

THE LITERARY INTERESTS OF CHICAGO. III AND IV

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III. LITERARY PERIODICALS FOLLOWING THE CHICAGO FIRE

“I found Chicago wood and clay,” a mighty Kaiser said,
Then flung upon the sleeping mart his royal robes of red.
.
And so the swift evangels ran by telegraphic time,
And brought the cheer of Christendom from every earthly clime;
Celestial fire flashed round the globe, from Norway to Japan,
Proclaimed the MANHOOD of the race, the BROTHERHOOD of man!
.
They all were angels in disguise, from hamlet, field and mart,
CHICAGO,S fire had warmed the World that had her woe by heart.
“Who is my neighbor?” One and all: “We see her signal light,
And she is our *only* neighbor now, this wild October night!”

—Benj. F. Taylor, in the *Lakeside Monthly*, October, 1873.

The whole nation and the whole world centered attention upon Chicago on October 8 and 9, 1871. On these days flames, starting on the West Side, swept through the heart of the business district to the very shore of the lake, like prairie fire through stubble; then leaped over the Chicago river, traversed the North side, died away there; and left the lusty, young giant city of marvelous growth burned and prostrate. A stream of sympathy from the people of the New World and the Old World poured in upon the citizens of Chicago. The effect is shown in the pages of the literary periodicals which survived the catastrophe, and in those of the many new ones started in the years of the seventies following the fire. From them it may be seen that the fire melted some of the barriers of western sectionalism. The world-wide sympathy caused the Chicago literary men to feel after a world-wide point of view, more

consciously than they had done before under the merely nationalizing influence of the Civil War.

The outside aid was a great stimulus to local energy, helping the ambitious rebuilders of the city to start upon a remarkable period of business enterprise; a period which, along with success in more material lines, led to the establishment of literary periodicals of kinds that were money-makers. Not only food and clothing for the sufferers, but goods for the merchants on long-time credit, and capital on easy terms, came in large quantities from other parts of America and from Europe. All this, added to their own determined spirit, led Chicago men not merely to rebuild on a larger scale, but also to launch new enterprises. Among such were papers of the "family-story" literary order.

That the typical ventures of this period were not of a higher literary type is explained by the fact that the "family-story" paper was the most promising for quick returns in cash. In fact, it is because investments in high-grade publishing in general do not yield returns more quickly than the development of serious publishing has continued to be comparatively slow in Chicago. In an article on "Chicago as a Publishing Center" in "The Commercial Association Number" of the *Chicago Evening Post*, March 8, 1905, Mr. T. J. Zimmerman, managing editor of *System*, a successful Chicago magazine of information on business, puts this point as follows:

The whole history and present condition of the publishing business in Chicago may be summed up in this statement: the westerner is looking for quick profits; when he makes an investment of money and labor, he wants to know what it is going to bring, and he wants to see the results at once. In the publishing business—that is, real, sincere publishing—this is impossible. The initial investment in a book or magazine is heavy. And not only this; returns are spread over a long period of time. Westerners have not gone into the publishing field to a greater extent, because there have been so many opportunities at hand for quick returns into which their energies could be turned.

Twenty years before the Chicago fire it had been discovered in New York that a popular story paper would bring returns to an investor. And we have already seen in the Chicago periodi-

cals of the sixties a drift toward this "family-story" type. In 1872 the *Chicago Ledger* was founded in direct imitation of the *New York Ledger*. Concerning the "Popular Story Papers," in a section on "The Weekly Literary Press," Mr. S. N. D. North, commissioner for the special Census Report on "The Newspaper and Periodical Press" (1880), says in part:

The most notable successes attained by American publications not of a purely news character are found in the type of periodical of which Robert Bonner, of the *New York Ledger*, may be said to have been the fortunate discoverer. Mr. Bonner purchased the *Ledger* in 1851, and shortly thereafter converted it from a commercial sheet into a family newspaper, excluding from its contents everything relating to the business and news of the day, and substituting therefor a series of continued and short stories, not generally of the highest class of fiction. But he attracted public attention to his venture by engaging the best-known literary men of the country to write for the *Ledger* over their own signatures. It rapidly rose to an enormous circulation, which at times has reached as high as 400,000 per issue. The *Ledger* may be said to be the original of that class of literary publications. The imitations of the *Ledger* have been numerous, and frequently their publication has been attended with great pecuniary success.

The *Chicago Ledger* has met with such success.

This paper was begun in connection with a newspaper plate supply business. For about twenty years Samuel H. Williams, a man of ability, was the editor. Like the *New York Ledger*, the *Chicago Ledger*, during its first few years, made a leading feature of stories which were literary in the accepted sense of that word. Containing this grade of literature, printed on cheap paper, and sold at \$1 for fifty-two numbers, it met with immediate favor, especially in the rural districts, during the seventies. By 1879 the *Chicago Ledger* had a circulation of 10,000, which was a paying start for it.

Little by little, however, the higher class of well-written fiction was dropped. One reason for this was competition introduced by the advent of the "Lakeside Library," published by Donnelly, Lloyd & Co., 1875-77. The books of this "library" were tri-monthly pamphlets, the first of the kind, containing cheap reprints of standard fiction, selling at ten cents per copy and attracting millions of readers. The stories of the *Chicago*

Ledger took on that more thrilling tone which is retained by those appearing in the current issues of 1906. Although selected by an editor who is the author of contributions accepted by high-grade magazines, their form is unfinished. The contents, however, are not of an immoral tone. In fact, the stories, like the melodramas of the cheap theater, often point a moral, with a not harmful effect.

The motto of the W. D. Boyce Co., the present publishers, as stated by Colonel William C. Hunter, the secretary and active manager of the *Chicago Ledger*, is: "The higher the fewer." In more positive terms it might be put: "The lower the more." At any rate, this paper, listed in the newspaper annuals as "literary," has, according to their figures, since 1900 enjoyed a regular circulation of nearly 300,000 a week. For "Boyce's Weeklies"—the *Chicago Ledger* and the *Saturday Blade*, a weekly imitation of a metropolitan daily—an average circulation of 631,869 copies is claimed; and for the *Woman's World*, a monthly which has grown out of the success of the *Ledger*, 829,982 copies. Although but few of the residents of Chicago have ever heard of these periodicals, these figures show the banner circulation of "literary" periodical publishing in Chicago. It was not until in 1891 that Mr. Boyce acquired the *Chicago Ledger*. Since then its growth has been remarkable. It is the basis of success with a paper mill and a city office building, which fact, like many of the points already made in this series of papers, again shows the engraftment of interests.

In "the trade" such periodicals as the *Chicago Ledger* have come to be more commonly called "mail-order" papers than "family-story" papers. It is thus recognized that they are run primarily for revenue. With the development of houses selling all kinds of goods direct to people in country homes, on orders by mail, the *Chicago Ledger* and the "mail-order" papers have been used for advertising by such firms. These mail-order houses, of which the original, that of Montgomery Ward & Co., started during the same year as the *Chicago Ledger*, in 1872, were among the new ventures in the period of enterprise after the fire. Their proprietors wanted to reach the country popu-

lation. *The Chicago Ledger* managers often point out that 69 per cent. of the people of the United States live outside of the cities, and that the circulation of the "mail-order" papers is in the country towns, villages, and rural communities. In the seventies the percentage of the population classed as rural was even larger. And since the *Chicago Ledger* and the "family-story" papers have never been much read in the cities, they were used from the start to get advertisements to the country people. The general advertising agencies were becoming an important factor in certain lines of business by the late seventies. For the large campaigns which they conducted, the first mediums they used, after the local newspapers everywhere, were the "family-story" papers, whose publishers were thus saved from great outlay in their organization for securing advertisements. This aided greatly in a quick realization of profits.

