began to carry articles and letters attacking or defending mesmerism and its practice or malpractice. And in New York, The Magnet appeared in June, 1842, devoting its articles on the study of mesmerism.

In 1850, hypnotism was not only gradually coming into practice in psychology, but its magnetic power, with its element of "magic," was broadly accepted as a means of balancing the mind and the heart.

The Salem of 1825 was not living in the past. Yet young men still listened to their neighbors' tales of far-away ports and waters, and the mansions of Chestnut Street and Federal Street were decorated with Oriental spoils of ivory and silk. The citizens of Salem still sat up at night and told tales of ghosts, but Brooks said that "mesmerism had become the fashion."³⁶

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶van Wyck Brooks, The Flowering of New England (New York, 1936), p. 214.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was just graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825 when hypnotism was beginning to flourish in New England. By 1836, Charles Poyen's report³⁷ manifested even more interest and more direct appeal in New England on the subject of "mesmerism."

The inference appears, therefore, reasonable enough that Nathaniel Hawthorne was acquainted with "mesmerism" which was so forcibly presented by the different periodicals and organized research-groups. This assumption, if true, would have the merit of casting a new light on Hawthorne's works.

³⁷Charles Poyen, Report on the Magnetical Experiments (Boston, 1836).

CHAPTER III

EXPLORATION OF HAWTHORNE'S LIFE AND AGE

Many have recognized Hawthorne as a "critic,"³⁸ a "poet,"³⁹ or an "editor."⁴⁰ It is true that Hawthorne often expresses himself critically, poetically, or editorially. Yet his true power lies beyond his ability as a critic, a poet, and an editor. He is at his best as a novelist.

To Horace Bridge, Hawthorne's close friend throughout his life, the novelist was always "manly, cool, self-poised, and brave. He was neither morose nor sentimental; and though taciturn, was invariably cheerful with his chosen friends."⁴¹ Others spoke of him as "reserved" and "retired," and of his habit of sitting with his head "gently inclined to one side."

³⁸Lawrence Sargent Hall, Hawthorne, Critic of Society (New Haven, Conn., 1944), pp. 183.

³⁹Q. D. Leavis, "Hawthorne as Poet," Parts I & II, Sewanee Review, 1951, pp. 179-205, 426-458.

⁴⁰Arlin Turner, Hawthorne, as Editor (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1941), pp. 250.

⁴¹Mark Van Doren, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1949), p. 21.

In writing the preface to a new edition of Twice-Told Tales in 1851, Hawthorne wrote that as a man he had been regarded as "a mild, shy, gentle, melancholic, exceedingly sensitive, and not very forcible man."

Nathaniel Hawthorne died with a simplicity which marked his character. His career had certainly variations throughout his life. These changes enriched his life and made him a master of expression. Through the years most readers of Hawthorne have recognized little relationship between his life and his works. Julian Hawthorne, after reading Hawthorne's books, testified that he was constantly unable to comprehend how a man such as he knew his father to be could have written such books.⁴² Yet we study his life more closely, we shall find that his tales and romances are engraved with all the experiences of his life. Stewart pointed out in his introduction to Hawthorne's American Notebook that Hawthorne often transcribes the characters, places, and incidents from his Notebook for those in his tales.⁴³

⁴²Austin Warren, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, 1934), p. lxxi.

⁴³Randall Stewart, ed., American Notebook (New Haven, Conn., 1933), pp. xxii-xliii.

Hawthorne loved so to observe, to imagine, and to listen that unconsciously he had woven his observations, imaginations, and the tales he had heard into his works. His own characteristics and feelings became vital in the texture of his tales and romances. Surely in Hawthorne's case, it is fitting to quote Tennyson's lines:

I am a part of all that I have met;
 Yet all experience is an arch where through
 Gleams that untraveled world whose margin fades
 Forever and forever when I move.

(Ulysses, L. 18-21.)

Many have remarked on the tragic depth in Hawthorne's works, but few have realized that his thoughts bore an immediate relation to the issues of his life and his own day.

Hawthorne came from a family distinguished in the early colonial days, but long declined into obscurity before Hawthorne was born in 1804. His father, a "silent, reserved, stern, melancholy man"⁴⁴ was a sea captain. After his death in Guiana when Hawthorne was only four years old, the young lad grew up in his mother's

⁴⁴Moncure D. Conway, Life of Nathaniel Hawthorne (New York, n.d.), p. 16.

care, singularly, solitary.

Among his ancestors, Hawthorne wrote in his introduction to The Scarlet Letter: "The figure of that first ancestor still haunts me. . . . He was a soldier, legislator, judge; he was a ruler in the Church, he had all the Puritan traits, both good and evil. He was likewise a bitter persecutor, as witness the Quakers, who have remembered him in their histories, and relate incidents of his hard severity towards a woman of their sect. This incident will last longer, it is to be feared, than any record of his better deeds, although these were many." That was William Hathorne; next comes John. "His son, too, inherited the persecuting spirit, and made himself so conspicuous in the martyrdom of the witches, that their blood may fairly be said to have left a stain upon him." These lines illustrated well the impressions that Hawthorne's ancestors early made upon the young mind. He probably felt guilty for what his ancestors were and did. For he said, "I, the present writer, as their representative, hereby take shame upon myself for their sakes, and pray that any curse incurred by them--as I have heard, and as the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year

back, would argue to exist--may be now and henceforth removed." It is then easy for us to see how with a touch of imagination these haunting thoughts in his youth have become the bases of many a tales and romances.

Between the ages of nine and twelve, Hawthorne was handicapped by lameness. During this period he was living with a large family of uncles and aunts, sisters, and cousins. This early close contact with people stimulated his inclination to observe the varieties of human nature.

The happiest days of his boyhood were spent around the banks of the Sebago Lake, in Maine, where the family owned a large tract of land. "I lived in Maine," he said "like a bird of the air, so perfect was the freedom I enjoyed. But it was there I got my cursed habit of solitude."⁴⁵ The "solitude" became almost a powerful fascination for Hawthorne throughout his works. After graduation from Bowdoin College in 1825, he moved back

⁴⁵J. T. Fields, Yesterday With Authors (New York, 1925), p. 29.

to Salem. The following years he began to feel as if he could not get away from the place and yet was conscious of being utterly different from everyone else in the place. He withdrew more and more to himself and to that "dismal chamber" where "Fame was won."⁴⁶

Whatever the cause was, hours of solitary thoughts and meditations were always natural to him. In 1853, he wrote to Richard Henry Stoddard, ". . . . I had always a natural tendency toward seclusion." Gradually, he was more and more accustomed to the unheard voices and the phantoms of the mind that deepened his lonely and secluded life. Years later in a letter to his betrothed Sophia Peabody he described the experience with the following words: "This deserves to be called a haunted chamber; for thousands upon thousands of visions have appeared to me in it;--because so much of my lonely youth was wasted here,--but found nothing in the world that I thought preferable to my old solitude." He secluded himself from society, and made himself, as he

⁴⁶American Notebook, p. 32.

told Longfellow, a "captive" in the "dungeon." He was never to be comfortable with extraordinary persons of any sort, just as he was never to go to church or into society. Such aloofness from his contemporary world did not, however, keep him from the knowledge of its existence. He was well aware of the intellectual movements, the social experiments, and the scientific affiliations, such as mesmerism.⁴⁷ This isolation from the world generated in him a sense of disengagement from the brotherhood of mankind. As time went by, he began to regard his separation from normal society as something sinful in itself. The loneliness he confronted had become, to him, the punishment of his isolation. To Hawthorne, there was "no fate in the world so horrible as to have no share in its joys or sorrows." He spoke of the times he spent in Salem as years when he had not lived but dreamed of living.⁴⁸ This feeling of his was once again reflected in the character of Fanshawe. Fanshawe was an excellent

⁴⁷George Edward Woodberry, Nathaniel Hawthorne, How to Know Him (Indianapolis, Ind., 1918), p. 91.

⁴⁸Conway, p. 57.

scholar, but he was doomed to an early death because he was "a solitary being" who deemed himself "unconnected with the world, unconcerned in its feelings, and uninfluenced by it in any of his pursuits."⁴⁹

Perhaps the difficulty was not only that Hawthorne indulged in solitude more than most men do but that he perceived its dangers more clearly from his own experience. He stressed this experience again and again in his tales.

