The Role of the Monk in the English Gothic Romance 1762-1826

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THE ROLE OF THE MONK IN THE
ENGLISH GOTHIC ROMANCE
1762-1826

BY

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FORWARD--State of Question--Purpose of Thesis.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I THE ROLE OF THE MONK IN THE GOTHIC NOVEL.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginnings of Gothic--German and French Influences--Meaning of Gothic--Elements of Gothic Literature--Horace Walpole and The Castle of Otranto--Monks in English Literature--Protestant Bias towards Catholic Institutions--Occasion and Suitability of Monk for Important Role in The Gothic Novel.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II THREE EARLY GOTHIC NOVELS.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longsword, Earl of Salisbury (1762) by Thomas Leland--Monk Reginhaid--Characteristics--Importance--The Castle of Otranto (1764) by Horace Walpole--Plot of Story--Role of Friar Jerome--Characteristics--Comparison with Reginhald--Importance of the Novel and Character of Friar Jerome--The Champion of Virtue (1777) by Clara Reeve--Plot--Role of Father Oswald--Comparison with previous monk characters--Conclusion of Chapter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III SIX MONK VILLAINS.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV THREE MONK CHARACTERS FROM TWO NOVELS OF SCOTT.</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott's Gothicism--The Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst from Ivanhoe (1819)--Friar Tuck Legend--Scott's humorous treatment of the hermit--Abbot Boniface and the sub-prior Father Eustace from The Monastery (1820)--Characteristics: of Boniface: peace-time Abbot; of Father Eustace--comparison of Eustace with Boniface; with heretic Henry Warden--with preceding monk types--Decline of monk villain--Influence of Scott in this decline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V CONCLUSION.</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This thesis is a study of the monk character as presented by the writers of the Gothic romance from the beginnings of this literary type in 1762 to its climax in 1795 and down to its gradual decline and incorporation into the novels of Sir Walter Scott about the year 1820. Various causes which contributed to make the monk a fitting character as the villain of the Gothic romance will be treated. Among these are the anti-Catholic atmosphere of England at this period, the successful endeavors of royal princes to suppress the Jesuits, the English misunderstanding of Catholic monastic and religious life, the avid thirst of the English reading public for tales of terror and horror, foreign influences chiefly from France and Germany, and, finally, the new interest in Nature which culminated in the Romantic movement. The aesthetics of the Gothic tale will be seen from this study of the monk character. The relationship between the simultaneous rise to popularity of the Gothic romance and the monk character will be pointed out. In the beginning the monk character was not a bad man and the Gothic novel itself was merely a weak mystery story, but as the monk became more and more the arch-villain, so the Gothic tale became more and more the vehicle of black terrors and hair-raising horrors. The various causes of the monk's gradual disappearance as the chief villain will be discussed.

The new religious revival in England soon brought about
a tolerance at least of Catholicism leading to the Emancipation Act of 1829. The monk character continued in the literature of the time, but his role was now taken by the dissolute prince or the renegade noble. Gothic romance also disappeared as a literary type, but many of its outstanding characteristics were absorbed in the new historical fiction so vigorously and fully developed by Scott. Gothic elements showed their appearance in the novels of Dickens in the sombre background and new villain. The mysterious Gothic plot survived in the detective stories of a later period. Gothic elements also influenced the romantic school of poetry as seen in the nature poetry of Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson and others.

Thus we see that the Gothic movement was no literary aberration. It resulted from a basic relation of cause and effect. Nor was it unproductive of much that is good in English literature, at least in its contributions to the literary works that followed it, since the majority of its own achievements are no longer worth reading in themselves.

Modus agendi: Monk characters from representative Gothic novels will be selected for study. After summaries of the plots to show the part played by the monk, the monk character will be treated according to his physical, intellectual, and moral qualities. Other characters will be examined in reference to the monk. Various monk characters will be compared with one another to point out differences in treatment by the Gothic novelists, causes for such differences, and also to trace the development of the monk from the pious hermit type to the scheming public villain.
CHAPTER I

THE ROLE OF THE MONK IN THE GOTHIC NOVEL

The Gothic novel arose in the latter half of the eighteenth century as part of the literary reaction "against the rational, realistic creed of Richardson and Fielding which had asserted the superiority for literary purposes of things familiar and contemporary." It was an essential force in the pre-romantic period which saw a new interest in the marvelous, the beauties of nature, and the longing of men to escape from the sober realities of life. This longing led to a new addition to the formula heretofore used by the novelists. As "Richardson strove to awaken pity for innocence in distress, the romancer was his complement; with pity he would unite terror." The beginning of the Gothic romance is usually dated from 1764, the year in which Horace Walpole published The Castle of Otranto, but elements of Gothic had already appeared in the novels of Smollet, as Roderick Random (1748), Peregrine Pickle (1751), and especially Count Fathom (1753). As Cross notes of this latest novel:

Realism he (Smollett) carried to that point where by its enormities it becomes romance...

Renaldo, who has been informed that his Monimia is dead and buried, visits her reputed tomb in a church lying in a sequestered field. It is a night


of 'uncommon darkness.' As he enters and walks up 'the dreary aisle,' the clock strikes twelve and the owl screeches from the ruined battlements. He turns his 'bloodshot' eyes to his attendants... falls prostrate on the cold grave, where he remains in the gloom until morning. ... Looking into vacancy, he sees the 'figure of a woman arrayed in white,' who, approaching with easy steps cries Renaldot in a voice very like Monimia's. He is speechless with terror, 'his hair stands upright' and 'a cold vapor thrills through every nerve.' That phantom is really Monimia, who has feigned death to get clear of the villain of the story and to contrive an interview with her lover. ③

The Gothic elements in this story will be quite apparent when we examine the characteristics of this new literary form.

Foreign influences chiefly from France and Germany helped to mold this Gothic form. The French Abbe Prevost, a translator of Richardson's novels, wrote many French novels which were soon translated into English. The most popular was Cleveland (trans. 1738), which Clara Reeve, an important Gothic novelist, considered an original English novel. Lovett describes the technique of Prevost:

'Prevost is a romancer... he put psychology at the service of love, but it is sad and tragic love, for the most part, in his stories, productive of suffering, crime, and catastrophe... the melancholy hero pursued by fate dominates his plots, and is adapted by imitators in France and England.' ④

Cross also points out this method of Prevost:

③ Ibid., p. 100.
Far from sharing Richardson's desire to dismiss 'the improbable and marvelous', Prévost turns from the domestic scene to enjoy strange and catastrophic adventures which in breathless succession contribute to the difficulties of his sentimental heroes and heroines. He places his characters in pseudo-historical settings, in remote lands, in mysterious hiding places. His stage once set, however, a dark and ominous scene suitably indicated, he returns to his characters, whose actions and sentiments are his chief interest.

Another French influence came from the revolutionary mind of Jean Jacques Rousseau whose *La Novelle Heloïse* was published in 1761 and translated the following year into English. The Frenchman's philosophy of the return to nature, contained many elements of the Romantic movement.

German influences came from the English translations of Goethe's *Leiden des Jungen Werther* (Sorrows of the Young Werther) 1774. Matthew G. Lewis had read the original German works of Goethe and the other German authors of his time who deeply influenced him when he wrote *The Monk* in 1795. Many German romances had been translated into English. Among these was *Hermann von Unna* (1788) written by Mrs. Christiane Benedict Naubert under the pseudonym Cramer, which went into two English editions and contained all the elements of the Gothic tale.

Although foreign influences on Gothic were many and strong, this new genre did not depend entirely on the Continent for its development. E. A. Baker points out that native influences were also at work:

But the foreign influences, from whatever point of the compass they arrived, coincided remarkably with native tendencies that have already been noted; with such curious tastes, for instance, such abnormal forms of sensibility, as appear in the literature of death and the sepulchre. ... The growing interest in the past, again, the tenderness for the hoary and decayed, the rage for the medieval, the awakening of the historical spirit—all these nourished and were nourished by this emotional romanticism. The work of the antiquaries, the revival of the ballads and other old literature, and even the imitations and forgeries, gave it fresh sustenance. The medieval, the antique, the picturesque, the funereal, ghostly, macabre, all were jumbled together as Gothic attributes.

Two years before the publication of The Castle of Otranto (1764), the English Protestant Bishop Hurd, like Walpole, a great friend of the poet Gray, helped to initiate romantic beginnings by his vigorous support of the Gothic elements in literature. In his "Letters on Chivalry and Romance" (1762), he showed "the preeminence of Gothic manners and fiction, as adapted to the ends of poetry, above the classics." He maintained that the Renaissance poets Ariosto and Spenser owed more to their romantic materials than to their classical culture. Even "Shakespeare is greater when he uses Gothic manners and machinery than when he employs classical." The great Milton, according to Bishop Hurd, was really a romanticist at heart, having actually intended to write his great epic on King Arthur and the Round Table rather than on a classic theme.