However sensational the call for a reader's attention, and despite the country reader's interest in the advertisements, the *Chicago Ledger* still appeals to the æsthetic interest broadly defined—to the interest in story. Incidentally this journal has lived for thirty-three years, and maintained its identity, character, and name. No other Chicago periodical having some sort of a dominant literary character can boast as much.

Thirty per cent. of the literary periodicals begun in Chicago during the period after the fire were of this "family-story" type, a larger percentage than the figures for those of its kind started in any decadal period since then. Among the ventures of this class in Chicago following the fire were the following papers: *Our Fireside Friend*, 1872-75; the *Cottage Monthly*, 1873; *Turner's Minaret*, 1873-75; *Western Home*, 1874-75; the *Old Oaken Bucket*, 1876; and *Sunset Chimes*, 1876-87. One of the newspaper annuals contained a standing line which described the contents of these and similar periodicals as "entertaining literature."

The relative permanence of the literary periodicals started in Chicago after the fire, including those of the higher as well as those of the lower literary orders, is one notable feature of the period, despite the fact, pointed out by E. Steiger, of New York,

in a compilation of American periodicals for the "ephemeral intellectual department" of the Vienna exposition in 1873, that in general "literary enterprises are ephemeral"—a generalization also brought out by the census of 1870. Statistics compiled in the course of study for these papers show that eight of the forty-seven periodicals of a literary character started in Chicago after the fire and before 1880 lived for more than fifteen years, and that four started in that period are extant. This is all the more remarkable when it is pointed out that, as the result of the financial panic of 1873, a dozen periodicals died. But in 1876, in Rowell's list prepared for the national Centennial Exposition, there were titles of twenty literary Chicago periodicals. Following the panic there was a new spurt of energy injected into the business activity which followed the fire.

In the establishment of the profitable, low-grade story periodicals the indirect influence of world-wide assistance to the burned-out city has been traced. Its more direct effects, through enlarging the point of view of Chicago editors, may be found in the journals and periodicals of a higher literary order during the fire decade.

The most notable direct aid from the Old World to the literary interests of Chicago came in a gift from England, a contribution which was the beginning of the Chicago Public Library. In the fire the semi-public libraries were destroyed, and the people lost the books of their homes. Moved by the thought of such a loss, Thomas Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown at Oxford*, led his countrymen in collecting a large library of fiction and general works. This was sent to Chicago and accepted gladly, the whole community being deeply impressed by an act of such refined sympathy.

Dr. W. F. Poole, a pioneer in the public-library movement, was called as librarian. And in October, 1874, with the bookwise doctor as editor, W. B. Kern, Cooke & Co., booksellers and publishers, brought out a three-column folio entitled the *Owl*, and subtitled "A Literary Monthly." In No. 1, to be found in a file at the Newberry Library, there appeared a dialogue, in which the Public said to the *Owl*: "*Qui vive?*" The *Owl* gave the

countersign "A pure literature." And the Public said: "All right, and all hail," As "an organ of all that is good and true, and an enemy of all that is bad and false in this age and country," the *Owl* was devoted chiefly to new books. The essays by Dr. Poole were a feature in which he carried out his policy of impressing on the community high standards, and at the same time a belief in popular fiction reading, an influence from him which was recently acknowledged by the *Dial*.

There were many manifestations of the striving toward metropolitan breadth of view-point in Chicago literary periodical ventures during the later seventies. This was so, notwithstanding the fact that in population Chicago was not yet the metropolis of the Mississippi valley. St Louis, with 310,864 inhabitants, outranked Chicago, the fifth in the list of cities, with 298,977 at the census of 1870. The *Inland Monthly Magazine*, 1872-77, advertised as "the only magazine of the West and South devoted to literature, science, art, humor, sketches, etc.," had its main office at St. Louis, and merely a branch in Chicago.

By 1873 Chicago had reached such a stage of metropolitan sophistication as to have its first periodical devoted exclusively to humor. "Carl Pretzel" was the *nom de plume* of C. H. Harris, the editor. He began with *Carl Pretzel's Magazine Pook*, in which the sketches, like all his works, were written in the style of Leland's *Hans Breitmann*. This *Pook* was a weekly folio, filled with good fun on local topics, phrased in a pseudo-German-English lingo. In this form of expression is to be seen one influence of Chicago's large and important German population. Many anglicized German expressions and many germanized English phrases have made fun in the ordinary conversation of Chicago people. Hence "Carl Pretzel's" form of humorous expression met with a specially ready welcome. In attitude his humor was of the comic variety, which, as is seen in the current work of Ade, McCutcheon, and Dunne, is the characteristic Chicago humor—the comic as against the cynic of more sophisticated New York. Mr. Francis F. Browne, Mr. John McGovern, and Mr. John R. Walsh, from their varying points of view, agree in recollections that "Carl Pretzel's"

“stuff” was decent, clever humor, not in the least coarse. The only file of his periodicals available, a sample of *Der Leedle Vanderer*, 1876, in the “Number 1 Book” at the Historical Society Library, gives the same impression.

From his beginning with the use of local material, Mr. Harris branched out, and in 1874 established *Carl Pretzel's National Weekly*, which later had the word “illustrated” in its title to advertise its cartoons, and was published regularly until 1893. After a time “Carl Pretzel” was more or less written out, and his paper gave considerable attention to politics, Robert G. Ingersoll and John A. Logan being among the contributors. It also became an organ of some secret society interests. It never reached a circulation of more than 5,500, which shows that its constituency was more local than national. In 1886 an advertisement showed that it kept something of its original character. This announcement read as follows:

Subscription price, \$2 for one year, or \$150 for 100 years. By subscribing for 100 years, subscribers can save \$50. Anyone can see that here is an excellent opportunity to save money. Twelfth year and the largest circulation of any weekly newspaper in Chicago.

Changes made in the name of a journal devoted to stories and news of sportsmanship, which was begun in 1874 and is continued today, are significant of movements toward a wider outlook. The founder, Dr. N. Rowe, who always signed himself “Mohawk,” first called this periodical *Field and Stream*. The next year he changed the name to the *Chicago Field*. Then in 1879 it became the *American Field*; and from 1883 on it has been dated from New York as well as Chicago, although the main office, has been in the Masonic Temple at Chicago. Since the death of its founder several years ago, the periodical has been carried on with Mrs. N. Rowe as editor.

Another sign of the stir toward metropolitanism was seen in a literary periodical based on the social stratification then developing. There was a joining of interest in literature, art, and music with the news of the local society sets, in this journal. the *Saturday Evening Herald*, founded in 1874 by Lyman B. Glover, who later became a newspaper dramatic critic, having

a wide following. This paper is still published, although devoted almost exclusively to society. In its first years, however, with John M. Dandy and G. M. McConnell doing editorial work in addition to that of Mr. Glover, the paper was distinguished for essays and other literary efforts of excellent quality. Among the quasi-literary journals of Chicago it was, in its day, one of the most influential.