Hawthorne's wife recalled in a letter to her that Hawthorne had once said his sisters "lived so completely out of the world that they hardly knew its customs." It is interesting to find that almost these exact words were used in describing the conditions of Esther Dudley:

Living so continually in her own circle of ideas, and never regulating her mind by a proper reference to present things, Esther Dudley appears to have grown partially crazed.⁵⁰

⁴⁹Works, XI, p. 93.

⁵⁰J. Hubert Scott, ed., Twice-Told Tales (New York, 1882), p. 328.

When Esther was brought finally to face reality, she found it too cruel to bear. She collapsed physically and spiritually as a result of depending solely on her feelings throughout these long years.

In "Feathertop: A Moralized Legend," Hawthorne indicated again his belief in the balance between one's outer and inner world. Feathertop, although only a straw man made alive by the witch, knew the distress and disgust of pretending and appearing to be what his inner self was not. In shame and despair, he cried out: "I've seen myself, Mother. I've seen myself for the wretched, ragged, empty thing I am! I'll exist no longer." Hawthorne was critical when he said that the world was full of people of straw and emptiness. He used the mouth of the witch to accuse those who present themselves to the world in a false picture:

There are thousands upon thousands of coxcombs and charlatans in the world, made up of just such a jumble of wornout, forgotten, and good-for-nothing trash as he was! Yet they live in fair repute and never, see themselves for what they are.⁵¹

⁵¹Works, II, p. 278.

In "Lady Eleanor's Mantle" the proud and haughty Lady Eleanor was presented from the beginning as already in moral isolation. Her character is disclosed in the rich mantle she wore. Her moral isolation was made more evident by the physical isolation she experienced. Her pride limited her heart from human sympathy and love. Hawthorne used the "mantle" as the sign of her pride and evil, and later as the center and only source of her humiliation and salvation of her soul.

Hawthorne loathed evil and struggled against it, yet he recognized that it humbled his pride and bound him to other sinners.⁵²

Hawthorne disliked also the isolation which takes the form of devotion to intellectuality. Dr. Rappaccini, who "cares infinitely more for science than for mankind,"⁵³ would sacrifice human life for the sake of adding so much as a grain of mustard seed to the great heap of his accumulated knowledge. His power of experiencing and expressing emotions was kept by the

⁵²Malcolm Cowley, "Hawthorne in the Looking-Glass," Sewanee Review, Autumn, 1948, p. 550.

⁵³Waggoner, p. 274.

"prick and anguish" of his daily life. He forgot that he had a heart. Hawthorne always stressed the importance of maintaining a balance between head and heart. Such a temperament as Hawthorne's was likely to lose contact with "heart" and become absorbed in mere "thought," to be simply intellectualized. Suddenly he realized that he was on the verge of losing his ability to love and to be united with the "chain of humanity." What a relief it was to him that Sophia finally came into his life and humanized his being. In a letter to her, Hawthorne wrote:

Thou hast taught me that I have a heart. . . .
 . Indeed, we are but shadows till the heart is touched. . . . Thou keepest my heart pure, and elevates me above the world. Thou enablest me to interpret the riddle of life, and fillest me with faith in the unseen and better land, because thou leadeest me thither continually.
 . . . It is a miracle worthy even of thee to have converted a life of shadow into the deepest truth by thy magic touch. . . . God gave you to me to be the salvation of my soul.⁵⁴

After 1850 Hawthorne grew to be more aware of the contemporary world. This change was also revealed by his changing attitude toward the problem of the

⁵⁴Randall Stewart, Nathaniel Hawthorne (New Haven, Conn., 1948), p. 54.

relationship between the inner and outer worlds.

Often he completely shifted his approach. Instead of starting with a tale from his inner world and surrounding it with objects copied from nature, he thought it better to start with the external world and brood over its meaning until he forced it to reveal its inner world.

All his life Hawthorne was searching for a bridge between his two worlds and a method of writing by which he could encircle them both.

Readers who are familiar with Hawthorne's methods know that he often mixed fact and fiction to create a new set of characters and scenes for his tales and romances. They were interwoven with incidents from the history of the Hawthorne family or his personal acquaintances with his native Salem. They represented, always of "his own making, or, at all events, . . . his own mixing."⁵⁵ There always appeared in his work an undercurrent of reflection on the relative worth of the world of actuality and of the world of imagination.

⁵⁵Thomas Morgan Griffiths, "'Montpelier' and 'Seven Gables,'" New England Quarterly, Dept., 1943, p. 432.

In dealing with the artist and the processes of creation, Hawthorne showed balance between his insight and sanity. Like Coleridge, he did not believe that genius should consist in any one-sidedness of intellect or emotion; of heart or head, but in a conjunction of these two powers. He clearly stated his belief that a too exclusive use of fancy or intellect would run the risk of disharmony.⁵⁶

His experience of early isolation from human brotherhood, his growing consciousness of the balance between the inner and outer state of one's self, and his belief in the mixing of actuality and imagination, compelled him to search for a medium through which he could express himself. He yearned to open himself to the world.

Through his own meditation he found a psychological medium in the contemporary abuse of mesmerism.

Hawthorne was never communicative as to the sources from which he drew material for his writings. That he had read widely is indicated by "an examination

⁵⁶Charles Howell Foster, "Hawthorne's Literary Theory," PMLA, March, 1942, p. 249.

of the list of books that he borrowed from the Athenaeum Library at Salem during his residence of some twenty years in that town."⁵⁷

Though Hawthorne made no mention of the Gothic romances, including Charles Brockden Brown's, we may be sure that he knew them, and had probably been influenced by their conventional Gothic machinery. Basically what always interested Brown was "the tormented states of mind"⁵⁸ which was the theme in many of Hawthorne's tales.

Like Brown, Hawthorne also anticipated the eager intellectual curiosity which gave both of these two writers' work a certain air of range and significance. They resemble each other in their passionate and productive power of imagination and their exploration into the "mysterious borderland between fantasy and reality."⁵⁹

Hawthorne must have thought very highly of Charles Brockden Brown to pay tribute to him after the fame of

⁵⁷H. Arlin Turner, "Hawthorne's Literary Borrowing," PMLA, June, 1936, p. 543.

⁵⁸Carl Van Doren, "Charles Brockden Brown," Dictionary of American Biography, vol. III (New York, 1929), p. 107.

⁵⁹F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (New York, 1941), p. 201.

Shakespeare in his "The Hall of Fantasy." His fascination with the mysteries that lie beyond human knowledge and his "solution" of these mysteries are strong reminders of Brown.

In Brown's Ormond, published in 1799, we see glimpses which reveal themselves throughout the romances of Hawthorne. Constantia, the mistress of Ormond, who "tortured by multiplicity of cares, shrinking from exposure to rude eyes and insolent spirit,"⁶⁰ was from the beginning overpowered with fatigue and disgust. She had no communication with the rest of the world. She kept herself in privacy, her engagements confined her to her own fireside, and her neighbors enjoyed no means of penetrating through the obscurity in which she had wrapped herself. She screened herself as much as possible from her neighbors. Brown described the life she was leading as "unvisited," "unknown," and in "frightful solitude."

Ormond was, under Brown's pen, the most difficult

⁶⁰Charles Brockden Brown, Ormond (Boston, Massachusetts, 1827), p. 28.

and the most deserving being to be studied. From the circumstances presented in the novel, no one was more impenetrable than Ormond. He appeared to be a man of speculation and seclusion and was equally mysterious in his real and assumed characters. He seized every opportunity to triumph over others' weakness. In Helena, for instance, Ormond built his success on the illusions of her heart rather than the conviction of her understanding. He wanted to mold her into the creature that he wished her to be. He aspired to nothing more earnestly than to hold and to exercise absolute power over the conduct of others. He enjoyed manipulating human lives. Yet in his outer world, he was regarded as "generous," "kind," "courteous," and "charming." When he failed to win Constantia, he grew impatient with her and disclosed his own inner being:

"Can you read my thoughts? Can your discernment reach the bounds of my knowledge and the bottom of my purposes? Catch you not a view of the monsters that are starting into birth here, (and he put his left hand to his forehead.) But you cannot. Should I point them to you verbally, you would call me jester or deceiver. What pity that you have no instruments for piercing into thoughts."⁶¹

⁶¹Ibid., p. 223.

To David Lee Clark, Brown's Ormond is a tragedy of a powerful and enlightened mind, wrecked by a master passion over which the victim has no control.⁶² At the same time, we can be almost sure that to Hawthorne it reflects the depth of his professed theme--the tragedy derived from an unbalanced relationship between passion and intellectuality.

⁶²David Lee Clark, Charles Brockden Brown, Pioneer Voice of America (Durham, N. C., 1952), p. 173.