8 Ibid., p. 225.
9 Idem.
The Gothic was part of the romantic movement. Romanticism has been said to combine two reactionary elements: first, the trend toward Gothic architecture as opposed to the classic palladian, and, secondly, sentiment as preferred to the confined neo-classical emotion. The close connection between the Gothic novel and Gothic architecture clearly explains the name given this type of fiction. The pointed architecture of the medi evals was despised by the classical architects like Sir Christopher Wren, who thought he was condemning it to the lowest depths when he called it "Gothic" after the barbarous Teutonic invaders of the Roman empire. He hated Gothic more from prejudice, considering these structures as "monkish piles", than as specimens of inferior art. Cazamian alludes to the fitness of the name "Gothic:"

As is shown by the term 'Gothic novel', the strangeness and mystery of a distant, age, itself a prey to superstition, and wonderfully fitted to re-create the atmosphere of emotional belief, served as a model and encouragement to an instinct in quest of more potent means of self-satisfaction.11

How then did the Gothic novel which dealt with terror and horror come to be so called? There was an evolution of the word in three stages. The first stage, as already mentioned, came in the use of the term "Gothic" to ridicule the architecture of the Middle Ages. Later it was applied to novels which related tales against a medieval background. Lastly, it came to include all

stories which concerned the terrible, the horrible, and the ghostly. Ernest A. Baker relates some characteristics of Gothic fiction and points out their relationship with the name "Gothic":

Mystery and Wonder, Fear and Suspense, Sensation and Terror, are some of the labels affixed by different historians to the romantic novels that traded in one or another, or in all these excitement, during the last few decades of the eighteenth century. The rather absurd term 'Gothic' is perhaps more convenient, and may be allowed to include both those which contented themselves with a discreet use of fear and suspense, and also those which sought the grosser sensations of terror and brutally aimed to make the flesh creep. It was term applied first in derision to the taste for ruins and picturesque survivals, especially from the Middle Ages, which the Augustans regarded as barbarous and outlandish. Then it was amiably accepted by Walpole and others, who confessed to a fondness for what they called Gothic, little as they understood the real nature of what they admired, and grotesque as were their attempts to imitate it. In due time, it became one of those vague descriptive words, like 'romantic,' which offer such facilities for a useful if inexact classification.12

The stage was now set for the introduction of this new genre of fiction. Apparently Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne had exhausted the vitality of the Eighteenth Century so far as concerned the making of great fiction. The period was now decadent. There seemed to be a poverty of material. The discovery of a new source was chanced upon by a literary dabbler who was in many ways most unfit for his role—Horace Walpole.

Gothic antiques and of building for himself a Gothic mansion according to his own peculiar tastes on his estate at Strawberry Hill. In erecting this castle Walpole followed no determined style of Gothic architecture, but made imitations of various specimens of Gothic he had seen throughout England. He imitated an arch from some famous old English cathedral, a staircase from another Gothic ruin, a window from some French church, etc. Many people laughed at his somewhat haphazard creation, but Walpole was proud of it. Steeped in Gothic lore, it is not strange that he dreamed of medieval times, that he even tried to live, now as a knight, now as a cloistered monk, now as a feudal lord. From this Gothic monstrosity and from his dreams emerged the first Gothic romance: *The Castle of Otranto; A Gothic Tale* (1764).

The subtitle was carried by most of Walpole's successors in the field of romance. We shall treat this first novel more in detail in Chapter II.

What then are the characteristics and purpose of the Gothic novel? Lovett summarizes briefly the genesis, characters, plots, and techniques of this new type of fiction:

The Gothic novel in England which grew out of the day-dreaming of the eighteenth century, encouraged by the precedents of French fiction, developed in due course stock characters and situations, and habitual emotional effects. Its characteristic figure is the somber, restless villain, already dimly outlined in the French novels. He is the progenitor of the Byronic type, who with the years develops a personality dominating and saturnine, in later novels approaching the satanic. In the strange and deliberate crimes of his ultimate embodiment, he is far from the lighthearted rogues of the early picaresque stories, and the criminal
adventurers of DeFoe. The heroine is a beautiful and innocent young person of excessive sensibility, waiting to be rescued by a chivalrous lover. The scene is laid in a haunted castle, a cloister, a ruined abbey, fortunately equipped with subterranean passages and unused chambers. Nature, wild and desolate or softly melancholy, provides a congenial landscape for the action, and an incitement to the reader's mood. Incidents of physical and mental anguish are assisted by supernatural appearances; and through this melodramatic matter runs the thread of romantic love... With minor variations, such are the elements out of which, after The Castle of Otranto, a Gothic novel could be composed.13

The purpose of the novel was to provide an escape from reality, by thrilling the reader through a vicarious experience into the realms of the terrible and horrible and at the same time to point a moral by showing the eventual triumph of virtue over vice.

We have already noted the origins, and general outlines of the plots, types of characters, and qualities of the Gothic novel. Since we are interested primarily in one type of character, the monk, we shall now examine the causes which contributed to his rise as an important character in the Gothic novel. The appearance of clergymen in literature was not new. Friars, monks, priests, bishops, cardinals, and even popes had been frequently cast in leading roles in the dramas, poetry, and stories of all great literatures. A Friar Tuck, the Nun's Priest, Friar Laurence, Cardinal Wolsey, Thomas of Canterbury, the popes in Dante's Inferno, among others immediately come to mind. It was not unusual then that Gothic novelists saw immense possibilities in the monk character and at once capitalized on his potentialities.

The Gothic story had its background in a country of love and romance such as Italy or Spain. Both *The Castle of Otranto* and Mrs. Radcliffe's *The Italian* had settings in Italy, while *The Monk* of Lewis had for its locale, Spanish Madrid. What prompted these authors to choose such backgrounds? First, in their novels they wanted the thrilling, the terrible, the mysterious. Where better find these ingredients than in the Catholic countries of the Middle Ages, places and times so famous for a belief in the miraculous and the incredible, not to mention a wholehearted and unreasonable acquiescence in almost every manner of superstition? Catholics of this era as a matter of cold historical fact were simpler and more naive than we of a more sophisticated age. They were more prone to believe in the supernatural and miraculous, because they did have a stronger and more child-like faith. Historically speaking they were frequently duped in this faith. They had no difficulty in considering some wonderful event a miracle or some bone as the sainted relic of a holy man.

Furthermore, in these Catholic countries, notably in Italy, plots, intrigues, and continual feuds were being waged between rival princes and nobles, which very frequently led to murder. In these vendettas, bravos, the armed retainers of a rich and powerful lord, did not hesitate to resort to assassinations to do the bidding of their masters. These murderous struggles were made to order for the Gothic novelists and were incorporated

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into their plots.

The culture of the Middle Ages was Catholic. The clergy or hierarchy of the church—churchmen—held supreme power over the laity, for the simple reasons, that, first, they were usually the only educated people of the times; and secondly, being consecrated to God through their priestly offices, they were revered and respected by the people. These ecclesiastics, too, were frequently wealthy secular lords, since many preferred the merciful rule of a bishop to the tyranny often practiced by secular lords. The Middle Ages also saw the rise of the mendicant orders of religious men and women; the Dominicans were solemnly approved in 1216 and the Franciscans in 1223. The Capuchins and Carthusians also came into being at this time. These orders grew rapidly in numbers and in power as the monastic endowments and industry increased. Some monks and abbots became influential in European social and political life. Many of them became confessors to the nobles and their wives, others were court preachers, while others received high ecclesiastical preferment as a reward for their various talents. Thus, the monk, because he was a noteworthy member of the church, moving sometimes in "high society," because he lived in the romantic era of the Catholic Middle Ages, was an apt Character of prominence in the Gothic novel.

For dramatic purposes the monk character was naturally changed to depict qualities not always consonant with his manner of life. Since in these novels he must be a villain, his character must exhibit the worst traits of a villain. There was some
foundation in fact for such monk characters, as any true history of the pre-Protestant Revolt era will reveal. Beyond question there was some immorality among the religious and clergy of the times. In certain localities, notably in Germany, men who should have been consecrating their lives to God, were instead sacrificing them on the altars of pleasure and licentiousness. There were many shocking scandals. Still, such conditions were not universal nor as abominable as many historians maintain; nor was the Church essentially corrupt as many would like to affirm. Thus history indicated that the monk was a suitable character to be the scapegoat for every manner of criminal excess.

In the novels to be treated in this thesis we shall see that he, the monk, was often the most important character. Many Gothic stories were named after their monk villain. Montague Summers among others lists the following: Adventurers of a Jesuit, The Benevolent Monk, The Friar's Tale, Gonzalez the Monk, Mysterious Monk, The Monk of Madrid, The Black Monk, Amorous Friars, The Three Monks.

A Protestant hatred of everything Catholic also prompted these authors to deal with Catholic countries and characters in a way calculated to do injustice to the Church. Many of course were not conscious of actually attacking the Church, but were merely retailing the common opinions of their times. It is significant that of all the writers of these Gothic terrors only two were Catholics and they were definitely second rate authors.