More important, however, as an index of an expanding point of view, was the advent of a periodical founded in 1873, by a group of liberal, literary preachers—Professor David Swing, Rev. Robert Collyer, Dr. Hiram A. Thomas, and others. To symbolize their getting together, they named the periodical the *Alliance*. It contained a faint religious dye. But it was first of all colored with an effort at literary expression, chiefly in the essay form. The denominational religious press in Chicago, although it has been most successful and has been marked by the incidental use of material appealing to the literary interest, is not a subject for treatment here. In a more general account of the æsthetic interests of Chicago such religious-literary periodicals should be given attention, because the purely religious desires and the most purely æsthetic desires are closely allied. But the main features of the denominational papers are the items of church news. The *Alliance*, however, was primarily literary—so distinctly literary that, at one time, Mr. Francis F. Browne, in the latter part of the decade, consented to be its managing editor. At the inception of the *Alliance* the literary clergymen attempted to settle their editorial problems in meetings as a board of editors. This proved fatal to any progress. Soon Professor Swing became the editor-in-chief and chief contributor. His weekly essay was one of the literary treats of the period, and was later continued when the *Alliance* was merged with the *Weekly Magazine* in 1882. According to the testimony of those concerned, the *Alliance* lost its identity from deliberate wrecking by its business manager, who is alleged to have taken advantage of the allied ministers' lack of business experience.

A western magazine from the newer West moved east to

Chicago in 1879, drawn by the centripetal force the city was exerting as the growing metropolis of the West. This was the *Western Magazine*—the third in Chicago to bear that name. It had been established in Omaha three years before. The periodical was of regular magazine form, with two columns of neatly printed matter on each page, and many excellent woodcuts illustrating mountain scenery and the towns from “British Columbia to the Gulf of Mexico.” It was divided into two departments, whose character was told by the following headings: “The Original Department of ‘The Western Magazine,’ containing Select Articles from Our Best Western Writers;” and, “The Eclectic Department of ‘The Western Magazine,’ containing the Cream of European Literature.” Although containing original stories, the leading feature of the “original department” was illustrated articles and historical sketches on the towns of the western states, in the form of travel letters from John H. Pierce, the publisher. One of these referred to Kansas City as “the new Chicago of the West.” These articles were accompanied by local advertisements from the places written up, and thus brought the publisher his principal receipts, which were augmented by subscriptions secured in these towns, at \$1 a year. Like Chicago’s pioneer literary journals, the *Western Magazine*, while at Omaha, said, May, 1879:

Give a prompt and willing support to the only periodical that illustrates our western country; and in the not far distant future we will furnish a magazine equal in size and variety of attractions to the standard monthlies of the eastern states.

When the *Western Magazine* came to Chicago, Mrs. Helen Elkin Starrett was engaged to be its editor. Mrs. Starrett, having in her youth contributed to Holland’s *Springfield Republican*, in Massachusetts; having written a volume of poetry; having later edited a newspaper at Lawrence, Kans.; having written editorials and literary criticisms for Joseph Pulitzer’s *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; and having been before the public as a lecturer on literary and social topics, particularly in the western states, was regarded as especially well qualified for

the position. Mrs. Starrett, who today conducts a school for girls in Chicago, teaches literature, and writes poetry for an accredited New York publisher, gave many interesting suggestions on the period treated in this paper.

The files of the *Western Monthly* show an immediate improvement in its literary quality after its transference to Chicago. The *Burlington* (Iowa) *Hawkeye*, in the reviewers' comments, reprinted by the *Western Magazine*, said: "Mrs. Starrett is eminently qualified and will be to the western literary interests what Mary Mapes Dodge and other eminent lady editorial workers are to eastern literature." The same paper quoted the *Chicago Tribune* as declaring that the *Western Magazine* would be "the foundation of great things in the literary history of Chicago."

"A Welcome Suggestion," from a "Well-Wisher and Reader," which is most significant of the Chicago desire for a literary organ of metropolitan character, was published in the September, 1880, issue of the *Western Magazine*. It turned out that this anonymous suggestion had come from Frederic Ives Carpenter, now a professor of English literature at the University of Chicago, at that time a Chicago high-school boy. The contribution said, in part:

Since the days of the *Lakeside Monthly* and the *Chicago Magazine*, it has seemed to many of the literary and semi-literary people of this city as though the day must be a long way off when Chicago might hope to have any exclusively literary organ of its intellectual interests.

Now, your magazine is the rising sun of our hopes. Will it be long before the *Western Magazine* is recognized as a worthy representative of our literary interests, before you allow it to become metropolitan?

Rushing, trade-maddened Chicago is well supplied with periodicals that uphold its myriad trade and labor and religious fields of activity. Yet not a sheet for its literature. Why should New York have its *Scribner's* and *Harper's*, Boston its *Atlantic*, Philadelphia its *Lippincott's* and we only our dailies and the denominational religious weeklies?

The *Western Magazine* can make a career. Broaden your interests; admit fiction (the modern home of geniuses) and literary criticism; or at least, if we are not ready for that—literary gossip. Do this for the sake of the cosmopolitan culture that any metropolis like this possesses, and which calls for this.

The publication of this significant communication was made the occasion for opening a new department in the magazine, called "The Club." Mrs. Starrett declared editorially that there was "no more significant sign of social progress than the spread of literary and social organizations known as clubs, whether woman's clubs, art clubs, social science clubs, or study clubs." The Chicago Philosophical Society, really a literary society in which Mr. Franklin Head, Mr. Lyman J. Gage, and other prominent business and professional men interested in reading, met for discussions, was the most important club in Chicago at the time. The Saracen Club, the Fortnightly, the Chicago Woman's Club, and the Athena, of which Mr. Carpenter's mother was president, were notable, the woman's-club movement having become well started. Mrs. Starrett says that Chicago people interested in letters were much more closely associated in those days than has since been possible in the enlarged city.

A sub-title was added to the name of the *Western Magazine* announcing it to be "A Literary Monthly." The editor was flooded with manuscripts from local writers and from writers in other cities, for both "The Club" department and the general literary pages. Much of the material was amateurish. But some of it was done in promising style by authors, who, through their start in this medium, later attained some prominence, among them being Lillian Whiting. After one of the later issues, Professor Swing sent a note to Mrs. Starrett in which he said:

There is no better-edited magazine, nor one containing finer writing, east or west or anywhere, than our little magazine which has just come to my desk.

But at that time the interests of Mrs. Starrett, who had previously found 75,000 readers for an article on "The House-keeping of the Future," in the *Forum*, turned more keenly to social and economic questions than to form in literature. The contributions to "The Club" department soon were almost exclusively along these lines—the reproductions of essays read at club meetings by studious women. For this reason, among others reflecting the general situation, it is not surprising that

on merging the *Alliance* in March 1882, the *Western Magazine* became the *Weekly Magazine*, and announced that thereafter it would

present to its readers each week the same choice collection of literary matter, with an added department of great interest devoted to discussions, by able and well-known writers, on the important political, social, and economic topics.