CHAPTER IV

USE OF HYPNOTISM IN TWO OF HAWTHORNE'S TALES: "ETHAN BRAND" AND "THE PROPHEMIC PICTURES"

Hawthorne in his Preface to Twice-Told Tales had analyzed his sketches and tales as "not the talk of a secluded man with his own mind and heart," but attempts, and very successful ones, "to open an intercourse with the world."⁶³ The truth is that his tales were not only attempts at communication with other men, such as only a solitary man could conceive, but also attempts to make clear to himself the meaning of his own inner and outer experiences. He was using the tales as a medium to record the soliloquies that were meant to be heard.

In "Ethan Brand," we saw this "simple and loving" man, who was a man of labor and a man of fame in his profession as lime-burner around the hillside of Graylock, working day and night with courage and spirit. He led a content and blessed life. He was surrounded by the beauties of the earth and was touched by the

⁶³W. C. Brownell, American Prose Masters (New York, 1923), p. 55.

wonders of nature. Often he was inspired by the falling of the night dew upon him and was thrilled to know that the dark forest cared to whisper to him; he marveled that the stars should gleam upon him. But all the time he was so very alone in the hill side of Graylock. He was to breathe, to live in solitude. Days, weeks, and months had passed when his lonesome and almost intensely thoughtful occupation had unconsciously inclined him to solitude and continuous meditation. In the lurid blaze of the kiln, he mused himself with mysterious thoughts. Gradually, through watching, and still more watching of the fire in the kiln, he formed the idea that there was one crime for which Heaven could afford no mercy.

It was first with tenderness, love, and sympathy for mankind, and pity for human guilt and woe that Ethan Brand started off his searching for this Unpardonable Sin: "What pity for human guilt and woe, he had first begun to contemplate those ideas which afterwards became the inspiration of his life."⁶⁴ He had always

⁶⁴Waggoner, p. 314.

looked into the human heart with reverence and had been viewing it as "a temple originally divine." He had started his "searching," with hope and prayer that there would never be an Unpardonable Sin he could find among his human brothers. Yet during the course of his journey, he searched too deeply for causes to care for his "brothers." He used human hearts as the subjects of his experiments and forgot that human beings were human beings with heart and soul. When asked whether he had met on his journey over the earth Esther, the missing daughter of the old Humphrey, Ethan Brand admitted that the old man's daughter was the very one whom he had made the "subject of a psychological experiment, and wasted, absorbed, and perhaps annihilated her soul, in the process,"⁶⁵ with such cold and remorseless purposes. He lost that very pity which had originally motivated his seeking and searching.

This Idea that first set off his searching grasped his whole being and tightened his life. His vast experiment in mankind opened for him the pathway to knowledge and intellectuality. Suddenly he realized that

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 310.

this "searching" had disturbed the counter-poise between his mind and his heart.

It had gone on cultivating his powers to the highest point of which they were susceptible; it had raised him from the level of an unlettered laborer to stand on a star-lit eminence, whither the philosophers of the earth, laden with the lore of universities, might vainly strive to clamber after him. So much for the intellect! But where was the heart?⁶⁶

As his intellect developed, his moral nature was left behind. His heart became cold and withered and was incapable of being softened. It had ceased to partake of the "universal throb." Indeed, it "had contracted, had hardened, had perished." He was pulling at the human heart-strings and was trying to look into them with curiosity and to find out the inner human sins. His head led him into the commitment of "a sin of the intellect and the ego," which "developed into what in its effects" the Unpardonable Sin, for he could feel no remorse.⁶⁷

In the progress of his intellect, Ethan Brand

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 314.

⁶⁷Ringe, p. 125.

lost possession of his inner spiritual power. His mind "triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God," and thus he lost his hold upon the magnetic chain of humanity. In lack of love, of human sympathy, of reverence for human soul, and of emotion and passion for his fellow-men, he had turned his back completely on mankind in isolation:

He was no longer a brother-man, opening the chambers or the dungeons of our common nature by the key of holy sympathy, which gave him a right to share in all its secrets; he was now a cold observer, looking on mankind as the subject of his experiment, and at length, converting man and woman to be his puppets, and pulling the wires that moved them to such degrees of crime as were demanded for his study.⁶⁸

His lofty pride, his quests for spiritual development, and his cultivation of the brain had eaten out his heart. He realized he had produced the Unpardonable Sin through the long years of isolation from human sympathy and brotherhood of mankind, the imbalance and separation of heart and mind. This Sin, Ethan Brand discovered too late, was the only Sin that deserved a

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 314.

recompense of immortal agony. He had, therefore, to accept the retribution, and then doom was inevitable.

In the sub-plot of the showman from Nuremberg, Sokoloff⁶⁹ had found even an extensive study of the Unpardonable Sin. Most critics have agreed that the man from Nuremberg may be taken as the Wandering Jew. In the legend the Jew rejected the Messiah. This act of rejection, similar to Ethan Brand's self-separation from his fellowmen, is identified as the sin which the two shared in common. As a counter part to the Unpardonable Sin, only Brand could see the pictures he carried in his show-box. It aroused the curiosity of the readers as to what Brand actually saw when Hawthorne noted that "a curious youth, who had peeped in almost at the same moment, beheld only a vacant space of canvas."⁷⁰ After Brand peered into the box, he looked fixedly at the showman and said, "I remember you now." This confirmed the "chain" that existed between these two men. Hawthorne artistically used this incident

⁶⁹B. A. Sokoloff, "Ethan Brand's Twin," Modern Language Notes, June, 1958, pp. 413-414.

⁷⁰Waggoner, p. 311.

to underscore the horror in Brand's inward vision of guilt.

The incident of the dog chasing after its own tail, though transcribed from Hawthorne's journal kept at North Adams during the summer of 1838, was most effectively inserted here to heighten the absurdity of the proceedings of Ethan Brand's self-centered pursuing.

Never was seen such headlong eagerness in pursuit of an object that could not possibly be attained; never was heard, such a tremendous outbreak of growling, snarling, barking, and snapping,--as if one end of the ridiculous brute's body were at deadly and most unforgivable enmity with the other.⁷¹

Again and again, Hawthorne reminded us that the Idea had gradually come into form when Ethan Brand was "watching" his "daily and night-long fire." The flames and the eyes almost served as media to suggestibility and imagination, till he could no longer tear himself apart from them. Out of these suggestibility and imagination, was rooted the seed of his fall.

On the whole, Hawthorne applied very skillfully in "Ethan Brand" the principles and usages of hypnotism of his day to show what happened when the head controlled

⁷¹Ibid., p. 312.

the heart. The theme of the tale--the separation from the magnetic chain of humanity--was brought out in the perception that the magnetic power inside a man cannot be separated from the huge magnetic power of mankind. Ethan Brand's long "fixed" watching of the burning fire became the medium for his hallucination. He was "hypnotized" by this Idea of Unpardonable Sin. And then, like a hypnotist, he started to search for the mysteries beyond human knowledge. It is admirable to see how Hawthorne used the basic devices in hypnotism to convey the theme of this tale.

Another tale that dealt with the violation of heart is "The Prophetic Pictures."

Seldom would Hawthorne disclose to the readers any clue concerning the significance of his characters very early in the tales. But here it seems that he wanted to be sure that we know the various accomplishments of the painter, which he elaboratedly described in the first paragraph of the tale:

"But this painter!" cried Walter Ludlow, with animation. "He not only excels in his peculiar art, but possesses vast acquirements in all other learning and science. He talks Hebrew with Dr. Mather, and gives lectures in anatomy

to Dr. Boylston. In a word, he will meet the best instructed man among us on his own ground. Moreover, he is a polished gentleman--a citizen of the world--Yes, a true cosmopolite; for he will speak like a native of each clime and country of the globe except our own forests, whither he is now going. Nor is all this what I most admire in him."⁷²

With his "vast acquirements" in all learning, he was able to communicate not only with artists in his own field but also with all other people. His knowledge opened for him the door to the world. In the end he could transcend his being and become adapted to every variety of character so completely that all men and women could find reflections of themselves in this painter. He had even acquired the skill of mirroring the loveliness and grandeur of nature. By means of this superhuman gift, he mirrored both man's outward semblance and his inward sphere. After he had painted the features, he explored the mind and the heart of the sitter. He aimed to catch "the secret sentiments and passions" of those whose portraits he was painting.