With very few exceptions—Mrs. Sleath and Mrs. Yorke, for example were Catholics—the Gothic novelist beyond his vivid imaginings only knew the cloister, the abbey, the priory as a romantic ruin. Religious were a people unseen, unknown, of an infinite mystery. The French anticlerical literature gave fuel for the wildest fantasies.¹⁶

As an example of the gross ignorance and bitter attitude of some of these writers, the same writer states:

As we might expect, Bage in Hermesprong; or Man as He is Not (1796) is very severe and censorious: 'on the right, stand the ruins of a convent, many centuries the domicile of a succession of holy drones who buzzed about, sucked the fairest flowers of the vale, and stung where they could extract no honey.'¹⁷

To a reading public bitterly anti-Catholic such tales of Catholic superstitions and horrors would be most greedily acceptable. As usual the sensational was always swallowed without any questioning by a thrill-starved and scandal-conscious public. All ridicule heaped on Catholic institutions, on Catholic characters such as priests, monks, or nuns, would be cheerfully approved. Every exposure of papal duplicity, or intrigues with the devil, of dealings in all manner of superstition and necromancy was applauded as the gospel truth by the solely biblically minded and self-righteous people of England who knew nothing whatever.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 193.
good about anything Catholic having had all true knowledge of the Church rooted from their hearts during the cruel persecutions of Elizabeth and Cromwell.

That Protestants gloried in the monastic ruins encountered throughout England may be seen from a contemporary essay on "Monastic Institutions," written by J. Aikin in a collection of essays, poems, and Gothic novels published in 1773:

I happened the other day to take a solitary walk amongst the venerable ruins of an old Abbey. The stillness and solemnity of the place were favorable to thought and naturally led me to a train of ideas relative to the scene, when, like a good protestant, I began to indulge a secret triumph in the ruins of so many structures which I had always considered as the haunts of ignorance and superstition.

'Ye are fallen,' said I, 'ye dark and gloomy mansions of mistaken zeal, where the proud priest and lazy monk fattened upon the riches of the land, and crept like vermin from their cells to spread their poisonous doctrine through the nation and disturb the peace of kings. Obscure in their origin, but daring in their guilt'.

Later in the same essay the author gives the monks credit for preserving the knowledge of the ancient Greek and Latin classics for civilization and for their labors in civilizing the barbarous nations. Still he thinks the world "was better than it would have been without them;" and he hopes "that he, who knows how to bring good out of evil, has made them, in their day subservient to some useful purpose."

19 Ibid., p. 118.
This native ignorance was extended to foreign lands. Spain and Italy, though frequently visited by these authors, were still distant countries noted for their air of romance and mystery. Travel does not necessarily make a person broad-minded. Furthermore, Mrs. Radcliffe, for example, never visited Italy, though she describes Italian landscapes with the brush of a skilled artist. The authors not bounded by any regard for truth could stretch their imaginations to the breaking point and yet not offend against the laws of probability. Such freedom with the truth did not bother their consciences and certainly did enhance their powers of story telling. That most of these authors were blissfully ignorant of things Catholic is easily substantiated from some of the erroneous statements of fact found in their own works. For example, there is the abbot in Robert Huish's The Brothers; or The Castle of Niolo, who is continually invoking his holy patron St. Benedictine. Matthew Gregory Lewis wrote The Monk when he was not quite twenty years old. Perhaps for this reason we can excuse his many inaccuracies. When the monk Ambrosio, for example, becomes abbot he cannot leave his abbey except to preach each Thursday in the Capuchin church. The poor Clares, a rigidly cloistered order of religious women, have him as their father confessor, but since he cannot come to them, they will go to him. So after the sermon they march in procession behind their prioress through the streets of Madrid to the holy monk, the

time being close to midnight when they are to return. In the same novel Agnes, a young noblewoman, is about to be forced to take the veil of a religious. The help of the Cardinal Duke of Lerma is implored by her straightened lover. The Cardinal without so much as inquiring into the matter quickly obtains a papal bull which frees her from every obligation. In the meantime he urges the lover, his nephew, to abduct Agnes from the convent. When the wicked abbess laughs at the papal bull saying that Agnes had already died, another papal bull is obtained with express powers to imprison the wily religious superioress.

Mrs. Ann Radcliffe in The Italian; or, The Confessional of the Black Penitents (1797), shows her woeful ignorance of Catholicity by building her entire story around the theme of the breaking of the confessional seal. She states "for the confessor, you know, must never divulge, except indeed for extraordinary occasions." Summers comments further on her ignorance of Catholic life:

In Mrs. Radcliffe's The Italian, we meet a Dominican 'monk' who, 'appears' wrapt up in the black garments of his order, and who is able to absent himself from the Society for whole days together unquestioned and unchecked. Whilst Ellena is at the convent of San Stefano the 'vesper bell, at length summoned her to prepare for mass' which is celebrated in the evening,

22 Ibid., pp. 146-166.
23 Ibid., p. 235.
and the lady abbess of a Carmelite house leads a procession 'dressed in her pontifical robes, with the mitre on her head.' Ellena is a guest at the Ursaline convent. [Note the spelling of Ursaline for Ursuline]

Hence, we are not surprised that a Protestant minister, who found novel writing more profitable than his ministerial work, used the Gothic novel to show his hatred of the Catholic Church.

Maturin, in Melmoth the Wanderer (1820) has some extremely detailed and lurid descriptions of what he conceived monastic life in Spain might be, and in his last romance The Albigenses (1824) he writes with the most deep-rooted prejudice and in entire disrespect for history. But then Maturin was of French Protestant stock, he was curate of St. Peter's Dublin, from which pulpit he preached Six Sermons on the Errors of the Roman Catholic Church. 26

The position of Catholics in England at this time was not very favorable. The Catholic Emancipation Act did not come until 1829. Henry VIII had confiscated most of the monasteries and convents so that there were few left. "Instead of monasteries and convents there was something better, at least for the writers of Gothic tales, and that was the ruins of these celebrated abbeys, convents, and monasteries, such as those at Glastonbury, and Tintern, Fountains and Whitby."

Another Catholic institution completely misunderstood then as now was the Inquisition. The exaggerated horrors of this medieval tribunal were a favorite tool of the Gothic novelist when he needed some agency to inflict unjust suffering and

26 Ibid., p. 195.
27 Ibid., p. 197.
tortures on his innocent hero and heroine. At other times the tragic character of the monk himself was subjected ironically enough to the torture chambers of the Inquisition. As examples, we have Abbot Ambrosio in The Monk, Father Schedoni in The Italian, Schemoli in The Fatal Revenge, and Abbot Gonzal in Gonzal the Monk, all of whom are tried and justly convicted.

From the considerations given above we see how fitting was the occasion for the important role given to the monk in the Gothic novel. But besides the contributing circumstances already mentioned, there were also certain inherent qualities in the monk's personality which made him a suitable character for the performance of crafty and sinister deeds. The monk had renounced the world and buried himself in the comparative solitude of religious life. His spiritual life not very well known to outsiders, was especially mysterious to the ignorant English Gothic novelist. A certain air of mystery invested the monk and his religious life. His very habit, often a gloomy black, his ascetic life of severe penance and fasts, all contributed to make him a curious and mysterious person. Furthermore, he was usually a learned man, often gifted in the arts and sciences. Learning plus a mysterious character made him even more a potentially wicked person. Then when ordained in the Roman Catholic priesthood in truly mysterious and deeply symbolic ceremonies the cloak of the unreal was complete. What a sinister character he must be after so many Latin incantations had been breathed over him and after so many strange rituals had been acted over
his person. People easily fear what they do not understand. The life of a monk was not understood by the English writers of horror. Therefore, they easily made out the monk to be a fearful creature. It was difficult for a man to be a celibate; therefore, they concluded, it was impossible. Hence, to excite fear and dread in their readers the writers of Gothic tales depicted the monk as a mysterious, suspicious, and hateful character whose innate depravity led him to every manner of shameful vice and excess. Mario Praz notes this notion of sinisterism in the monk character:

At that time (1797) the chief source of mysterious crimes (that source of evil actions in which the British public is forced to believe by its innate Manicheism, whether it be a Machiavellian monster, as in the Elizabethan period, or a double-dyed criminal, as in the detective novels of today) was to be found in the Spanish and Italian Inquisition. Illuminism had pointed to the Roman Catholic much as an infamy which must be crushed, and the recent campaign of the states of Europe against the Society of Jesus had disclosed a sinister background of material interests. Schedoni, there is a monk; [there follows a description of Schedoni]28

For the purely literary function of dramatic necessity the monk was a highly suitable character. In theory and almost always in practice, he was a noble character— one set aside from the generality of mankind. In virtue of his special talents, of his holy vocation, his life in pursuit of the perfection of the counsels of Christ, he was revered by the faithful.

and devout Catholic, and at the same time he was respected and admired even by those who feared and hated him. This very hatred was a recognition of the monk's high aims in life. Hence, the fall of a monk from so lofty a position of honor and respect would be dramatically more tragic and interesting to a reading audience than the decline of another noble personage.

People too were somewhat accustomed to the character of the monk in literature.

The depravity and vices of monks and priests is an old theme in literature providing particularly in the days of the Reformation a fount of material for blame and satire. The fleshy and lazy monk with a bent for amorous adventures had become a veritable scapegoat in fold-tales, which invariably imposed great discomfiture on him in the end. In such tales he usually plays a humorous part but as soon as the narrator transfers his attention to graver matters, to the depiction of crime and horrors and every description of dangerous intrigue, the monk is ready to appear as the instigator of evil and a master of duplicity. 29

That the popularity of the Gothic novel was due to a great extent to the character of the monk is attested by the numerous successors of Abbot Ambrosio.