While the weekly sermon-essay by Professor Swing, written after the manner of Addison in *The Roger de Coverly Papers*, was the leading literary feature, and there were some stories and poems, the main source of interest in the contents of the *Weekly Magazine* came more and more to be inquiry about social questions. A regular letter from Washington was sent by Gail Hamilton. James G. Blaine contributed an article on "The South American Policy of the Garfield Administration." Mr. William A. Starrett, Mrs. Starrett's husband, at first associate editor, wrote such acceptable reviews of political events that in the later numbers his name was put above Mrs. Starrett's in the lines naming the editors.

The circulation of the *Weekly Magazine* reached 23,450 in 1883, not equaling, however, the 50,000 credited to the *Western Magazine* in 1880. It was backed to an extent by prominent Chicago business men. George M. Pullman and C. B. Farwell contributed \$1,000 each for stock, and Marshall Field \$500. The editors had no part in the business management. The business manager, who had previously been in charge of the *Alliance*, got the affairs of the *Weekly Magazine* into such a hopeless tangle that it became bankrupt, and ended its career in 1884.

The history of the *Western Magazine* and the *Weekly Magazine* gives another example of the diverting of the æsthetic literary interest to the knowledge interest. But the story of its attraction to Chicago from the farther West, and of its development thereafter, shows the movement toward metropolitanism in Chicago, and carries us over into a period of greater development toward that characteristic in the eighties.

IV. JOURNALS FOR LETTERS IN THE MARKET METROPOLIS,
1880-90

"It is universally conceded that Chicago is rapidly achieving world-wide reputation as the great literary center of the United States."—From *Culture's Garland, Being Memoranda of the Gradual Rise of Literature, Art, Music and Society in Chicago, and Other Western Ganaglia*, by Eugene Field (Ticknor & Co., Boston, 1887).

Chicago arrived at the rank of a metropolis during the decade of 1880. A position of metropolitan character was reached, as far as the groundwork of materialistic supremacy in a large territory is concerned. In tracing the origin and character of the literary periodicals outcropping in these years, and the interplay of literary and other interests, the first requirement is a picture of Chicago as a material metropolis.

It has often been said by the citizens of older centers that a nation can have only one metropolis, only one "mother-city." Unquestionably, New York city has been the metropolis of America for many decades. But the essential idea of metropolis is that of the relation of the city center to an expanse of its surrounding country. The United States covers so large a sweep of country that several European cities of metropolitan rank, along with their supporting empires, could be set down in it. In position Chicago is the center of the most fertile and extensive expanse of valley and prairie in the North Temperate Zone—a territory which by 1880 had become populous. And in every way before the close of the eighties Chicago had become the chief city of the West, and also the first of the nation, and indeed of the world in not a few phases of business and commercial command.

The foremost of the chief positions of which Chicago men could and did boast was the rank attained as the greatest railroad center. Ever since the prairie days Chicago had been growing rapidly as a railroad center. This growth had come out of the food-supply industry, and had been reared on the bringing of wheat and cereals to Chicago for shipment over the lakes, and of live stock to the Union Stock Yards, the greatest wholesale meat-market in the world. Established in 1865, after commissary work for the Civil War had demonstrated the importance of

Chicago as a point for supplies, this market had grown to immense proportions by 1880. On the bread- and meat-supply business had been built the so-called "Granger Railroads," and their development was followed by the locating in Chicago of manufacturing plants for the making of all sorts of goods. All this called for more railroads.

Seven new main lines were built into the city during the eighties. This made the total number of trunk lines with terminals in Chicago an even twenty, which, according to Blanchard, was the full quota of "railroads entering Chicago on their own tracks August 1, 1900." Chicago became not only a receiving point for raw materials, but the growth of the railway systems made the city the center of a most striking example of that which was defined by Herbert Spencer in his elaborate analogy between the structure of society and that of an animal organism, as the "social distributing system."

As it took a multitude of people to handle all this market, manufacturing, and railway business, the number increased so rapidly that by 1880 Chicago had, in population, become the metropolis of the West. The census of 1880 showed that in numbers of people Chicago had far surpassed St. Louis, which had before led in the states west of the Alleghanies. In that year Chicago's population was more than half a million by several thousand. This meant a large distribution of any marketable commodity for consumers within the city itself. But the population of the Middle West, Northwest, and Southwest, increasing proportionately, made a larger market. Chicago became the chief inland distributing center, not only for life-sustaining products—food, clothing, druggists' supplies, and lumber for housing—but also for material luxuries, and finally for those classes of goods designed to satisfy the æsthetic interest.

Among the many jobbing-houses which had grown to large proportions by 1880, one of the most notable was that of a firm whose largest business was in book-jobbing. This was the McClurg house, known since 1886 by the firm name of A. C. McClurg & Co., which today, in a nine-story building, does, besides a large retail book-selling business and a good amount of

original publishing, the most extensive book-distributing business for all publishers by any single house in the United States. In 1880 this house was the most conspicuous among three large book-stores in adjoining buildings on State Street, known to residents of the city, to visitors from the Middle West, and to tourists as "Book-Sellers' Row."

The immense book-distributing business of the McClurg firm was built up in conjunction with, and as an engraftment upon, another line of jobbing. The retail book-sellers of the small towns throughout the West are the druggists, who, in addition to proprietary medicines and drugs, sell a varied line of sundries. Such a retailer would often ask the McClurg company to deliver an order of books to some Chicago house jobbing these sundries, so that shipment could be made in one box. Therefore the firm decided to supply these articles direct. And today, in addition to a *Monthly Bulletin of New Books*, A. C. McClurg & Co. send out a large annual volume, the cover of which says: Catalogue of Blank Books and Tablets, Stationery, Typewriter Paper and Supplies, Hair and Tooth Brushes, Druggists' Sundries, Pocket-Books, Pipes, Pocket Cutlery, etc." More than one floor of their large building is filled with such prosaic supplies.

Directly out of this book-distributing agency, so built up, ramifying to drug-stores and book-stores in all towns of the West, and centered in the McClurg house, there originated a journal of literary criticism—the *Dial*. In 1880 the McClurg firm started this periodical in conjunction with Mr. Francis Fisher Browne, who from its first number until the last of the current volume in 1905 has been in charge of its editorial management. At the time, Mr. Browne, whose work in editing and publishing the *Lakeside Monthly* had been so notable, was connected with the book-house as literary adviser in its publishing department, which General A. C. McClurg was then personally making special efforts to develop.

Devoted exclusively to literary criticism and information concerning new books, the *Dial* did not and does not make the appeal of literary form direct to the æsthetic interest, although the style of its contents is excellent. Its appeal is to the interest

in knowledge about the form and contents of literary works. The *Dial* was raised up for keeping time on the knowledge of current productions of literature.