He soon became the center of general curiosity and fame. The deceased were brought alive under his

⁷²Scott, p. 192.

pen, and the characters of the distinguished were displayed: "In most of the picture, the whole mind and character were brought out on the countenance, and concentrated into a single look."⁷³

In painting the portraits, Hawthorne's artist was trying to take in the physical likeness as well as the likeness of the soul and spirit. In the end, he prided himself on this gift and fancied nothing else could satisfy him. Whenever proposals of portrait painting were made, he always fixed his piercing eyes on the applicant and seemed to look him through and through. If he beheld only a sleek and comfortable visage, though there were a gold-laced coat to adorn the picture and golden guineas to pay for it, he civilly rejected the task and the reward."⁷⁴ But if the face were the index of anything uncommon, in thought, sentiment, or experience, he would exhaust all his art on it even with small amount of payment.

After all his adventures, travels, and searching for intellectual power, he was acquainted with the

⁷³Scott, p. 196.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 194.

highest knowledge and the various expressions of human feelings. His whole mind, interest, and being had centered solely on his art. He cared merely how to snatch back "the fleeting moments of History" and to touch the Future:

O glorious Art! . . . With thee there is no Past, for, at thy touch, all that is great becomes forever present; and illustrious men live through long ages, in the visible performance of the very deeds which made them what they are. O potent Art! as thou bringest the faintly revealed Past to stand in that narrow strip of sunlight, which we call Now, canst thou summon the shrouded Future to meet her there? Have I not achieved it? Am I not thy prophet?⁷⁵

He had yearned only for his creative ability. Gradually he viewed himself higher than any other human being. His art became his all. He began to lose all sympathies, all pleasures, and all aim in life. Eventually his art became "an engrossing purpose" which would insulate him from the mass of human kind. Though gentle in manner, he did not possess kindly feelings; "his heart was cold; no living creature could be brought near enough to keep him warm."⁷⁶

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 207.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 206.

In a further study of the tale, we are likely to ask, "Did the painter really have the power to foresee?" Apparently Hawthorne knew that the readers of his time would be awed by the same question. The following paragraphs will be devoted to this point in the tale.

The foregoing paragraphs have discussed the characteristics of this painter. Hawthorne also said that it was the painter's habit to watch "the effect that each picture produced on such untutored beholders" in order to derive "profit from their remarks." Probably the painter had already perceived the true characters of Elinor and Walter from the different remarks they made about his pictures while they were unaware of his presence. He penetrated these remarks and applied them in his own painting to suggest their deeper characters. Dickmann also thought that Hawthorne meant to suggest from his standpoint that "the meaning of the paintings may not be absolute, but may conform to the attitude and the character of the beholder."⁷⁷

⁷⁷Mary Dickmann, "Hawthorne's 'Prophetic Pictures,'" American Literature, May, 1951, p. 198.

Reading closely the different interpretations given by Elinor and Walter on the same pictures they saw in the painter's room, we could easily be convinced that Hawthorne did hint at this possibility.

"This dark old St. Peter has a fierce and ugly scowl, sant though he be," continued Walter. "He troubles me. But the Virgin looks kindly at us."

"Yes; but very sorrowfully, methinks," said Elinor.

"Kind old man!" exclaimed Elinor. "He gazes at me as if he were about to utter a word of paternal advice."

"And at me," said Walter, "as if he were about to shake his head and rebuke me for some suspected iniquity."⁷⁸

Here we begin to see how the difference in the two characters had suggested different meanings of the expressions to their minds, even though they were commenting on the same pictures. From their comments, we can detect that Walter's character tended to the violent side, and Elinor's to the gloomy and sensitive.

As for Walter, he had, from the beginning, the superstitious fear of the painter's talents. He half-

⁷⁸Scott., p. 197.

admitted that the painter was probably a "wizard" and that he would be "almost afraid to sit to him." His mind was apparently dwelling constantly on this fearful thought during their first visit to the painter. Immediately upon leaving the painter, he could contain himself no longer. He said to Elinor, "The old women of Boston affirm, that after he has once got possession of a person's face and figure, he may paint him in any act or situation whatever--and the picture will be prophetic. Do you believe it?"⁷⁹

In this frame of mind, Walter was sure that the painter was to acquire an influence over his fate and Elinor's. He thus unconsciously submitted himself to the "spell of evil influence" that the painter had cast upon his features. He was willing, therefore, to be led and drawn by the suggestions in the pictures to fulfill the last horrible scene in the tale. When his act was halted by the painter, his muttering hinted, without doubt, that he considered the painter to be the agent of his destiny: "What! Does Fate impede its

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 198.

own decree?"

Elinor, being more sensitive and imaginative, was by nature easily touched and frightened if by chance evil was ever hinted. She had such a delicate character that Walter's description of the painter had already deeply alarmed her in the beginning. Then she fancied she had seen an unusual yet frightful "look" on Walter's face. She was not sure now of her own judgment. She could not dismiss the thought of it from her mind, and even long after Walter had left she was still meditating on it: "I know, by my own experience, how frightful a look may be. But it was all fancy. I thought nothing of it at the time--I have seen nothing of it since--I did but dream it."⁸⁰

This introduction of the painter filled her sensitive mind with suspicion, fear, uncertainty and a degree of defense toward the forthcoming sitting for the painter. On the surface, she tried to be calm, but actually she was concerned with whether the painter might perceive anything from her features. She had

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 193.

half-believed in his "genius" when she saw in the rough drafts the almost perfect likeness of Walter's features and her own. She beheld her phantom self in utter amazement; but neither she nor Walter was quite satisfied with the "expression." The reason she gave was that it "seemed more vague than in most of the painter's works."⁸¹ If we read and study these lines closely, it is evident that Elinor had expected to see something other than "likeness." Was she expecting to find that "look" and was she disappointed because it was not there? This reaction gave the painter the opportunity to say that there still was prospect of success. The painter needed more time to penetrate Elinor and Walter.

The day of completion finally arrived. Elinor and Walter were anxious to see those pictured shapes of themselves. This time both were quite satisfied at their first glance of the portraits. Then after they had been standing some moments, each in front of the other's picture, viewing it with entranced attention,

⁸¹Ibid., p. 199.

Walter suddenly insisted that something was altered:

"I could fancy that the portrait has changed countenance, while I have been looking at it. The eyes are fixed on mine with a strangely sad and anxious expression. Nay, it is grief and terror! Is this like Elinor?"⁸²

This exclamation fitted in with the closer examination that Elinor was making of Walter's portrait. She shuddered and cried out too, "That look! How came it there?" When she said this, the painter knew immediately that his thoughts were not only comprehended but also accepted. The words of explanation he offered only deepened Elinor's anxiety and uneasiness. His "art" would now serve as suggestion to Elinor and Walter.

After her horrified examination of the portrait, her mind was in such a condition that by the time the crayon sketch was shown to her, she was "psychologically conditioned to accept the dark prophecy of her future."⁸³ If this assumption was true, then her growing melancholy may, therefore, be easily attributed to the sugges-

⁸²Ibid., p. 201.

⁸³Dickmann, p. 199.

tion which the painter planted in her mind.

There is also another point which we should not overlook. The painter from the beginning had chosen to proceed with both portraits at the same time. Thus, he gave now a touch to Walter's, and now to Elinor's. It was his purpose to "combine and fix" the features. Through this procedure, he intended the portraits to reflect each other. He knew the "rich light and deep shade" he used in painting the portraits would eventually bring out different expressions when viewed from different angles. With the pre-assumption both Elinor and Walter had in their minds, their viewing each other's picture brought their belief that there is a "change" in each of the pictures.

Turning to the painter, we perceive that his fate was, to an extent, worse than that of his victims. He had striven to be the form in which destiny had embodied itself and to act as the chief agent of the coming evil which he had forshadowed. He used Walter's and Elinor's weakness to provide the means for the fulfillment of his purpose. He violated their hearts by attempting to reveal their hidden

characters. His art was used as medium to control the fate of Walter and Elinor. In the last scene of the tale, he was coming back to the city only to see whether there was any fulfillment of his prophecy. He was interested in the pictures rather than in either Walter's or Elinor's welfare. After he had witnessed his prophecy fulfilled, he stood like a magician "controlling the phantoms which he had evoked."

We have seen many instances where Hawthorne employed the heart as vehicle of various artistic techniques as well as expressions of thoughts.

For Hawthorne, the most terrible form of human guilt is found in the pride in one's intellectual achievements, in taking merely a scientific interest in one's fellow men, in cultivating one's intellect at the expense of sympathies and love. The result of this guilt of intellectual pride presented to Hawthorne the deepest misery he could conceive--the misery of separation and isolation from the normal life of mankind.