The best proof that the basic argument of Lewis' novel (The Monk) did accord with one of the truths thus silently acquiesced in is the fact, that, as though sprung from the earth, a series of sombre tragic phantoms of monks appeared to keep Ambrosio company, introducing into the romantic literature of England and the rest of Europe, a ghostly graveyard atmosphere. 30

30 Ibid., p. 177.
Although the monk became a stock character he was treated differently by the various Gothic novelists. Owing to this individual treatment the monk underwent a gradual evolution. Eino Raito comments on this transformation and gives several general causes for it.

It is not without interest to follow how these monk-types, which originally bore the devout and naively innocent physiognomy of the hermit, gradually became transformed -- in England as though in response to an outbreak of the puritan spirit and in France to the anti-clerical revolutionary spirit -- into the kind of representative of vileness and popery the Protestant would fain have seen in all such servants of the Roman Catholic Church. They became at the same time twin-brothers to the tyrant type and even assimilate certain general outward characteristics of that somber hero of romanticism. 31

Not every monk to be described in this thesis was a depraved monster of iniquity. Friar Jerome in The Castle of Otranto (1764) by Horace Walpole and Father Oswald in Clara Reeve's The Old English Baron (1777) belonged to this first hermit type mentioned by Raito. The transformation of the monk into the tyrant type was exhibited in five great Gothic monk heroes of tragedy: Abbot Ambrosio in The Monk (1795) by Matthew Gregory Lewis; Father Schedoni in The Italian (1796) by Mrs. Ann Radcliffe; Abbot Gondez in Gondez the Monk (1805) by William H. Ireland; the monk Schemoli in The Fatal Revenge (1807) by Charles R. Maturin; and Father Udolpho in The Monk of Udolpho (1807) by T. J. Horsely Curties. All are variations of the

sensual, proud, scheming, avengeing, immoral, tyrant type. Sir Walter Scott continued the Gothic tradition but only approached the monk-tyrant once, and that in Ivanhoe in the person of the Knight-Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert. Also in Ivanhoe there appears Scott's version of the traditional Friar Tuck. In The Monastery published in 1820, a year after Ivanhoe, appear two more monk characters, Abbot Boniface and the Sub-prior Eustace. These two characters are so far removed from the usual Gothic monk that one writer on English fiction adversely criticizes Scott's treatment of them and considers this a fault to be included along with his other obvious historical inaccuracies: "... The schoolboy knows that Amy Robsart did not meet death in the year Scott related... We object to the amiability of the churchmen in The Monastery;"

With this preliminary general discussion of the monk character we are now ready to proceed to a specific analysis of the monk in several typical Gothic novels.

CHAPTER II

THREE EARLY GOTHIC NOVELS

LONGSWORD, EARL OF SALISBURY, (1762) by THOMAS LELAND

THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO, (1764) by HORACE WALPOLE

THE OLD ENGLISH BARON, (1777) by CLARA REEVE

Historians of English Literature usually credit Horace Walpole with initiating the Gothic novel with The Castle of Otranto in 1764. Like all dates used to indicate the beginning or end of an historical era, it is only approximate. Two years earlier, there appeared a novel from which stemmed true historical Gothic as also the elements of Gothic plotting and characterization later to be found in Walpole's work. The background of this novel, however, is not as completely Gothic in spirit as Otranto or the Gothic tales which followed it. Longsword, Earl of Salisbury was published in two volumes anonymously by Thomas Leland an Irish university scholar and historian. Most critics consider this work as the first historical novel in English.

Of special interest to us is the first appearance of the criminal monk. In brief the story deals with the return of Lord William Longsword from France where he had been reported dead in the wars of Gascoigny and with his fight to regain his

royal demesnes from the usurping Raymond, nephew of the King's close adviser, Hubert. Raymond was seeking the hand of William's widow Ela and to achieve this end sought to kidnap their infant son. The son was taken to a convent where he was protected by William's loyal warden Oswald who also retired to the convent. At this juncture the villain monk Reginhald appeared. Summers describes the position of power he held in the religious community:

In the religious house to which Oswald retired with the heir, there dwelt a monk, called Reginhald. Insolent and assuming, he holds his place owing to the favour of Lord Raymond, so that his brethren scarce rebuke his drunkenness, and riot, and lewdness, and other scandalous excesses utterly subversive of holy discipline and order. They lament these enormities of their unworthy brother, but tremble lest if they punish him the vengeance of Lord Raymond fall on the house.

Reginhald is the first of a long line of criminal monks, most of whom we shall treat in this work. Summers remarks:

... The wicked monk, Reginhald, although rather crudely drawn, is, indeed, the ancestor of a whole progeny of villainous cowmen and friars, Schedonis, Manfrones, Conrads, Fra Udolphos, Maldichinis, Schemolis, Obandos, Malvicinos, Placio Corsos, Rovengos, Hildargos, Dorias, cum multis aliis quos nunc perscribere longum est.

Reginhald does not delay to carry out his nefarious schemes. An insight into his physical makeup, again the model for subsequent monk characters is given by Summers:

3 Ibid., p. 160.
When Reginhald learns the state of affairs from his brother, he at once has Oswald and the heir closely watched, and is eager for violence. He even visits the Countess Ela and contrives to purloin an ancient and precious jewel, a ring. The Lady, although admitting him when he named the brotherhood of Sarum, viewed him with repulsion. 'His aspect, in which the sensual and malignant passions had fixed their seat, and his deportment, which was that of the rude hind or midnight brawler, not of the holy and lettered clerk, were surveyed by the Countess with sudden disgust,' which is not lessened when he vehemently advocates the cause of Lord Raymond. Presently Reginhald by use of the ring induces the Abbot to entrust young William to himself.

Incited by his two evil agents, Lord Raymond announced his nuptials with the unwilling widow. He invaded her apartments and was going through the marriage ceremony before the impious monk, when a messenger brought news that the Earl of Salisbury was hastening to the castle. The Earl was put off by being informed that his Countess had already married Lord Raymond. The Earl, therefore, went to consult the King. King Henry was too weak to oppose his counsellor Hubert and since he was helpless, tried to smooth matters over. Reginhald then secretly visited Hubert who gave him a deadly poison to pour into Lord William's wine at an opportune moment. The monk poured this phial of poison into a bowl of wine about to be served to the Lord. As he saw the cup raised to his lips he left in a state

of exultant joy to inform Raymond of the good news of William's death. As it turned out William was interrupted from taking the deadly potion by the sudden appearance of a long lost friend and in the excitement dropped the glass to the floor. Thinking William dead, Lord Raymond began to feel remorse and proceeded to take out his remorseful anger on his false friends, including the monk Reginhald. More crimes of Reginhald were discovered by the monks and realizing now that he no longer enjoyed the protection of Raymond, they determined to punish him. When Raymond learnt that William still lived, he blamed his precarious position on Reginhald and in a rage ordered his followers to hang the unfortunate monk from the branches of a tree. Rather than face the charges of his own guilt, Raymond fell on his sword. William, the Earl of Salisbury arrived at the castle and was re-united to his wife and heir.

Reginhald is a prototype of Father Schedoni. Like Schedoni he is disliked by his religious brethren and for the same reason, his ambition. He also essays to keep separated two lovers, in this case, husband and wife. He is the tool of Lord Raymond as Schedoni is the tool of the Marchesa Vivaldi. Unlike Schedoni Reginhald's crimes are well-known to the community of monks. His crimes eventually bring about his downfall, though not in the same dramatic fashion in which Schedoni is brought to justice at the hands of the Inquisition.

Walpole may have read Longsword, Earl of Salisbury. If he did, he failed to make his Friar Jerome a villainous monk,
preferring rather to concentrate his Gothicism on the castle itself. Leland used no supernatural machinery, but developed his plot according to the more natural method of cause and effect. The instance of poisoning, and chance coincidence of William's failure to drink the poisoned cup when his old friend arrived, were common enough devices to extricate his hero from danger. This novel, then, is Gothic not so much because of terrifying ghosts, and mysterious portents, but chiefly because of the horrors and thrills found in the intrigues and murderous intent of the characters. As already mentioned its importance lies in the fact that it was the first attempt at an historical novel and that it gave a monk model which was to be used frequently in later more-Gothic romances.

Horace Walpole wrote his major contribution to fiction, The Castle of Otranto, in 1764, as the result of a dream. Oswald Doughty in the introduction to his edition of the novel sums up what Walpole himself had written in various letters:

... Throughout the years of his residence at Strawberry, of his 'gothic' studies, impressions had been accumulating, charging his imagination, penetrating his subconscious self, until now they clamored for an outlet with irresistible force. In dreams they fought their way to consciousness. He awoke one morning of early June moved by the memory of a vivid dream that had come to him on the preceding night; all day its influence was strong upon him and when evening came, he took his pen and began to write.5

Within eight days the tale was finished. Walpole then spent two months polishing up the story. Realizing the shock the appearance of the book would make and the ridicule that might fall upon him, if he published the tale under his own name, he decided to hide his authorship of the novel. A method came to him from his familiarity with Gothic manners. What could be easier than to pass it off as a translation of a long lost MS? So he asserted that the work was "translated by William Marshall, Gent. From the Original Italian of Onuphrio Murillo, Canon of the Church of St. Nicholas at Otranto." In a translator's preface he justified the work and prepared the reader for the unusual story:

Belief in every kind of prodigy was so established in those dark ages, that an author would not be faithful to the manner of the times who should omit all mention of them... If this air of the miraculous is excused the reader will find nothing else unworthy of his perusal. Allow the possibility of the facts, and all the actors comport themselves as persons would do in their situation... The rules of the drama are almost observed throughout the conduct of the piece. The characters are well drawn, and still better maintained. Terror, the author's principal engine, prevents the story from ever languishing; and it is so often contrasted by pity, that the mind is kept up in a constant vicissitude of interesting passion.