Nevertheless, the *Dial* is significant of Chicago and western literary interests as they developed in the decade of its founding, and as they have grown to be since then. With Chicago having attained a metropolitan prominence in materialistic things, one characteristic of the majority of Chicagoans in the eighties became self-confident boasting about their city. It was the crass clamor of a puissant metropolitanism of the market-place. When this note became most strong, many citizens, with material achievements accomplished, began to have some doubts as to whether business success is all of greatness possible. The appearance of the *Dial* marked the fact that the central inland market for grosser products had become a great central market for literary goods. In a section where literary appreciation was much more predominant than the creative literary interest—writing and publishing—it is perhaps remarkable that such a journal as the *Dial* did not come earlier. The West was buying books. The West began to criticise books. And incidentally other journals of literary criticism, among them being a short-lived magazine called the *American Critic*, were started at this time. Of course, from the earliest days of periodical-publishing in Chicago there had been some literary criticism. But the attitude of appraising quality had not been a characteristic of Chicago until the decade of the eighties, when this element found a place in the public mind of a community which had reached a material metropolitanism, and was growing toward a broader and higher metropolitan spirit.

The history of the *Dial* during the eighties and later tells of the advance toward, not only breadth, but also independence in the judgment of letters. During the entire decade of the eighties, and for two years in the nineties, the business success of the *Dial* was made easy because A. C. McClurg & Co. were heavy wholesale purchasers from all of the large publishing-houses of the East. Naturally the publishers were quick to place advertisements in the *Dial*. Furthermore, the *Dial*, published by Mc-

Clurg's had to criticise books from the publishing department of McClurg's. The effect of these relationships was to arouse disbelief in the independence of the journal; and in July, 1892, the interest of A. C. McClurg & Co. in the *Dial* was sold to Mr. Browne. At the time the *Dial* was disconnected from their house, A. C. McClurg & Co. made the following statement through its columns:

The change looks wholly to the good of the paper, which, it is believed, will be better served by its publication as a separate and independent enterprise. It is perhaps natural that a critical literary journal like the *Dial* should be to some extent misunderstood through its connection with a publishing and book-selling house. To relieve the paper from this disadvantage, and to make its literary independence hereafter as *obvious* as it ever has been *real*, is the prime object of the present change.

From the first, Mr. Browne, though a prophet of Western literature, had maintained, besides a broad critical outlook, the high ideals of editorial independence for which he had been respected while editing the *Lakeside Monthly*. With Mr. Browne small. The character of the editor, and the fact that experts on 1906, it stands as the only authoritative American journal devoted exclusively to literary criticism that is not connected with a book-publishing house. While in the eighties its circulation was in largest part western, today it is national, although not large as compared with the popular magazines, because the constituency of publishers, reviewers, librarians, teachers, ministers, and general readers deeply interested in literary criticism is relatively small. The character of the editor, and the fact that experts in special topics are paid for reviews expressing their opinions freely, have made the independence of the journal have meaning. It is safe to say that the *Dial*, although published in the inland metropolis, is the leading journal of literary criticism in the nation.

After all is said about the *Dial* as a symbol of the growing metropolitan independence of criticism in Chicago, that which stands out as most striking concerning the developments of the eighties is its origin in a book-distributing agency erected, like other freight-distributing houses, along with the railway systems

which made the dot on the map marked "Chicago" a metropolitan center.

The distributing of people as well as packages by the railway systems centering here brought the *Arkansas Traveler* and Opie Read, who had founded this periodical at Little Rock in 1882, to Chicago in 1887. It might appear that the name *Arkansas Traveler* was given in a punning mood, because its contents were prepared for the amusement of railway travelers. But it was taken from a tune made familiar in Arkansas by a local character, one "Sandy" Faulkner, who as a candidate for the legislature had gone about the state playing a "fiddle" and reciting a monologue. The contents of the paper were of a humorous character—sketches and jokes, drawn chiefly from the lives of southern dialect characters, with whom Mr. Read had made himself familiar when local editor of the *Little Rock Gazette*. While during the early eighties the comic papers of New York were, according to Frederick Hudson, the authority on American journalism, first becoming successful, the *Arkansas Traveler*, still at Little Rock, leaped into popularity, first in the Southwest and then through the North, attaining a circulation of 85,000 in its second year. The year 1887, in which the headquarters of the *Arkansas Traveler* were removed to Chicago, was one in which the last two of the seven lines of railroad coming into Chicago in the eighties were opened. Mr. Read, in an interview given to contribute material for these papers, said:

Chicago had become the great railway center. Our paper was sold chiefly on railway trains. We moved to Chicago so as to be in position for reaching the largest number of railway passengers most easily. The mailing facilities of Chicago, as the central point in a spider's web of railways, also led us here. In those days schoolboys were not used extensively for the sale of weekly papers. Besides making sales on the trains through the news companies, we had a subscription list. For years Chicago had been a great point for the sale of subscription books. For our weekly of general circulation the business manager, P. D. Benham, my brother-in-law, found that it was not possible to get advertising in the same proportion to the number of subscribers as with a local newspaper. The advertising patronage came from the general agencies, and in those days magazine advertising was not done so generally as it is today. We counted on sales and subscriptions.

For five years after its migration to the western railway

metropolis, the *Arkansaw Traveler* held its own. In fact, it is still brought out regularly from a bookkeeping supply house. But it has lost its unique characteristics, and has an insignificant circulation.

Mr. Read resigned from the editorship in 1892, and has not since contributed to the paper. His resignation was made partly because some promoters acquired control of the organization of the periodical, converted it into a stock company, and proposed to put Mr. Read, its creator, on salary. But a more important reason was that Mr. Read had come to the conclusion that humor and character sketches put into ephemeral form in a weekly periodical were more or less wasted. He aspired to write books, and had been encouraged by Ticknor & Co., of Boston, who had already published one of his southern dialect productions, entitled "Len Gansett." For thirteen years, since resigning from the periodical whose interests brought him here, Mr. Read has been in Chicago writing for publications chiefly in book form. He has probably been the most prolific user of the fiction form working continuously in Chicago since the eighties. A score of his books of fiction are to be found in the Public Library. Most of them have been published, by Chicago printing-houses, between paper covers. The news-company boys on passenger trains east and west will tell you that Opie Read is the author most popular among train readers. He has held and enlarged the audience before which he secured his first hearing with sketches and jokes in the *Arkansaw Traveler*. And recently eastern magazine and book publishers have solicited and secured his output.

From the day of his arrival, Mr. Read has been the personification of the fact that the growing mid-American metropolis has been constantly drawing to itself men with unique points of view — writers whose outlook is first of all that of some other locality. To busy Chicago Mr. Read brought the point of view of quaint and quiet southern life, the eye and ear of an interpreter of the dialect characters in the region from which he came. Always picturesque in character, wearing a long black coat, black string tie, long locks, and a broad-brimmed hat, Mr. Read has visited the Press Club almost daily, and, meeting the younger news-

paper men, as well as those of "the old guard," in avowed and democratic freedom and simplicity, has imparted his point of view to others. Men from other places in America having distinct local color have brought other variations in point of view. The attraction of such men was specially notable in the eighties. Since then more men trained to the cosmopolitan view of letters and art derived in Europe have come to the Chicago field. But in that decade these various local view-points, along with the attitude of men versed in classic English literature, such as Mr. Browne of the *Dial*, fused with the virile mercantilism through which those in the roar of Chicago's busy streets saw life into a new composite metropolitan outlook. It affected the writers and publishers of Chicago in the eighties.