Though Hawthorne never once mentioned the word "hypnotism" nor "mesmerism" in the tales discussed

above, we are aware, at all times, of his interweaving of his themes with the basic principles of hypnotism. We are led to see the overruling of the head over heart in Ethan Brand and the painter, the losing of Walter's and Elinor's conscious minds to that of the painter, and the painter's attempt to control the minds and fate of his two sitters.

From the tone he used, we can at least detect that Hawthorne was not in favor of the basic practice of mesmerism of his day.

This viewpoint was more clearly proved by the letter he sent to his wife to warn her against mesmerism and spiritualism. He accused mesmerism of trampling over the human heart and of peeping into the inner chamber of one's soul. He told her, "The view which I take of the matter is caused by no want of faith in mysteries, but from a deep reverence of the soul, and of the mysteries which it knows within itself, but never transmits to the earthly eye and ear."⁸⁴

It is from the half-formed yet reluctant expressions like these that we are introduced to Haw-

⁸⁴Warren, pp. lxviii-lxix.

thorne's attitudes and deep insights. The depth of his character as a man, a writer, and an artist is unquestionably disclosed.

CHAPTER V

THE USE OF HYPNOTISM IN THREE OF HAWTHORNE'S NOVELS: FANSHAWE, THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES, AND THE BLITHEDALE ROMANCE

Many times Hawthorne uses symbols and images to express himself in his works. Although often silent with his lips, he talks with his pen.⁸⁵ In the novels that are to be discussed, he finds a new symbol and a new medium in the form of the new science of his day--hypnotism. Three of his novels will be analyzed here: Fanshawe, The House of the Seven Gables, and The Blithedale Romance.

Fanshawe, the first of Hawthorne's novels, is also the shortest one. It was written three years after Hawthorne's graduation from Bowdoin College. Evidently, when he wrote it, Hawthorne was still meditating on the general atmosphere of Bowdoin College. The wood, the river-banks, and mountain scenes described in the novel parallel those found around the campus of Bowdoin College in Maine.

It is altogether natural that after reading

⁸⁵Henry James, Jr., Hawthorne (New York, 1879), p. 93.

Fanshawe, we should find in it many faults as well as virtues. It appears that Hawthorne is not at all clear about the path he should undertake as a novelist. But through the course of the novel, we are likely to be convinced that many of Hawthorne's beliefs, attitudes toward certain theories, and "morals" which reflect themselves again and again in most of his later works, had already been firmly formed as early as 1828.

One of these "morals" that Hawthorne so strongly holds is the goodness that prevails in the balance of intellect and heart and the suffering that is the result of an imbalance of these two faculties.

In Fanshawe, though there appear in the story quite a number of characters of both sex, Hawthorne has centered his interest in only Fanshawe. Hawthorne seems to hold a definite view of what Fanshawe is and what he ought to be. He treats Fanshawe with sharpness and finality.

Fanshawe, the thoughtful and earnest student of Harley College, is found to possess and "absorbing" zeal for learning and studying. Nothing in the world can distract him from his study. His lamp burns

"constantly from the first shade of evening" till the gray morning light appears. He shuts himself completely away from his school-mates and the world. His face is hardly seen among the young and gay. He seldom allows the "pure breeze" and the "blessed sunshine" to refresh his broad brow and pale face. His long confinement to his study has impaired his health. So the president, Dr. Melmoth, has sent him riding everyday to improve his physical condition. Among the hills and the woods, at times he apparently loses consciousness of time and direction. He is weary and pale with the expression of one who is "a ruler in a world of his own, and independent of the being that surrounded him."⁸⁶ It cannot be denied that Fanshawe feels proud of his intellectual and spiritual superiorities over his fellow school-mates. To others, he is "a solitary being, upon whom the hopes and fears of ordinary men were ineffectual." He lives in his inward sphere and does not seem to be conscious of outward objects.

This student, who has isolated himself from all

⁸⁶Works, XI, p. 88.

men and affairs of the world and has devoted himself only to intellectual developments, has met Ellen Langton during one of his rides. Suddenly he feels the first "thrilling of one of the many ties" that unite human beings to their own kind. The voice and glance of Ellen have awakened his inner heart and brought a change in him. He finds, for the first time, joy and hope in life. His health becomes better and his spirit brighter:

. . . . the change which a few months had wrought in Fanshawe's character, . . . the energy of his mind had communicated itself to him frame. The color was strong and high in his cheek; and his whole appearance was that of a gallant and manly youth.⁸⁷

His growing fellowship with Ellen has opened for him the intercourse with the world. For Ellen's safety, he forgets his studies and even his own safety in order to pursue the enemy. His love for Ellen and his spiritual power enable him to combat singularly the wicked. He brings Ellen safely back to her father. But when the maiden offers her heart to him, Fanshawe refuses to accept. He says his heart is too "weak" to bring happiness in matrimony. Ellen then uses argument of her

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 165.

own:

"Not so," answered she, with animation. "Yours is a heart full of strength and nobleness; and if it have weakness"--

"You know well that it has, Ellen,--one that has swallowed up all its strength," said Fanshawe. "Was it wise, then, to tempt it thus, when, if it yield, the result must be your own misery?"⁸⁸

At the same time Fanshawe is not willing, for Ellen's sake, to give up his studies. He refuses the only way to be united with the world, and he turns from the only "angel" who could have guided him to heaven. His intellect conquers his heart. He is dominated by his passion for studies. He exerts "the whole might of his spirit" over his heart. Fanshawe's absorbing devotion to his studies has taken from him the warmth of life. He dies at the age of twenty. Hawthorne pauses to ask the reader:

. . . . to what purpose was all this destructive labor, and where was the happiness of superior knowledge? . . . he had thrown away his life in discovering, that, after a thousand such lives, he should still know comparatively nothing.⁸⁹

Several times in the novel, Hawthorne hints that

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 215.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 93.

Fanshawe possesses a certain magic power which enables him to penetrate evil. And Hawthorne also stresses from time to time the "brightness" of his eyes and the mysterious power in the gaze of those eyes. When the wicked stranger encounters Fanshawe, we read the following lines:

Fanshawe turned calmly, and fixed his eyes on the stranger. "Retire, sir," was all he said. Ellen almost shuddered, . . . the stranger endeavored in vain, borne down by the influence of a superior mind, to maintain the boldness of look and bearing that seemed natural to him. He at first made a step forward, then muttered a few half-audible words; but quailing at length beneath the young man's bright and steady eye, he turned and slowly withdrew.⁹⁰

These lines lead us to think that Hawthorne had, during that early period of his career as a writer, some half-formed and untried thought about some of the theories of his day, such as mesmerism. Still, it is delightful to know that though Hawthorne was then quite aloof from contact with his immediate world, like the character of Fanshawe in his novel, yet he had been all the time familiar with the things and people existing in the world.

Unlike all the other tales he wrote, Hawthorne chooses a house to be the center of his story in The

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 108.

House of the Seven Gables. He also provides us with an intended moral of the story--namely, the "wrong-doings of one generation live into the successive ones."

Obviously, it is Hawthorne's purpose to want more freedom in the method he is to follow. For he says in his preface that he expects the book to be read as a Romance rather than as a Novel. He intends to "manage his atmospherical medium" so as to bring out the lights and to "deepen the shadows of the picture." As we read, we are more and more conscious of how well Hawthorne does use his "atmospherical medium" to bring more lights and shadows to his "moral." At the same time we grow to be more and more absorbed in the different characters and their fate rather than in the plot itself.

The house was built by one certain Colonel Pyncheon three centuries ago for the posterity and happiness of his descendants. The soil on which the house was built belonged to one Matthew Maule. Through his prominent position and political power, Colonel Pyncheon had asserted claims to the land. This started the dispute between the two families. When Matthew Maule was executed for the crime of witchcraft, he cursed his perse-

cutor, Colonel Pyncheon, by saying that "God will give him blood to drink."