So the author hoped to interest his reader, but he failed to mention the chief merit of his work, its brevity. The action

7 Ibid., p. lxxii.
does move along swiftly as the author promised. "The characters are well drawn,"—perhaps in Walpole's own mind, but to the reader they are colorless types, almost entirely lacking in delineation. Since Walpole looked on his characters as actors, no attempt is made to give the reader an idea of any physical qualities of the characters. All we know of Manfred's daughter Matilda is that she is "a most beautiful virgin." His son Conrad is "a homely youth, sickly, and of no promising disposition." The physical appearances of Manfred, Isabella, Hippolita (wife to Manfred), Friar Jerome are in no way described; however, from their roles and actions we can gather some idea of their appearances and some knowledge of their mental and moral qualities. But for the most part they are mere types subordinated entirely to the plot and the supernatural background of the story. In fact it can well be stated that the Castle itself is the hero of the story.

Walpole had lived in Italy for many years and enjoyed the romantic Italian way of life, so different from the reserved stoicism of England and the hustle and bustle of London. In Italy he saw many friars and probably took some typical, ordinary parish priest as the model for Friar Jerome. The church of St. Nicholas had for its counterpart a church of the same name in Italy, though most probably not in Otranto. The castle was the imaginative production of Walpole's Gothic-filled mind.

8 Ibid., p. 1
9 Idem.
When Walpole sent a copy of the first edition of his novel to Gray, the latter knew at once that Walpole was its author from the church which he described. Evidently both of them remembered it from their stay together in Italy.

A brief summary of the story will help us to understand the role of Friar Jerome better. Conrad, the only son of Manfred, Duke of Otranto, is to marry Isabella, daughter of Frederic, Marquis of Vicenza, but is mysteriously crushed to death under a gigantic helmet on the very night of the wedding. Manfred is in reality an usurper, and is fearful that his claim on the dukedom has now come to an end. So he proposes to marry Isabella, since Hippolita, his wife, cannot bear him any more sons. With the help of an unknown youth Isabella flees through subterranean passages to safety in the church of St. Nicholas. Friar Jerome, who is confessor to Hippolita, comes from the church to console the distraught wife. Manfred captures the youth, named Theodore, and is about to kill him for his insolence and suspected aid to Isabella, when the Friar recognizes him as his long lost son and begs for his life. Jerome had taken sacred orders when his wife and son had been carried off by bandits. Duke Frederic comes to claim his daughter, but Manfred refuses to give her up. In his search for her, Frederic is wounded by Theodore who defends her against his attempts. His wounds are not fatal, and he eventually agrees to a double wedding: himself with Matilda, the daughter of Manfred, and Manfred with Isabella, provided Hippolita gives Manfred a divorce.
Friar Jerome is ordered by Manfred to use his influence on Hippolita to bring about a divorce, but the monk hopes that his son will eventually marry Isabella, although Theodore actually is in love with Matilda. Manfred is led by the good Father to suspect that Theodore desires Isabella. Manfred then stages a sumptuous banquet and while under the influence of drink sees Theodore talking to a young woman. Without further inquiry he stabs her in the back, only to learn to his amazement that she is his daughter. At last brought to his senses, Manfred realizes the futility of fighting against fate, resigns his dukedom, admitting his false title to it. As son of Jerome, Theodore turns out to be a noble prince and rightful heir to the dukedom of Otranto. He marries Isabella, while Manfred and Hippolita retire to a monastery and convent respectively.

As has been mentioned, we know nothing of the physical traits of Friar Jerome. From his words and actions, we can deduce something of his intellectual and moral qualities. The first glimpses of his character come when Manfred suspects him of sheltering Isabella in the church. Walpole describes the Friar response: "the good man replied with an air of firmness and authority, that daunted even the resolute Manfred, who could not help revering the saint-like virtues of Jerome." In the monk's own words this firmness is expressed:

The Friar resolutely refused to approve Manfred's request that he urge Hippolita to ask for a dissolution of their marriage, so that the Duke could marry Isabella. Nor would a rich bribe move him even though he loved his order very much. However, the Friar knew well that Manfred was capable of desperate deeds and would easily ignore his advice or threats. So when Manfred revealed a scruple he had about the legality of his union with Hippolita, Jerome saw in this an opportunity to delay for time. We thus have the first instance of duplicity in his character.

... How cutting was the anguish which the good man felt, when he perceived this turn in the wily prince! He trembled for Hippolita, whose ruin he saw was determined; and he feared if Manfred had no hope of recovering Isabella, that his impatience for a son would direct him to some other object, who might not be equally proof against the temptations of Manfred's rank.13

So the monk took time out to think over his position.

... At length conceiving some hope from delay, he thought the wisest conduct would be to prevent the prince from despairing of recovering Isabella.

12 Ibid., p. 36.
13 Ibid., p. 37.
Her the friar knew he could dispose, from her affection to Hippolita, and from the aversion she had expressed to him for Manfred's addresses to second his views, till the censures of the church could be fulminated against a divorce. With this intention, as if struck with the prince's scruples, he at length said: 'My lord, I have been pondering on what your highness has said; and if in truth it is delicacy of conscience that is the real motive of your repugnance to your virtuous lady, far be it from me to endeavor to harden your heart.' Manfred was overjoyed at this sudden turn, and repeated the most magnificent promises, if he should succeed by the friar's mediation. The well-meaning priest suffered him to deceive himself, fully determined to traverse his views, instead of seconding them.  

A second instance of the friar's duplicity turned out very tragically and far otherwise than the monk supposed. Manfred had asked him whether the unknown youth was in any way connected with the flight of Isabella.  

The friar, who knew nothing of the youth, but what he had learnt occasionally from the princess, ignorant what was become of him and not sufficiently reflecting on the impetuosity of Manfred's temper, conceived that it might not be amiss to sow the seeds of jealousy in his mind; they might be turned to some use hereafter, either by prejudicing the prince against Isabella, if he persisted in that union; or by diverting his attention on a wrong scent, and employing his thoughts on a visionary intrigue, prevent his engaging in any new pursuit. With this unhappy policy, he answered in a manner to confirm Manfred in the belief of some connection between Isabella and the youth.  

It was this mistake in judgment which was the occasion of the fatal death of Matilda at the hands of her own father. This  

14 Ibid., p. 38  
15 Ibid., pp. 38, 39.
stabbing seems lacking in plausibility. If Manfred was so drunkenly mad that he had to stab someone, why did he stab the girl and not the man? If he stabbed the girl he must have known that she would be either his daughter, Matilda, or Isabella, the girl he wanted to marry. We may explain his action by way of poetic justice, admitting that he was so far out of his mind that he merely stabbed a figure, not knowing whether it was a man or a woman, or thinking that it was the youth.

The friar's noble courage is shown when he discovers that Theodore is his son. He pleads for his son's life at the feet of Manfred and eventually gains his objective, but only upon accepting a further risk. He must secure the dissolution of Manfred's marriage with Hippolita and bring Isabella back from her sanctuary in the church of St. Nicholas. The friar is torn between love for his son and a desire to do his priestly duty.

He trembled for the life of his son, and his first thought was to persuade Isabella to return to the castle. Yet he was scarce less alarmed at the thought of her union with Manfred. He dreaded Hippolita's unbounded submission to the will of her lord; and though he did not doubt but he could alarm her piety not to consent to the divorce, if he could get access to her; yet should Manfred discover that the obstruction came from him, it might be equally fatal to Theodore... he did not dare absent himself from the convent lest Isabella leave it and her flight be imputed to him. He returned disconsolably to the monastery, uncertain on what to resolve.16

To Jerome's credit he always opposed the acceptance of a

16 Ibid., p. 49.
divorce by Hippolita and from pure motives.

The role of the friar in the story is important. As confessor and adviser to Hippolita he is a foil to Manfred. He is a simple, conscientious and pious priest, whose only attempts at duplicity are naive when compared with the clever machinations of a Father Schedoni. Unlike Schedoni he is not ambitious for any high ecclesiastical position; nor is he anxious to enrich his own monastery. Unlike the Abbot Ambrosio he is not a gross sensualist. He does not continue the character of the monk Reginhald before him, who is the tool in the hands of a prince much like Manfred. Though Jerome's virtues are not described as being heroic in stature, he must have had some strength of character to oppose a prince as headstrong as Manfred is made out to be. On the other hand the friar is not overpowered by a strong passion which drives him to perdition, a fate which overtakes most of the monks who follow him in subsequent Gothic tales.