The conspicuous patronage of artistic endeavor, in various mediums, by citizens who had acquired wealth with the city's growth into rank as a great mart, worthy of satire as it was in some aspects, was another factor in creating a metropolitan attitude. The Art Institute by 1882 had a brick building, and in 1887 erected for school and museum the excellent four-story Romanesque structure of brown stone, on Michigan Boulevard, at the southwest corner of Van Buren Street, now occupied by the Chicago Club. There, in the heart of the market city, on a boulevard which was fast becoming the fine-arts avenue of Chicago, was a material temple fixing in the public mind the idea of art. Theodore Thomas and his orchestra, besides filling winter engagements in Chicago, had been giving long series of summer-night concerts in the Exposition Building which stood on the Lake Front until 1887. Grand opera was annually presented by foreign companies, and the drama, exceptionally well patronized for years, was presented by the best of visiting American and English actors. All this told on the attitude of the literary workers and publishers of periodicals.

But the most interesting expression of the growing metropolitan literary consciousness of the decade was "the Saints' and Sinners' Corner." Engene Field, the poet and prose humorist, who had been in newspaper work in Missouri and Colorado for ten years before he was drawn to Chicago, in 1883, was the

voice of this unique group. The "Saints and Sinners" were a score of bibliophiles—clergymen, general readers, and literary workers—who held meetings, imaginary for the most part, in the rare-book corner of the retail department of the house of A. C. McClurg & Co., from another section of which, as we have seen, there emanated a journal of literary criticism. It was really a corner in the *Daily News*, where Field had a column devoted to gossip about "The Saints and Sinners," and local literary and artistic topics, under the caption "Sharps and Flats." This was widely read and had a great effect on the ideas of the community. From it, in 1887, Field culled selections, which were published in book-form by Ticknor & Co., of Boston, under the title: *Culture's Garland—Being Memoranda of the Gradual Rise of Literature, Music and Society in Chicago, and Other Western Ganglia*.

The garland with which Field wreathed Chicago culture, as shown in a frontispiece, was a string of sausages. He made a reference to the time "when Chicago's output of pork swept the last prop from under the old Elizabethan school at Cincinnati;" and said, on p. 168:

Here in Chicago "a hand well known in literature" is a horny, warty but honest hand which, after years of patient toil at skinning cattle, or at boiling lard, or at cleaning pork, has amassed sufficient to admit of its master's reception into the *crème de la crème* of Chicago culture.

Besides the extreme expression of satirical criticism which he gave to sham in literary patronage, Field also played with superficiality in efforts at literary and artistic production, including some fun at the expense of three ambitious literary periodicals started in Chicago during the decade. All this was the expression of an attitude that is typical of metropolitan centers, and which in older, cosmopolitan capitals attains a degree of frigid or flippant cynicism never yet reached by Chicago.

The three periodicals noticed by Field, while not devoted to satire, were more metropolitan in character than any which had preceded them in the succession of those started in Chicago. These were the *Current*, a weekly begun in 1883 and lasting until 1888; *Literary Life*, a monthly magazine, 1884-87; and *America*, a literary and political weekly journal, 1888-91.

The *Current* was the creation of Edgar L. Wakeman, a brilliant newspaper man. Magazinedom is a kingdom of heaven of which many newspaper men, in Chicago as elsewhere, often fondly dream. Mr. Wakeman's venture stands as one of the most conspicuous efforts to get over the wall. As Chicago correspondent for the newspaper of Colonel Henry Watterson, Mr. Wakeman had, by the use of postal cards which he sent out to prominent people, saying, "You will be interested in such and such a number of the *Louisville Courier*," attracted much attention to his work in a paper that allows scope for individuality. Both in promotion and character the *Current* was sensational. In an early number the *Current* declared that it was "the weekly, literary, news, and family journal of our time." Its ambitious ideal was stated as follows: "The *Current* is yet a model of brevity and does *every week* what the pretentious magazines aim to do once a month."

While a family journal, the *Current* was far above the plane of the "family-story" type of papers in literary quality. Its contents had distinct literary merit. And yet they were not of the classic character approached in such a magazine as the *Lakeside Monthly*. It was a magazine of popular literature. It may with approximate accuracy be listed as the first of that type undertaken in Chicago. And by Mr. Forrest Crissey, the western editor for two current eastern magazines of the popular literature type, its career of five years is rated as the most significant of efforts at periodical publishing in Chicago prior to those of the present decade. Its popular character is to be seen by dipping into a file at the Public Library. For example, a serial story by E. P. Roe, entitled "An Original Belle," is to be found in its pages.

The field from which Mr. Wakeman gathered serials, short stories, poems, and articles was not confined to the city limits, nor by the boundaries of the Middle West, nor yet by those of America. The management of the *Current* was the first among Chicago publishers to seek manuscripts from England. While not so well favored with results as has been the editor of the *Red Book* of the present day, the effort shows a metropolitan breadth approached by Chicago publishers in the eighties.

In securing contributions from American authors of established reputation the *Current* was more successful. James B. Cable, with "Southern Silhouettes," James Whitcomb Riley, and Joaquin E. Miller were among the contributors. In its early career the *Current* was reported to have \$100,000.00 worth of excellent manuscripts pigeon-holed. From the first, however, Chicago men were important contributors. Eugene Field, Ernest McGaffey, Colonel William Lightfoot Visscher, and John McGovern were among them. Field played with the pretensions of the editor of the *Current* in the report of a "Convention of Western Writers" at Indianapolis, where he said literary workers would be asked: "But have you never written anything for the *Current*?" He remarked that the implication was: "If you have, you must be all right.

In 1885 Mr. John McGovern, a vivid imaginative writer, who honestly believes that the "West is in literary rebellion against the East," and that "General McClurg's chief office was to command a literary blockhouse and keep down the Indians of the frontier," became editor of the *Current*. The periodical became an avowed exponent of the literary interest of the people in Chicago and the West, and their support was asked. As an experiment to see if such support could not be secured, in 1885 a beautiful Easter edition was prepared. With the enterprise backed by Mr. George Wiggs, a member of the Board of Trade interested in the patronage of local letters, 100,000 copies, four times the normal number, were printed. The paper bill alone was \$3,000. But the bulk of the issue went to the ragman.

Under Mr. Wakeman's administration the circulation and advertising had been sufficient to give promise of success. With the magnetism of enthusiasm, Mr. Wakeman had interested able financial supporters. But by the end of his second year the finances were in a tangle. Mrs. Starrett, who characterizes the *Current* as "a flash in the pan," says that Mr. Wakeman proposed to sell the *Current* to the owners of the *Weekly Magazine*, which had grown in metropolitan character and was continued until 1884. The proposition was rejected. Mr. Wakeman left town. The *Current*, embarrassed financially and narrowed to

“its chosen field as a representative of western literature” dragged out a profitless existence until 1888, when it was merged with *America*.

In the meantime, *Literary Life*, a contemporary of the *Current*, attracted attention. It appeared in regulation form, and was advertised as “an illustrated magazine for the people; only \$1 a year, ten cents a copy.” Charles Dudley Warner was quoted as having written to the publisher saying: “I am amazed that you can afford to publish such a very handsome periodical at so little cost to the subscriber.”