In the present story, Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon has become, by some family arrangement, the life possessor of this house with the seven gables. Hepzibah, out of grief for the imprisonment of her brother Clifford, has secluded herself for a quarter of a century. She has lived alone in this old house, except for a certain young photographer who has been a lodger in a remote gable for the past three months. It is a house with locks, bolts, and oaken bars on all the intervening doors. Hepzibah has dwelt in strict solitude, taking no part in the life outside her house. She has kept herself so aloof that every coming day adds another bar against the "cavern door of hermitage." She has had no dealings with people in the world. Her long years of seclusion have brought loneliness, sorrow, and poverty. She has shut herself away from human love and sympathy. Now, in her old age, driven by poverty, she must earn her own food. When she prepares to open a cent-shop, she has a feeling of degradation. She is "fain to step down from her pedestal of imaginary rank," for she is a lady who has fed herself from childhood

with the "shadowy food of aristocratic reminiscences." Finally, with timidity, hopelessness, a general incapacity for everything else, and a true appreciation of herself, she opens the shop-door and comes forward to meet the world. The long years of prejudice and ancient aristocracy have now been demolished by her attempt to be one of the common.

At this moment of Hepzibah's decision, Hawthorne brings in immediately a breath of the air of the outer world by introducing the little country cousin Phoebe to the house and to the story. Phoebe arrives with a ray of sunshine. She alone can "bring light" to the house and to the people living in it.

Hawthorne patiently describes the inner and outer states of Hepzibah during this period. Time, her near-sightedness, and the fret of inward discomfort have rendered a scowl and ugliness to her face. Indeed, people are even frightened to behold her face; her neighbor Dixey says:

"Why, her face--I've seen it, for I dug her garden for her one year--for her face is enough to frighten the Old Nick himself, if he had ever so great a mind to trade with her. People can't stand it, I tell you! She scowls dread-

fully, reason or none, out of pure ugliness of temper!"⁹¹

She is despised and scorned by the people she meets in the world outside her house. Yet inside her being, there is a generous and kind will toward all mankind. There is nothing fierce in Hepzibah's heart, nor has she a single bitter thought against any man or woman. She wishes them all well. She has been "enriched by poverty, developed by sorrow, and elevated by the strong and solitary affection of her life." This contrast of her outer and inner states is best shown in her love for Clifford and her affection for Phoebe. Loving Clifford with all her heart, she would do her utmost to make him happy and strong again. Through all the long dreary years, she has waited and looked forward for the day of Clifford's return. She would give up anything and everything she holds in order to care for his physical and spiritual needs:

How patiently did she endeavor to wrap Clifford up in her great, warm love, and make it all the world to him, so that he should retain no torturing sense of the coldness and dreariness without! Her little efforts to amuse him! How

⁹¹Works, III, p. 66.

pitiful yet magnanimous, they were!⁹²

The outer state of Hepzibah is different from her inner sphere. In spite of her long withdrawal from the mass of humanity, her love for her brother has made her step out from the ancient structure of aristocracy. Her opening of a cent-shop offers the only means for the comfort of Clifford. Hepzibah forgets her pride and does what is necessary. Her heart has finally overcome her willful head. Redemption comes to her out of suffering.

Clifford, who has been isolated from the world by the long period of imprisonment, is released and is home at last. With despair and distress, he finds the old house of the seven gables still gloomy and shadowy as ever. It depresses him to see so little sunshine in the house, for he "was never fond of gloom." Years have brought much change in him. There is no trace of that "grace," "beauty," and "sweetness" that Phoebe beheld in the "miniature" Hepzibah once showed her. Clifford's figure is now old, feeble, wasted, gray, and melancholy. At one time Hawthorne describes this figure in an old and worn "dressing-gown" with long gray hair

⁹²Ibid., p. 163.

and a pale ruined face. His soul's more "immediate garment" is also worn and old. He has lost both his spiritual and intellectual faculties. He is unbalanced, and his moral and mental natures have perished. The cold prison life has almost crazed his mind. Often his mind and consciousness depart from his body. Hawthorne uses the description of Clifford's "eyes" to show his inner and psychological state of mind and heart:

After a blank moment, there would be flickering taper-gleam in his eyeballs. It betokened that his spiritual part had returned, and was doing its best to kindle the heart's house-hold fire, and light up intellectual lamps in the dark and ruinous mansion, where it was doomed to be a forlorn inhabitant.⁹³

The state of his eyes serves to indicate Clifford's inner struggle to renew his relation with the deep ocean of human life. Though he is in a broken state of heart and mind, he is almost magnetized by the urge inside himself to plunge into the "surging stream of human sympathies." He is ready even to sympathize with a monkey; indeed, he bursts into tears when he perceives the ugliness of that being, physically as well as spiritual-

⁹³Ibid., p. 131.

ly. One day upon seeing a political procession on the street from an arched window on the second story, Clifford attempts to jump out to join the crowds of people. At another time, seeing the throngs of churchgoers from his window, his heart yearns to have a part in this common activity. He persuades Hephzibah to start with him for church. But just as he is about to cross the threshold, his spirit fails him. He shrinks from himself:

"It cannot be, Hephzibah!--it is too late. We are ghosts! We have no right among human beings, --no right anywhere but in this old house, which had a curse on it, and which, therefore, we are doomed to haunt! And, besides, it would not be fit nor beautiful to go! It is an ugly thought that I should be frightful to my fellow-beings, and that children would cling to their mothers' gowns at sight of me!"⁹⁴

We see a flickering, in these lines, of that delicate and kind feeling Clifford has toward his fellowmen. He realizes that his frightful ugliness will never be welcomed by the throng.

He makes a third attempt to mingle with the multitude. After Judge Pyncheon's death, he and Hephzibah escape from the old house. For a while he is

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 204.

free, free from the old house, from his past, from his old age, and from all the miseries of suffering he has endured. He is exhilarated with joy that he is again sitting in a train with "fifty human beings in close relation." He has finally broken down the wall between himself and the world and is drawn into the great current of human life.

In the first chapter of the present study, the character of Judge Pyncheon was briefly analyzed. In the outer world he is represented as a warm, benevolent, and powerful person, but inside he is wicked, gross, and ignoble. With his words, he tries to assure Hepzibah of his love and concern for Clifford. He claims that he will do everything in his power to make Clifford happy. Yet he is the very one who sent Clifford to prison years ago. His pretense cannot escape the eyes of Hepzibah. She says to him, "Give over, I beseech you, this loathsome pretense of affection for your victim! You hate him! Say so, like a man! You cherish, at this moment, some black purpose against him in your heart."⁹⁵ After Hepzibah's accusation, he has to admit that his purpose

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 271.

of urging an interview is not actually for the welfare of Clifford but for securing the secret of the hidden wealth. He threatens that if he leaves the house without the secret, he will send Clifford to a public asylum for the rest of his life. In the following outrage of Hepzibah, we get a glimpse of Hawthorne's opinion of the judge:

"It is you that are diseased in mind, not Clifford! You have forgotten that a woman was your mother!-- that you have had sisters, brothers, children of your own!--or that there ever was affection between man and man, or pity from one man to another, in this miserable world."⁹⁶

His thirst for wealth and more wealth has made the judge blind to human sympathies. His one ruling purpose in life is riches and fame. In order to get what he wants, he will sacrifice his heart. His heart has become so "cold" that he is no longer capable of any human feelings. Out of his selfishness and wicked doings, he has destroyed not only Clifford's body but also his heart. Using his position as a judge, he wants to show that he has control over Clifford's life. By doing so, he lets his mind again overrun his heart. It is thus inevitable that

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 282.

doom must catch up with him.

In the three characters discussed above, Hawthorne borrows once again the key devices of head over heart, of one's control over another in the practice of hypnotism, to unfold his theme.

Holgrave, the descendant of Maule, assumes in the present story the role of a photographer. But Hepzibah has reason to believe that he practises "animal magnetism" and gives lectures on the topic. Though she does not particularly like the man, Hepzibah admits he has "a way of taking hold of one's mind." Holgrave himself hints that he is quite a learned man, for he has already been a country schoolmaster, a salesman, a political editor, a pedlar traveling through New England and the Middle States, a dentist, and of more recent day, a public lecturer on "mesmerism." He also assures Phoebe, by putting Chanticleer to sleep, that for this new science he has very remarkable endowment.

Holgrave claims to be a "thinker" but he seems to us more of an observer. He occupies a part of the house for the purpose of prying into the inner world of the Pyncheons. He takes pleasure in looking closely

at the moods of Hepzibah and Clifford. Hawthorne tells us:

"He was too calm and cool an observer. Phoebe felt his eyes, often; his heart, seldom or never. He took a certain kind of interest in Hepzibah and her brother, and Phoebe herself. He studied them attentively, and allowed no slightest circumstance of their individualities to escape him."⁹⁷

Like a hypnotist, he inquires deep into the inner spheres of their soul and tries to influence their doings. He looks on the old house of the seven gables as a theatre and the people who dwell in it as actors. He takes the distress and misfortune of Hepzibah and Clifford as a tragedy on the stage. He has no feelings whatsoever toward them.