Though a more or less colorless character, Jerome shows to advantage when compared with the other characters in the story. In contrast to Manfred who exhibited a hot temper and strong self will, the friar always remained calm and cool. His mind is keen in seeing through the prince's wily plans for advancing his own projects. As confessor and adviser to Hippolita he knows her character completely. She is weak willed and of so charitable a disposition that she can think no evil of anyone, not even of her own husband who she knows is trying to get rid of her. Theodore likewise places his entire fate in the friar's hands.
Of all the characters in *The Castle of Otranto*, Friar Jerome is the most interesting. As a pious priest whose "office is to promote peace, to heal divisions, to preach repentance and teach mankind to curb their headstrong passions," he has direct relations with every other character. He is as Railo points out the model for the monk character of that particular period.

In such form the man of the Church appears in all the romances now in question—a further example being Clara Reeve’s Father Oswald—and is in my opinion, a derivation of the hermit motive... In his present guise, owing to his excessive virtue and piousness, the monk is lacking in real romantic fascination and must therefore be transformed into a wolf in sheep’s clothing before the romanticists could succeed in making of him that embodiment of human crime which is to be his in the future.17

Walpole took this further step in his Gothic drama *The Mysterious Mother* (1768), in which he gives us two more monk characters, one of whom Benedict is prepared to do anything to promote the welfare of the Church. Benedict, therefore, much more than Friar Jerome became the prototype as far as Walpole’s contribution to the future monk is concerned, for such characters of the terror-romanticists whom we shall meet in Abbot Ambrosio, Father Schedoni and others.

Though an amateur novelist Walpole gave the impetus to the Gothic tale, which more experienced writers were to advance to still greater heights.

Clara Reeve wrote *The Champion of Virtue*, a Gothic Story in 1777. The second edition (1780) bore the changed title: *The Old English Baron,* by which it is known today. It is difficult to see why the author named the story for Baron Fitzowen, a passive and less important character than Edmund, for whom the first edition had been named. Perhaps the author thought the original title unattractive to the reader who wanted to read about terrifying events, and not about virtue. In this novel Miss Reeve thought she would improve on the technique of the Gothic tale as executed by Walpole. In the preface to her novel she indicated her dislike for the utter improbability of the supernatural events in *Otranto* and showed how she intended to avoid "his mistakes."

... the machinery is so violent that it destroys the effect it is intended to excite. Had the story been kept within the utmost verge of probability the effect had been preserved. For instance, we can conceive and allow the appearance of a ghost, we can even dispense with an enchanted sword and helmet, but then they must be kept within certain limits of credibility. A sword so large as to require a hundred men to lift it, a helmet that by its own weight forces a passage through a courtyard into an arched vault. ... when your expectation is wound up to the highest pitch, these circumstances take it down with a witness, destroy the work of imagination, and instead of attention, excite laughter. ... In the course of my observation upon this singular book, it seemed to me that it was possible to compose a work upon the same plan, wherein these defects might be avoided.19

19 Clara Reeve, *The Old English Baron,* Ballantyne Novelists etc., ut supra, p. 602.
The common sense of Miss Reeve took pains to invent natural and reasonable explanations for most of the mysteries in her story in which practice she was followed by Mrs. Radcliffe, her more imaginative successor.

Walpole read Miss Reeve's novel and found it very disappointing. Shorn of all preternatural agencies except a weak ghost character in armor, it could not thrill the author of Otranto. He describes the tale as "Otranto reduced to reason and probability" and declares 'that any murder trial at the Old Bailey would have made a more interesting story.'

Sir Walter Scott in his "prefatory Memoir to Miss Reeve," comments somewhat favorably on her technique, but defends Walpole's use of the supernatural against her objections.

Her dialogue is sensible, easy, and agreeable, but neither marked by high flights of fancy, or strong bursts of passion. Her apparition is an ordinary fiction, of which popular superstition used to furnish a thousand instances, when nights were long, and a family had little better to do, when assembled round a Christmas log, than to listen to such tales. . . In no part of The Old English Baron, or any other of her works, does Miss Reeve show the possession of a rich or powerful imagination.

She seems to use the ghost of Lord Lovel unwillingly, but she does use the preternatural. Therefore, continues Scott, why not go the entire distance and make the ghost complete.

Scott's defense of the supernatural will be shown more at length.

23 Ibid., p. lxxxiii.
when we treat of Mrs. Radcliffe, whose technique resembled that of Miss Reeve.

Miss Clara Reeve was the daughter of a clergyman who gave her all the education she ever received. Isolated from the world and educated in accord with the strictest religious principles of her father, she naturally wrote novels "marked by excellent good sense, pure morality, and a competent command of those qualities which constitute a good romance." In fact The Old English Baron might well have been written by a Catholic, so packed is it with virtuous precepts and the observance of Catholic customs. For example, when the knight Sir Philip Harclay

stopped at the place where his faithful servant was buried and caused masses to be said for the repose of his soul... he then looked round his neighborhood for objects of his charity; when he saw merit in distress, it was his delight to raise and support it, he spent his time in the service of his Creator, and glorified him in doing good to his creatures.

This Catholic atmosphere is shown especially in the character of Father Oswald, the chaplain and confessor to the castle of Baron Fitzowen, in whom we are chiefly interested in this study.

The main theme of the novel is the common story of an unknown and apparently low-born youth who has been wrongfully dispossessed of his patrimony by a base uncle and the process whereby his fortune and inheritance is restored to him.

Before discussing the character of Father Oswald we shall give a brief summary of the plot of the story: Walter Lovel, envious of his brother's high rank and covetous of his wife, brought about his death on his return from a military campaign, but informed his wife that he had been killed in action. When Lady Lovel, his sister-in-law, refused to marry him, he ordered her to be drowned in a river. Before being drowned she gave birth to a son, who was found later by Andrew Twyford who took the baby to his home after burying the dead mother. The usurping Lovel then took possession of the Lovel castle as next of kin. Unhappy in his ill-gotten property, he sold it to Baron Fitzowen. The boy, Edmund Twyford, was unhappy and unloved by his foster-parents and soon was sent to the castle of the Baron Fitzowen to live with the Baron's two sons William and Robert, daughter, Emma, and his two nephews, Wenlock and Markham. While there Edmund slept in a haunted apartment of the castle which had not been used since the deaths of the first Lovels. In a dream he saw Lord and Lady Lovel who told him that he was their son and rightful heir to the Lovel castle. Joseph, the only servant remaining from the old household, informed Edmund and Father Oswald of the truth about the deaths of his Lord and Lady Lovel. In a search through the haunted apartment they discovered the remains of Lord Lovel. Under pressure Margery Twyford told what she knew about Edmund's birth and the death of his mother. Edmund then sought the help of Sir Philip Harclay, a dear friend of his father. In a duel Sir Philip defeated Walter Lovel, who
then confessed his crimes. Edmund, of course, married Emma and assumed his rightful position as Lord Lovel. The usurping uncle was banished to Asia.

Like her predecessor Walpole, Miss Reeve gives us no physical description of Father Oswald, preferring to make him a dramatic actor and so permit the reader to learn of his various qualities from his words and actions. As pointed out in a recent Doctoral Dissertation on the subject of character, this dramatic portrayal is "the most attractive and poetically effective method... the expert artist will show, rather than describe, his characters; will make them live before us in distinctive, fully human deeds, words, and gestures."

Father Oswald in many ways resembles Friar Jerome. He is a pious priest who enjoys the complete respect and confidence of Baron Fitzowen. He is a learned man whom the Baron has retained to teach his sons, in addition to performing the usual priestly functions at the castle. When Edmund comes to the castle, Father Oswald quickly develops a strong affection for the youth. He soon notices that Edmund is outshining the baron's sons and nephews, though the youth is not supposed to be of noble birth. Oswald watched the growing envy of the elder son Robert and of his two cousins Wenlock and Markham towards Edmund:

... he saw through the mean artifices that were used to undermine him in his patron's favour; he watched their machinations, and

strove to frustrate their designs.

The good man used frequently to walk out with Edmund. They conversed upon various subjects; and the youth would lament to him upon the unhappiness of his situation, and the peculiar circumstances that attended him. The father by his wholesome advice, comforted him in his resolution of bearing unavoidable evils with patience and fortitude, and from the consciousness of his own innocence, and assurance of a future and eternal reward.27

We thus see an outstanding trait of Father Oswald—his trust in providence. When Edmund asked him of the mystery surrounding the death of the Lady Lovel, the priest replied:

"Alas... that is only known to God; there were strange thoughts in the minds of many at that time. I had mine, but I will not disclose them, not even to you. I will not injure those who are innocent; and I leave it to providence, who will doubtless in his own best time and manner, punish the guilty."28

When Edmund again confided to the Father that he was disturbed at the hostile attitude of the three youths with whom he lived, but that he had determined to act according to his conscience and trust in Providence, the priest continued to encourage him in his holy resolution:

"I see it too, with great concern," said Oswald; "and everything I can say or do in your favor is misconstrued, and by seeking to do you service, I lose my own influence... put your trust in God—He who brought light out of darkness, can bring good out of evil."29

28 Ibid., p. 616.
29 Idem.
He advised him to be patient under trial. In the meantime he would attempt to represent the truth to the Baron. He hoped that perhaps the cause of their enmity could be removed. "Continue to observe the same irreproachable conduct; and be assured that Heaven will defend your innocence and defeat the unjust designs of your enemies."