There was nothing local about the contents of *Literary Life*. Essays on literary topics, biographical sketches and portraits of well-known authors in America and England, with engravings to show their “homes and haunts,” appear to have made up the material sought for the magazine, which also announced a somewhat broader ambition—namely, to be “the *Century* of the West.” To what degree the aspirations it advertised were realized cannot be ascertained in Chicago. There is no reliquary file in the libraries here.

The name of Rose Elizabeth Cleveland, sister of President Grover Cleveland, was conspicuously connected with *Literary Life*. Miss Cleveland was the editor of some of the early numbers. But although a Boston organ was quoted as saying, “*Literary Life* helps to make Chicago one of the literary centers of the country,” Miss Cleveland never came to this literary center. All her work as editor was done at her home in New York state. Perhaps this arrangement for long-range editing may be interpreted as a sign of a broad, metropolitan outlook on the part of A. P. T. Elder, the publisher.

Miss Cleveland, in a letter recently sent for use in these papers, said:

I was interested in *Literary Life* for three months, and then dropped it because of a wide divergence between myself and its business manager as to policy in its management. During the three months in which I did my rather amateurish “editing” it was quite successful, and would in the hands of a more discriminating manager, or a less fastidious editor, have been a profitable enterprise.

The close of its career was chronicled by Field in 1887, with the following paragraph :

For the information of our public we will say that the *Atlantic Monthly* is a magazine published in Boston, being to that intelligent and refined community what the *Literary Life* was to Chicago before a Fourth Ward constable achieved its downfall with a writ of replevin.

The efforts of the editor-publishers of *America*, the literary-political weekly, 1888-91, are of more interest in many ways than any others by periodical publishers at Chicago in the eighties. Mr. Slason Thompson and Mr. Hobart Chatfield-Taylor were the founders of *America*, and Mr. Thompson stuck to it as editor and publisher to the end of its career. At the time of its founding, Mr. Thompson, as he is today, was a strong journalist. Mr. Chatfield-Taylor, now a novelist and prominent society man, was then a recent college graduate of independent means, just beginning a career of literary endeavor.

Mr. Thompson is one of the men drawn to Chicago by the growing importance of the north-central American metropolis. Educated for the bar at the University of New Brunswick, admitted to practice in that Canadian province, and later to the bar in California, he had entered journalism at San Francisco, served on the *New York Tribune*, and, after coming to Chicago as agent for the New York Associated Press, had been one of the founders of the *Chicago Herald*, and had held numerous important editorial positions. While in San Francisco, Mr. Thompson had been an admirer of the *Argonaut*, published there by Frank Pixley. He believed that if a serious literary periodical published on the Pacific coast could succeed, one brought out in Chicago should surely do so. Mr. Thompson was one of the "Saints and Sinners," an intimate friend of Field, and in later years the collator of some of that author's writings. In "Sharps and Flats," Field, referring to an imaginary sale of pews in the famous corner, made the following remark :

Mr. Slason Thompson, boiling over with indignation, declared that if the Rev. Mr. Bristol and General McClurg intended to form a trust on pews, they must expect to feel the castigatory torments of the nimble pen and sarcastic pencil wielded by the facile editor of *America*.

In *America* Mr. Thompson was strong in writing castigations. His supreme interest was in political questions, and he made them all hinge on one — that of immigration.

Mr. Taylor had just come home to Chicago from Cornell University, where he had been connected with the undergraduate journals. Today he laughingly says: "Having been on the college papers, I thought I could set the world on fire." Mr. Taylor was not greatly interested in political and sociological questions. His supreme interest, as an editor, was in literary form.

Although the endeavor to combine the literary and political interest was a striking phenomenon in *America*, during the first few months a remarkably strong, cosmopolitan literary character in a large part of its contents was the feature which attracted wide attention. The greatest array of contributions from noted American authors ever secured for a Chicago periodical was spread in the pages of *America* during the first few weeks of its publication. Some, also, were from England. The file in the Chicago Public Library would please any reader fond of the works of American authors. A poem by James Russell Lowell, contributions from Charles Dudley Warner and Julian Hawthorne, and an instalment of a serial by Frank R. Stockton are among the contents of the first number. Hawthorne conducted a department of literature for many weeks, and was succeeded in that by Maurice Thompson. Andrew Lang, the English essayist, was a frequent contributor. Swinburne was among the authors of poems. Poetry by Holmes, Scollard, Morris, McGrath, Riley, Garland, and Waterloo was printed. Eugene Field wrote his "Little Boy Blue" for *America*. Ella Wheeler Wilcox and Louise Chandler Moulton were among the contributors. The aim of Mr. Taylor was not to secure material with which to make the popular type of magazine, but to get for *America* the best of the current American literary output. Fabulous prices were paid for these contributions. For Bret Harte's "Jim" the sum of \$500 was given. Mr. Taylor is said to have sunk from \$50,000 to \$100,000 in the *America* venture; and a good part of that sum went for manuscripts. *America's* outlook over American litera-

ture was broader than that of any literary magazine containing fiction and poetry undertaken in Chicago during the eighties.

The publication of this representative American literary output, secured at such extravagant prices, was continued for only a few weeks. It did not pay. But few copies of *America* circulated east of the Alleghanies. "Literary trade-winds blow from the east," says Mr. Thompson today. The circulation of *America* was for the most part western, and at no time did it exceed 10,000. After the period of high prices for contributions, Mr. Taylor wrote nearly all of the literary contents under a series of *noms de plume*. In recounting this part of his experiences with *America*, Mr. Taylor said: "That is where I gained my literary training."

Two local writers who have since attained national prominence in lines of artistic production were assistant editors of *America* during parts of its career as a training school—Reginald De Koven, composer, and Harry B. Smith, light-opera librettist. Writing as "Quaver," Mr. De Koven conducted a department of musical criticism. Of Mr. De Koven's column, *Belford's Magazine*, a Chicago contemporary of *America*, said:

His notes will be read with much interest, for he is an eminently qualified musician; a graduate of Oxford University, England, and essentially cosmopolitan as regards his education.

Mr. Smith, who was beginning his literary work, was at first listed as assistant editor and later as business manager, although Slason Thompson says the periodical never had any business management in the present-day sense. Mr. Smith was a frequent contributor of verse.

While starting out with a notable character as to genuine American literature, *America* from the first was distinguished for the virile political interest and the vigorous personality of Mr. Thompson, which stood out in its pages most emphatically. The very title, while suggesting the literary interest, was conspicuous for its political significance, and a sub-title declared *America* to be "a journal for Americans." Articles by Seth Low on "American Patriotism," and by Theodore Roosevelt on "Americans Past and Present, and the Americanization of Foreigners," appeared

in the first numbers. In editorials, and in a department headed "Americanisms," Mr. Thompson hammered away continually in favor of the restriction of immigration and of limiting the influence of the Roman Catholic church in American affairs.