With his mesmeric gift, Holgrave tries to catch sight of man's inner movements as well as outward activities. He devotes time to the study of Judge Pyncheon's soul and mocks at his discoveries. He loves to treat all men as subjects of his hypnotic practice. He attempts even to try his power on Phoebe:

Holgrave gazed at her, . . . and recognized an incipient stage of that curious psycholo-

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 213.

gical condition, which, as he had himself told Phoebe, he possessed more than an ordinary faculty of producing. A veil was beginning to be muffled about her in which she could behold only him, and live only in his thoughts and emotions. His glance, as he fastened it on the young girl, grew involuntarily more concentrated; in his attitude there was the consciousness of power, investing his hardly mature figure with a dignity that did not belong to its physical manifestation. It was evident that, with but one wave of his hand and a corresponding effort of his will, he could complete his mastery over Phoebe's yet free and virgin spirit: he could establish an influence over this good, pure, and simple child.⁹⁸

It is fascinating to see how very familiar Hawthorne has been with the methods, the mysterious power, and the general practice of hypnotism in his day.

His love and reverence for Phoebe finally compel Holgrave not to use his hypnotic power on her. He wants for himself that "self-balancing power" which he sees in Phoebe. He looks at Phoebe as the only salvation for his soul: "You are strong! You must be both strong and wise for I am all astray, and need your counsel. It may be you can suggest the only right thing to do!" Phoebe's acceptance of his love offers him the "only possibility for happiness" and saves his soul

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 252-253.

from eternal loss. Head and heart have come together to temper each other in the marriage of Holgrave and Phoebe. This bond at the same time brings the two families into one accord.

Turning to the inserted legend of "Alice Pyncheon," we find, for the first time in his works, Hawthorne's detailed description of hypnotism with its operator and the subject. The whole process of hypnosis is recorded.

Alice is used as a medium by the old Matthew Maule, a grandson of the original Maule, to acquire knowledge of the mysterious world. Alice is asked to sit on a chair and "to fix her eyes" on the operator. Minutes later with a "half-uttered exclamation," Alice is put to sleep. All the efforts and noises fail to awaken her from deep trance. From that moment on, Matthew manages to keep dominion over Alice. He triumphs: "She is mine! Mine, by the right of the strongest spirit!" Matthew's strong will overrules that of Alice. He assumes whole control over her mind, action, and body. Little has she dreamed of the power that is taking grasp of her maiden soul:

A will, most unlike her own, constrained her to do its grotesque and fantastic bidding.

Her father, as it proved, had martyred his poor child to an inordinate desire for measuring his land by miles instead of acres.⁹⁹

And therefore, while Alice lives, she is Matthew Maule's slave. By posthypnotic suggestions, he has but to wave his hand to make bow herself to his bid wherever she may chance to be. It is through Matthew's hypnotic practice that Alice is driven to her grave. He takes a woman's delicate soul into his rude grip and plays with it until he destroys it. He regrets too late the harm done. He has thus made the hate between the two families too deep to be removed.

Through this legend of "Alice Pyncheon," Hawthorne has certainly managed to bring in "atmospherial medium" to moralize his theme. Studying the whole book more closely, we are convinced that Hawthorne has from the beginning of the story been anxious to unload this legend of "Alice Pyncheon." In the first chapter of the book, he mentions "Alice's posies" with hints of a mysterious legend. Then in the following chapters he again and again puts in a note about Alice's harpsichord. When

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 249.

he has aroused enough curiosity about the "mystery" of Alice, Hawthorne manages to add that the withered flowers in the Pyncheon garden were originally planted by her. All the time the readers are conscious that the garden with its flowers has played an important role in bringing Holgrave and Phoebe together and in bringing Clifford back to a more normal life. Again near the very end of the book, Hawthorne puts in another chapter, "Alice's Posies," to show how the posies have now become the symbol of the end of the "curse." Now we see more clearly the role of the hypnotized Alice Pyncheon in the whole story. Hawthorne has used the legend of hypnotic power and result as the central thread to tie all characters and tales together, though invisibly. This legend serves also as an extraordinary example of how Hawthorne uses hypnotism in his works.

The House of the Seven Gables is full of all sorts of deep intentions, suggestions, and meditations. In this book, Hawthorne's artistic use of hypnotism is obvious in its principles and terms. Hawthorne has grown mature, too, in his own views toward this new science. He attempts to find out the amount of human

nature contained in the "abused" practice of hypnotism.

In another of Hawthorne's novels, The Blithedale Romance, Hawthorne uses life at Blithedale Farm to frame the story of the romantic characters and their relations to one another. He gives very little attention to the actual minute activity on the farm, though he definitely has hinted through the course of the plot that so far as he is concerned, the whole experiment of the farm is a failure. This reflects his viewpoint toward a similar experience he had at Brook Farm in the course of one year:

The real Me was never an associate of the community, there has been a spectral appearance there, sounding the horn at daybreak, and milking the cows, and hoeing potatoes, and raking hay, toiling in the sun, and doing me the honor to assume my name. But this spectre was not myself.¹⁰⁰

The most strikingly drawn character in this novel is the proud and high-tempered Zenobia. She is introduced in the beginning as a very strong woman, both physically and spiritually. Her beauty surpasses that of all the other women. She dislikes Hollingsworth and shrinks from his project. She talks about the project as "grimy,"

¹⁰⁰Conway, p. 89.

"unbeautiful," and "positively hopeless." She never can tolerate such a philanthropist. Yet after she first meets Hollingsworth's eyes, she is drawn helplessly into the gulf of his egotism. She offers her love to him only to find that he loves Priscilla, her newly claimed sister. Zenobia, who has been haughty in spirit and strong in mind, is now unable to sustain herself; neither is she able to cover her "wounds." She perishes with a broken heart. Her love for Hollingsworth, like a magnetic power, hypnotizes her beyond all sanity. Her one passion in life, to gain Hollingsworth's love, makes her forget all her other aims. She neglects the experiment on the farm and her position as a leader in this community; she is even willing to offer Priscilla to the mesmerist in order to remove her from the sight of Hollingsworth. When she fails in her love affair, she is completely thrown off balance. Death, and only death, can bring her soul to safety.

Hollingsworth, the philanthropist, devoting his power to the reformation of criminals, has the scheme of pursuing a large piece of land and a "spacious edifice." With this purpose in mind, he has come to live on the

farm. Coverdale finds him to be "not altogether human." He lends Zenobia his affection as long as she is available for his scheme. In order to assure Zenobia of his devotion, Hollingsworth is even ready to sacrifice Priscilla to Westervelt, the mesmerist. But as soon as he finds out that Zenobia is no longer "rich," he flings her aside as a broken tool. Hawthorne stresses the point that Hollingsworth's finest gift is his great heart, but since it overbalances the head, the philanthropist is somehow incomplete. Because he lacks controlling intellect, Hollingsworth's heart is destroyed as philanthropy becomes his one "ruling passion, in one exclusive channel." Zenobia calls him a "monster--a cold, heartless, self-beginning and self-ending piece of mechanism." Coverdale speaks of him as one of those who "will keep no friend unless he make himself the mirror of their purpose" and who "will smite and slay you, and trample your dead corpse under foot, all the more readily if you take the first step with them, and cannot take the second and the third and every other step" of their path. Hollingsworth deems his scheme a holy work and is willing to offer sacrifices of whatever is most precious.

Thus the "god-like" benevolence of Hollingsworth has been debased into devouring egotism. Hollingsworth, the criminal reformer, becomes the only criminal who needs to be reformed.

Similar to the method he uses in The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne in The Blithedale Romance inserts a legend of the Veiled Lady. This legend is used to indicate the true personalities of the romantic characters and to tie the whole story together. Early in the first paragraph of the first chapter of the book, Hawthorne gives us the illusion of the Veiled Lady. He also explains "for the benefit of the reader" that the Veiled Lady is "a phenomenon in the mesmeric line" --one of the earliest that has indicated the "birth of a new science or the revival of an old humbug." Using the legend, Hawthorne states that Priscilla has identity with the Veiled Lady. Then the plot rushes swiftly on as if Hawthorne is anxious for the reader to see how he is to end. The show of the Veiled Lady is earnestly described by Hawthorne: the curious and impatient audience, the homely village lecture-hall, the stage, the "bearded" mesmerist in "Oriental robes," and, most

important of all, the personage of the Veiled Lady. Priscilla is induced to sleep before the large audience. Her mesmeric faculty is utilized by Westervelt. Hawthorne cites in detail the principal devices and the effects of hypnotism. He tells how through hypnotism the "miraculous power" of one human being takes over the will and passions of another; in the end "settled grief" becomes but a shadow under the influence of a hypnotist and "strong love of years melted away like a vapor." Hawthorne's "disgust" mounts to horror as he sees Westervelt take possession of the sanctity of Priscilla's being. Hawthorne uses the effects of Westervelt's hypnotism as artistic machinery to brood over his moral-- the heart, the rich juices of human life, should never be pressed violently out from one's being.