Father Oswald accompanied Edmund to the haunted apartment where they both learned from the old servant Joseph the truth about the deaths of Lord and Lady Lovel. On the priest's suggestion they then questioned Edmund's foster mother. She admitted that Edmund was not her son and that her husband had buried the body of Lady Lovel, his mother. As proof she produced some of the Lady's clothing which her husband had hidden.

Edmund then went to get the aid of Sir Philip Harclay. At this point we meet the single instance of dissembling on the part of the priest. Edmund had written two notes, one to William who had shown him friendship, and the other to the Baron, both explaining in a vague fashion his departure. It was up to the priest to deliver these notes, as if left behind by Edmund.

About dawn of day Oswald intended to lay his packets in the way of those to whom they were addressed. After much contrivance, he determined to take a bold step, and, if he were discovered to frame some excuse. Encouraged by his late success, he went on tip-toe in Master William's chamber, placed a letter upon his pillow.

30 Ibid., p. 616.
and withdrew unheard. Exulting in his heart, he attempted the Baron's apartment, but found it fastened within. Finding this scheme frustrated he waited till the hour the Baron was expected down to breakfast and laid the letter and the key of the haunted apartment upon the table. 31

When questioned by the Baron about Edmund's departure, Oswald affected surprise, feigning ignorance as to what the youth had done or where he had gone. He knew of Edmund's departure, though he was not sure where he had gone. Of all his actions, this instance of duplicity is the most serious charge that can be placed against the good father.

Naturally, Wenlock was not satisfied with Oswald's apparent lack of information. Wishing to extricate himself from an embarrassing position, Oswald offered to call Joseph to discuss possible reasons for Edmund's disappearance, hoping beforehand to acquaint the servant with the real cause, so that both of them would be safe in whatever they said. Wenlock was suspicious of this move and stopped him from going to summon Joseph.

"No, father, . . . you must stay with us; we need your ghostly counsel and advice. Joseph shall have no private conference with you."--

'What mean you,' said Oswald, 'to insinuate to my lord against me or Joseph? But your ill will spares nobody. It will one day be known who is the disturber of the peace of this family; I wait for that time, and am silent.' 32

The firmness of the priest's reply made Wenlock pause; but when they arrived at the haunted apartment, the youth became

31 Ibid., p. 629.
32 Ibid., p. 630.
sarcastic and tauntingly asked Father Oswald to introduce them to the ghost. The priest ignored the question and countered whether Wenlock knew where they should find Edmund:

'Do you think,' said he, 'that he lies hid in my pocket or in Joseph's?''—'Tis no matter,' answered he, 'thoughts are free.'—'My opinion of you sir,' said Oswald, 'is not founded upon thoughts—I judge of men by their action, a rule, I believe, it will not suit you to be tried by.' 'None of your insolent admonition, father,' returned Wenlock: 'this is neither the time nor the place for them.'—'That is truer than you are aware of, sir: I mean not to enter into the subject just now.'

The priest had come off successfully in this bitter exchange of words. He had said nothing to betray the confidence of Edmund.

Edmund soon returned with Sir Philip Harclay. Andrew Twyford was summoned to reveal his knowledge of Edmund's birth and the death of his mother. The Baron was surprised at this turn of events. He did not oppose Sir Philip's determination to bring Walter Lovel to justice. Lovel was summoned. The Baron tried to dissuade Sir Philip from settling justice in a duel. Nor apparently did Father Oswald oppose it. Naturally, Sir Philip won the encounter, by wounding his opponent seriously. Lovel then admitted his guilt, made restitution to the Baron, and declared Edmund true Lord of the castle. Edmund married Emma, the Baron's daughter, and the usurper agreed to leave England.

33 Ibid., p. 630.
The characters in The Old English Baron are more types than individuals. Baron Fitzowen is passive throughout the story, always waiting for something to happen. Edmund is the pure, faultless youth, unjustly cheated out of his inheritance. Sir Philip Harclay is the brave, generous knight who comes along to right the injustice. Joseph is the typical, faithful old servant who necessarily knows the family secrets to be divulged at the right time. Wenlock shows some signs of character delineation, in his stubborn opposition to the priest. Emma is the usual innocent and modest heroine frequently "with tears on her cheek, sweetly blushing like the damask rose with the dew of morning." Among all these characters Father Oswald stands out. He, too, is the pure, unselfish, high principled priest, but we seem to know more about him than we do about Friar Jerome. He is the adviser to the Baron; he encourages Edmund in actions to find the truth about his birth; he is a foil to the suspicious and envious Wenlock; he initiates every action which eventually leads to the solution of the mystery. Thus he is a truly active character.

In general, there is a lack of individual characterization which Scott notes and which he considers one reason for the monotony of the tale.

The total absence of peculiar character,—for every person introduced is rather described as one of a genus than as an original, discriminated, and individual,—may have its effect in producing the taedium which loads
the story in some places.

Though not guilty of the duplicity of Friar Jerome, Father Oswald shows a lack of moral stature when he fails to oppose the duel of Sir Philip with Walter Lovel. In the conflict of wills he also shows himself inferior to the friar. Because of her ignorance of the world and her own tender nature, Miss Reeve was unable to endow her priest character with the strength which Walpole gave to Jerome. In Wenlock, an immature youth Oswald did not have the opposition of a headstrong prince such as Manfred. If anything, the lord of the manor, Baron Fitzowen, is on the side of the priest, or at least does not oppose him. The nature of Father Oswald is even more tender than that of Jerome. In other respects the two monk characters are on the same level. Thus Oswald continued the pious, hermit type, until Matthew Gregory "Monk" Lewis, by way of vigorous reaction, gave us the complex character of Abbot Ambrosio, and Mrs. Radcliffe, though a lady like Miss Reeve, produced her masterful character, Father Schedoni.

With Father Oswald we have completed the treatment of three monk characters. The monk Reginbald in Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, though crudely drawn, exhibits more of the evil tendencies of the future monk villain than either Jerome or Oswald. These latter merely kept the monk character in an important role in the Gothic novel. We now come to the great monk characters.

CHAPTER III

SIX MONK VILLAINS

ABBOT AMBROSIO (THE MONK) 1795 by MATTHEW GREGORY LEWIS
FATHER SCHEDONI (THE ITALIAN) 1796 by MRS. ANN RADCLIFFE
FATHER CONRAD (THE MYSTERIOUS PREGNANCY) 1796 by JOSEPH FOX
ABBOT GONDEZ (GONDEZ THE MONK) 1805 by WILLIAM H IRELAND
MONK SCHEMOLI (THE FATAL REVENGE) 1807 by CHARLES R. MATURIN
FATHER UDOLPHO (THE MONK OF UDOLPHO) 1807 by T.J. HORSLEY CURTIES

Twelve years were to elapse before a noteworthy Gothic novel appeared after The Old English Baron. In 1789 Mrs. Ann Radcliffe published The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne. Three more novels soon came from her pen: in 1790, A Sicilian Romance; in 1791, The Romance of the Forest; and in 1794, her famous The Mysteries of Udolpho. It was this last named book which fired Matthew Gregory Lewis to write The Monk. In this novel we have in Abbot Ambrosio, the monk character who marks a tremendous leap in the development of the personality of the monk over the type represented by Friar Jerome and Father Oswald. Lewis published this tale when not quite twenty years of age in 1795. Lewis had read most of the Gothic novels since Otranto, and had especially been influenced by the works of Mrs. Radcliffe. As we shall see, he failed to follow the good points of her literary technique. In order to thrill the reader he became starkly

-49-
realistic. Unlike Mrs. Radcliffe he was unable to imply action, to suggest the fulfillment of a horrible deed, or to intimate the interior struggles of his characters, but must paint these in their most lurid and detailed colors. Lovett and Hughes describe this rough technique of Lewis:

In the physical basis of his horrors Lewis's melodrama is on a lower plane than that of his predecessors; his effects are less romantic and more sensational. Human perversion is here a source of horror more powerful than the supernatural. In depicting the monk's violent deeds in all their abnormality, in describing the tortures inflicted upon its victims by the Inquisition, as well as in the satanic fury of the catastrophe, Lewis utilizes visual detail and emotional excess to a degree unparalleled in earlier novels of terror.

The German influences on Lewis must not be minimized. At the age of eighteen his father, intending him for a diplomatic career sent him to Weimar in Germany. Here the young Lewis met Goethe and other German writers, learned German, and read many of the German productions of the period. He professed himself greatly stirred by Goethe's Leiden des jungen Werther (1774), which had speedily spread over Europe. Here he also became familiar with the Teutonic "resuscitations of feudalism, monasticism, ghosts, and hobgoblins... including the Inquisition, the wandering Jew, and the bleeding nun." These last two legends Lewis incorporated into The Monk, but since they are only episodes, we shall not treat them in any detail.