The literary character of the weekly faded away with the twenty-third number. By mutual agreement, Mr. Taylor retired, and Mr. Thompson became sole editor and publisher. In an editorial announcement, Mr. Thompson remarked that there would be "no deviation from the high literary entertainment," and then laid all emphasis on a statement that *America* would

continue to urge the restriction of all immigration by consular inspection and a per capita tax, the making of citizenship essential to the privilege of suffrage, and the limitation of the right to vote to citizens who can read and write;

and other propositions for the protection of "America's free schools, American morality, and American nationality." To enforce these ideas, in some of the later numbers there was a use of cartoons, the first and only illustrations published in *America*. One of these was subtitled, "America for the Irish." Another, a lurid thing with much black ink, done by the famous Thomas Nast, was called "Foreign Thrones among Us." But the advocacy of such sentiments did not prove popular enough to bring large business returns, and with the number of September 24, 1891, the transfer of *America* and all that pertained to it, except the "personal opinions of the editor," was announced by Mr. Thompson. In penning his farewell editorial he said: "In respect to several subjects too much slighted in the daily press, *America* has been a voice crying in the wilderness;" and declared that the policy had been to put forth "a firm but moderate opposition to the political and educational policy of the Roman Catholic church in the United States," and to give expression to faith in the American common school as an "alembic" for the varied nationalities represented in American population.

While the mixture of representative American literature and national political policy in *America* makes it stand as an index of the growing metropolitan spirit of Chicago in the eighties, it was this mixture, and the gradual increase of the political element

—the advocacy of a cause—which brought failure to *America*. Mr. Taylor says:

Besides our inexperience, the fact that the periodical was published in Chicago and not in New York kept it from gaining a sure foothold.

Mr. Thompson, also, says:

Of course, there was a prejudice against a journal from Chicago; and the labor organizations here made prices of printing higher than in New York. But these magazine failures are not peculiar to Chicago. There has been no greater extinction here than those of *Putnam's* and the *Eclectic* in New York.

Nevertheless, the chief reason for the disappearance of *America* remains the decline of its appeal to the pure literary interest, and the phenomenal persistence and increase in its appeal to interest in one political idea. In forsaking literature to follow the anti-immigration will-o'-the-wisp, *America* followed the line of extinction taken in Chicago in the earliest period by the *Literary Budget*, founded in 1852 and transformed in 1855 to the short-lived *Native Citizen*. It is difficult to make a literary tree grow out of a political platform.

That *America* in dying was transferred to the *Graphic* was in line with the developments of periodical publishing at Chicago in the decade following the eighties. The *Graphic* was an illustrated weekly of about the same age as *America*. "With the World's Columbian Exposition coming," said *America's* editorial valedictory, "during the next two years, the *Graphic*, having the facilities, will render valuable service to Chicago."

Other weeklies with metropolitan earmarks springing up in the eighties were those of the smart variety. These contained a melange of clever comment on current events and local society news, verse, and other material of interest for its form of expression. The *Rambler*, started in 1884, by Reginald De Koven and Harry B. Smith, and carried on until 1886 by Elliott Flower, was the most interesting of these weeklies. It was "A Journal of Men, Manners, and Things." Mr. Flower, in an interview for these papers, said:

We wanted to do for Chicago what *Life* does for New York. The manager of the Western News Co. said: "Put a New York date line on it, or the West won't take it." We did not do so. But he was right.

The *Rambler* never secured more than 5,000 readers, and the experiment cost its promoters several thousand dollars. Its chief result of permanence was the training Mr. Flower had through it for writing the humorous sketches and fiction which he has since contributed to magazine- and book-publishers elsewhere. *Vanity Fair* was the name of a "literary and society weekly" which was of sufficient interest to be listed in the newspaper annuals for 1885 and 1886. *Appleton's In the Swim*, a "literary, travel, and society weekly," engrafted on an advertising travelers' bureau, flourished from 1887 to 1891. And a "pictorial weekly" having the name *Life* was attempted in 1889, but did not survive. A monthly in regular magazine form, designated the *Society Magazine*, and filled with selections from the periodicals of England, came out during the entire calendar year 1888, and left a file in the Public Library.

A most creditable monthly for "gentlemen of wealth and culture," as its advertising read, was *Wildwood's Magazine*, edited by "Will Wildwood" (Fred E. Pond), and undertaken in Chicago in 1888. During its first year it was devoted to "the higher literature of manly sport." "To readers seeking reflection of the charms of woodcraft we offer the work of contributors whose genial essays partake of the breezy character of forest and field," said the initial number, which commented on the expansion of the literature of sport during the twenty years just then past. Perusal of a file in the Newberry Library shows that the magazine contained charming tales, essays, and memoirs of sportsmen. Both in subject-matter and in form its pages made a pleasing appeal to the play instinct, which some of the authoritative psychologists say is essentially the same as the æsthetic interest. But at the end of a year, Charles Hallock, the former editor of *Forest and Stream*, became associated in the editorship, a philosophy of the serious interest in outdoor activity was announced, the name was changed to *Recreation*, and "geological picnics" were organized from a branch office at Washington. This brought public ridicule. An editorial retort in the magazine listed the national capital as "the graveyard of journalism," and a delightful

æsthetic publication of high literary quality went to pieces on the dry rocks of a knowledge interest.

A phase of the increasing complexity in the character of Chicago—complexity growing out of the industrial magnitude of the city in the eighties—was reflected in the starting of several magazines devoted to serious subjects but appealing to the popular literary interest through the form of essays, supplemented with fiction and, in some, with illustrations. Questions on the relations of capital and labor began to be the subject of much talk and action in Chicago—questions whose consideration has since grown to such importance here as to make the city one of the caldrons in which much of social import is seething. In 1886 a violent manifestation of this came in the anarchist riots at Haymarket Square, which, it may be mentioned incidentally, were pictured with large wood cuts in the *Illustrated Graphic News*, published simultaneously in Chicago, New York, Cincinnati, Detroit, and Kansas City, in that year. But the riots and the execution of the anarchists were merely the extreme expression of elements constantly stimulating serious thought.

A monthly magazine called the *Commonwealth*, started in 1888, was recorded in the newspaper annuals until 1892. But *Belford's Magazine*, of which No. 1, June, 1888, bore the imprint "Chicago, New York, and San Francisco," is the most significant serious periodical of the decade which is represented among the files. It appears that, during its second year, the periodical was issued from New York, that in 1892 its headquarters were moved back to Chicago, and that it died in 1893. A statement on American life and serious periodicals was made by the editor, in June, 1889. In an editorial he said:

When the best blood of Europe sought these shores as laborers or pirates, they sought to conquer a continent. The victory achieved between the first landing and now is simply a marvel of industry, endurance, energy, and enterprise. In this struggle of man versus matter we have become materialists. Out of sixty odd millions of population, about three million read books, and these mainly novels. To attempt the publication of a monthly devoted to the discussion of grave subjects, to be to the thoughtful reformer of this country what the *Westminster* of London has been to the Liberals of England, would be commercial insanity. Successful American magazines are devoted to

pictorial exhibits, which, although they are artistically done, yet make only picture-books, to be looked at, not read.

The file shows, however, that in *Belford's Magazine* an endeavor to popularize serious subjects was made. On the occasion of locating in Chicago again in 1892, the magazine editorially declared that "the literature of the West has been acted, it has been *done*" — not written.

Another type of serious magazine broadly to be classed as literary, which grew up in the eighties at Chicago, was the home-study journal. Some of these were: the *Correspondence University Journal*, monthly, 1884–86; the *University*, 1885–86, biweekly, claiming to be a successor to the *Weekly Magazine*; the *Home Library Magazine*, monthly, 1887; and the *National Magazine*, published by a so-called "National University" from 1889 to 1894.