All the way through the story, our sympathy is at its keenest whenever Priscilla is concerned. Hawthorne first presents her with fragility, depression and sadness in the picture by the fireside in the farmhouse. As a result of habitual seclusion, her face is of "a wan, almost sickly hue." Through her forlorn appearance, we get glimpses of her forlorn spirit.

She seeks "shelter" not only for her body but also for her soul. Living on the farm has gradually benefited her. She grows stronger and gayer every day. But her soul continues to be torn between her strong affection for Hollingsworth and the mysterious power of Westervelt. Hawthorne describes her as a "butterfly at play in a flickering bit of sunshine and mistaking it for a broad and eternal summer." At the last appearance of the Veiled Lady, she finally throws off the "evil hand" that formerly environed her and is safe forever. She has come out triumphantly, for she has always kept her "virgin reserve and sanctity of soul" throughout it all.

Hawthorne's picture of Coverdale reminds us very much of Holgrave in The House of the Seven Gables. Though he is only an observer taking no part in the common destiny of others, Coverdale is not completely removed from the world. He tries to look in the hearts of Zenobia, Hollingsworth, Westervelt, and Priscilla for secrets otherwise hidden to the world. He probes at their identities and their relations one to the other. His heart grows remorseless as he watches them as actors on his mental stage. He is present at all the important

crises of the lives of the other four. Suddenly he realizes that even an observer can become a "criminal." He says: "That cold tendency, between instinct and intellect, which made me pry with a speculative interest into people's passions and impulses, appeared to have gone far toward unhumanizing my heart."¹⁰¹ He leaves immediately his role and is content.

Coverdale has never cared to possess anyone; neither has he wanted to be possessed. He refuses to be a slave of Hollingsworth's "great, black ugliness of sin":

Had I but touched his extended hand, Hollingsworth's magnetism would perhaps have penetrated me with his own conception of all these matters. But I stood aloof. I fortified myself with doubts whethre his strength of purpose had not been too gigantic for his integrity, impelling him to trample on considerations that should have been paramount to every other.¹⁰²

Coverdale is wise enough to know how to balance his intellect and his passion, his mind and his heart. He holds himself firm in his beliefs and disbeliefs. Above all, he keeps himself always true to the world. For him, Hawthorne thinks, salvation is easily attained.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 192.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 167-168.

From The Blithedale Romance, it is evident that Hawthorne's attention during that period of his life was centered in two things: the socialistic reform atmosphere which is illustrated in Brook Farm, and also the "mesmeric" or "hypnotizing" interest of the hour. Hawthorne has a desire to probe spiritual reality beneath all manner of guises, but not at the expense of what human beings have held to be sacred and sanctified--the heart or the soul. He does not at all try to cover his critical attitude toward a contemporary "science" like mesmerism or hypnotism, as it is called today. Obviously, he disapproves of the way in which these "imperfect theories" of mesmerism, rejected once by modern science as "rubbish," are now tossed up again. For he says:

Alas! My country men! Methinks we have fallen on an evil age. If these phenomena have not humbug at the bottom, so much the worse for us. . . . These goblins, if they exist at all, are but shadows of past morality--outcasts, mere refuse stuff, adjudged unworthy of the eternal world, and, on the most favorable supposition, dwindling gradually into nothingness.¹⁰³

In The House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne swamps us with details and lingers on the story as if

¹⁰³The Blithedale Romance, p. 249.

he is mesmerized by his own daguerrotypist. But in The Blithedale Romance, he has grown to have definitely a clearer viewpoint and a firmer attitude toward modern hypnotism. The various illustrations used in this paper also exemplify the nature of the environment in which Hawthorne has placed himself in his day and generation.

Close examination of these novels has brought evidence that Hawthorne not only has ample knowledge of the principles and practices of hypnotism at his day, but also has used them as media to transfer his thoughts, attitudes, and viewpoints into his works. The identifications and analyses of these uses lead us to an even better and richer view of Hawthorne as a man, a novelist, and an artist.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

To Henry James, Hawthorne's career was as "tranquil and uneventful a one as ever fell to the lot of a man of letters."¹⁰⁴ After the study of Hawthorne and of his works in the foregoing chapters, we hold James' statement not precisely true.

Though he had little contact with the world, Hawthorne was intimate with all kinds of people and showed us through his works, the infinite variety of human experiences. One of the experiences that interested him most keenly was the practice of hypnotism of his day. The foregoing chapters have illustrated that Hawthorne not only was attentive to the principles, methods, and practice of hypnotism but also managed to use them as media to express his thoughts, his attitudes, his mind and heart. This art of interweaving his themes with hypnotism had proved to be a worthy subject to be studied.

Hypnotism, or mesmerism as it was called in Hawthorne's age, had been practised for many centuries,

¹⁰⁴ Henry James, Jr., Hawthorne (New York, 1879), p. 1.

first in the Orient, then in Europe, and in the United States. The main principles of hypnotism lie in the separation of one's conscious and subconscious mind. But to Hawthorne the key point was the isolation of one's outer and inner states or the imbalance of heart and head. The hypnotist often used the "fixing of the eyes" to concentrate the fixation of the subject's mind. The method of suggestibility was then used to induce the subject till he completely lost control of his consciousness, and only then could the hypnotist succeed in taking the control of the subject's mind, body, and action.

During Hawthorne's age, the practice of hypnotism was still new and disapproved by the general public. Often it was used with a mysterious air and for uncertain purposes. The showmanship was still applied by hypnotists to stir the curiosity of the audience. Thus we found in Hawthorne's works descriptions of the stage, the "Oriental robes," and the "printed handbills" of the "show" of the Veiled Lady.

Hawthorne believed strongly in the mixing of reality and imagination. His tales and novels are examples of how firmly he held this belief. With touches of "fancy"

and imagination, Hawthorne successfully transcribed incidents and real experiences in his life into great works of art. In characters such as Holgrave and Coverdale, we find reflections of Hawthorne himself as an observer of people and things; and in Fanshawe and Hepzibah, we may see the same solitude and isolation experienced by Hawthorne in his early manhood. Hawthorne also wove the legendary curse on his first ancestor and "the mysterious disappearance of the titles of Hawthorne's maternal relatives to the land of Raymond, Maine," into the plot of The House of the Seven Gables.

After this method of mixing, he went a step further in interweaving his works with the new theories of his age. Hypnotism, being the one that appealed most strongly to his mind, was used many times in his works. He used the violation of personality to indict the practice of hypnotism in general.

In early childhood, I witnessed a religious practice of Buddhism based on the same methods and principles of modern hypnotism. The subject gradually

¹⁰⁵The Blithedale Romance, pp. 244-251.

lost consciousness under the priest's repeated suggestions. The subject was thus made to hear, to see, and to act what the priest willed. I was informed that this practice had been practised by the general public in China for many centuries.

Salem, Massachusetts, where Hawthorne was born and lived, was the first port to have communication with the Oriental countries, especially China and India.¹⁰⁶ We are told that Hawthorne "liked to watch the vessels dropping down the stream" and that "nothing pleased him more than to go on board a newly arrived bark from down East."¹⁰⁷ Fields also tells how many times he and Hawthorne made acquaintances of the sailors and listened to the tales from far-off lands. Through these experiences, Hawthorne may have gained his first knowledge of hypnotic practices of the Orient.

It is interesting to study Hawthorne's knowledge of and attitudes toward hypnotism. Yet this phase of Hawthorne's genius has never been included or appraised by any of his biographers. Since the last word concerning

¹⁰⁶ James Duncan Phillips, Salem, and the Indies (Boston, 1947), pp. 44-60.

¹⁰⁷ Fields, p. 53.

Hawthorne had not been said, I hope that this study may contribute something toward a deeper appreciation of Hawthorne's art and may suggest a larger significance of Hawthorne's genius.

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VITA

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