2 Ibid., p. 234.
Ambrosio was the Abbot of the Capuchin monastery in Madrid, in the prime of his life, famous for his eloquence as a preacher and holiness as a monk. Lewis, unlike his predecessors Walpole and Miss Reeve, to achieve more terrifying effects in his readers, describes in detail the physical traits of his monk hero. He is leaving the pulpit of the Capuchin church where he had just preached:

He was a man of noble port and commanding presence. His stature was lofty and features uncommonly handsome. His nose was aquiline, his eyes large, black and sparkling, and his brows almost joined together. His complexion was of a deep but clear brown; study and watching had entirely deprived his cheek of color. Tranquility reigned upon his smooth unwrinkled forehead; and content, expressed upon every feature, seemed to announce the man equally unacquainted with cares and crimes. He bowed himself with humility to the audience. Still there was a certain severity in his look and manner that inspired universal awe, and few could sustain the glance of his eye, at once fiery and penetrating. Such was Ambrosio, abbot of the Capuchins, and surnamed The Man of Holiness.

Both Friar Jerome and Father Oswald are more or less static characters, but Abbot Ambrosio undergoes a complete psychological transformation during the action of the novel. Lewis traces this development of Ambrosio in detail. He explains why the abbot could fall so easily and so far. We may not agree with the author that there was sufficient time and reflection

on the part of the monk to make his ruin plausible, but we must admit that the author's explanation is fundamentally sound and even in accord with the teachings of the best writers on asceticism. There does seem to be an insignificant spiritual struggle before Ambrosio's fall; he is made out to be too great a sinner who turns into a beast, and thus kills the very pity his fate at first aroused. But "Corruptio optimi est pessimi" and Ambrosio was reputed to be a man of the highest sanctity.

Ambrosio lived in the atmosphere of a monastery from his childhood days. As a foundling he had been discovered by the monks on the doorsteps of the monastery. The monks considered him a gift from the Virgin and took him to be educated as a future member of their order. He was taught by the abbot that no happiness existed outside the cloister. The other monks treated him as the darling of the monastery. They carefully rooted out all the noble virtues which naturally emanated from the youth; they allowed him to be vain and proud; to have his own way; to be ambitious for preferment; they made of him their idol who could do no wrong. He never conversed with the other sex and was apparently ignorant of everything and even of the purpose of sex. There seems to be an inconsistency in this lack of knowledge, for if Ambrosio were the learned man and popular confessor he was supposed to be, he would have to possess a theological knowledge of all manner of sins in order to give correct moral guidance to his penitents in the confessional.

In an endeavor to make Ambrosio before his fall as pure as possible, I think the author has somewhat overshot the realms of probability. On the other hand it is true that many priests of the period were woefully lacking in such fundamental knowledge.

The devil saw in Ambrosio a worthwhile victim of his machinations. A clever psychologist he began to tempt the monk in small things. He led Ambrosio to a spiritual pride because of his virtues, and to conceit on account of his great reputation as a preacher, confessor, and abbot. The devil next caused the monk to become unduly attached to the holy picture of a woman saint which he kept in his room, a picture which was in reality the facsimile of a beautiful girl named Matilda. Satan's next move was to send Matilda (already in league with him) disguised as a novice, Rosario, to enter the novitiate of the monastery. Here as the boy Rosario she immediately won the affection of the abbot who was greatly flattered and encouraged by her filial love for him. Having won Ambrosio's heart, Rosario became sullen in mood and threatened to leave the order to lead the life of a hermit. This threat pained Ambrosio. Finally, Rosario in feigned seriousness asked the abbot to help her and never to abandon her. The abbot replied: "To give up your society would be to deprive myself of the greatest pleasure of my life. Then reveal to me what afflicts you and believe me while I solemnly swear." Rosario then proceeded to draw a solemn promise from

\[6 \text{ Ibid., p. 42.}\]
Ambrosio that even when he should become aware of her secret
he would not oblige her to leave the monastery until her novitiate
was over. The abbot replied: "I promise it faithfully; and as I
keep my vows to you may Christ keep His to mankind! Now explain
this mystery and rely on my indulgence." Rosario then revealed
her true identity as a woman. Ambrosio, stupefied beyond words,
did not know what to do or say. She reminded him of his solemn
promise to her. He hesitated to break this promise and, conse-
quently, instead of immediately sending her out of the monas-
tery as he should have done, he allowed her to continue to talk.
She told him not to worry. She insisted that she was drawn to
him only by his holiness. She wanted the friendship to be
purely spiritual and for the benefit of her own soul. Lewis
relates in detail the psychological reactions of the monk:

She ceased. While she spoke, a thousand oppos-
ing sentiments combated in Ambrosio's bosom.
Surprise at the singularity of this adventure;
confusion at her abrupt declaration; resentment
at her boldness in entering the monastery; and
the consciousness of the austerity with which
it behooved him to reply—such were the senti-
ments of which he was aware; but there were
others which did not obtain his notice. He
perceived not that his vanity was flattered by
the praise bestowed upon his eloquence and vir-
tue; that he felt a secret pleasure in reflect-
ing that a young a seemingly lovely woman for
his sake abandoned the world, and sacrificed
every other passion to that which he had in-
spired; still less did he perceive that his
heart throbbed with desire, while his hand was
pressed gently by Matilda's ivory fingers.

7 Ibid., p. 42.
8 Ibid., pp. 45, 46.
Gradually the abbot recovered from his confusion. How could he permit her to remain he thought to himself. Then with a show of weakness he asked her what good she could derive even were he to grant her request to remain. Ambrosio never reflected that even though he was abbot he did not have power to allow a woman to remain permanently to break the rule of religious cloister. Matilda continued to flatter the monk, holding out that she wanted to improve spiritually by being near him. She insisted that there would be no danger to his lofty virtue. All Ambrosio had to do was forget that she was a woman; As soon as he had lost any particle of his virtue she would leave him. She looked upon him as a saint. Therefore, there could be no harm in her staying. She further reminded him of his solemn promise to allow her to remain.

Ambrosio still insisted that she must leave the next day because he confessed to her that she would be a temptation to him. Fearing that the monk might force her to go, Matilda drew a poniard, opened her dress, and placed the point of the weapon on her breast. She told him that there was no choice left for him; either she will stay or send her soul to eternity. Ambrosio was not certain whether she would actually kill herself, but he could take no chances of having a suicide, and that of a woman, in the monastery. Furthermore, at this new sight of Matilda’s bodily charms a strange emotion swept over the monk’s heart. He did not seem to want her to go. Matilda’s scheming mind had won a further victory over the hesitant abbot.

9 Ibid., p. 47.
Under the influence of her flattery, Ambrosio continued to consider his position. To think that he had vanquished a heart which the noblest cavaliers of Spain doubtlessly had not been able to win. Besides, he reflected, since she was undoubtedly wealthy, certainly much benefit might accrue to the monastery and indirectly to his credit. But constant delay made the monk's position less firm. He could not keep her out of his thoughts. In desperation he allowed her but two more days respite before she must definitely go. On the day set for her departure, she asked Ambrosio for a remembrance. In the act of giving her some flowers, Ambrosio was stung by a deadly cientipede. Matilda knew a remedy for this poisonous bite and saved the fevered monk's life, attending on him most dutifully as the novice Rosario. The necessity and difficulty of sending her away still haunted the monk after his recovery. He continued to attempt to defend her apparently pure intention. His spiritual pride now came to the front again: He began to think it cowardice to fly from temptation. Hadn't St. Anthony withstood all temptations to lust, and he had been tempted by the devil, while his own temptation or danger "proceeded from a mere mortal woman, fearful and modest, whose apprehensions of his yielding were not less violent than his own... I am secure from temptation by the innocence of Matilda." Ambrosio was yet to learn "That to a heart unacquainted with her, vice is ever most dangerous when lurking behind the mask of virtue."

10 Ibid., pp. 48, 49.
11 Ibid., p. 62.
12 Ibid., p. 63.
Matilda then cleverly admitted that Ambrosio after all was right. She must go. This sadness, however, made her sick and she was taken to bed. It was in reality the poison which she had sucked from the monk's wound that was causing her illness. Ambrosio himself attended on her lest her presence and identity be discovered. She told Ambrosio she must now die. There was nothing in life worth living for unless she were permitted to live for Ambrosio. Now before she died they should be like brother and sister. Suddenly Matilda showed her real self. She begged to be allowed to die in Ambrosio's arms. She requested this as a parting remembrance. She drew the monk closer to her. And with no one around, with his passions aroused, Ambrosio fell a complete victim to the charms and wiles of Matilda, and soon violated his precious vow of chastity made to God.

Once fallen Ambrosio could not turn back. The pleasures he had tasted for the first time, were so keen, that he could not dream of sending Matilda away. Furthermore, he was so steeped in crime, that by sending her away he would only completely ruin his reputation before his brethren and men. He could only hope to keep his actions secret from now on. Thus he played a dual personality: holy monk in the daytime, and lusty playboy at night. In this role of the double personality which was further elaborated in the character of Schemoli and Father Udolpho, we have the beginning of the split personality of later fiction which culminated in the famous Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of Robert Louis Stevenson. Ambrosio went from bad to worse. Remorse
followed but it was insufficient to make him change. As his conscience was dulled, so the frequent repetition of the sensual pleasures begin to cloy his nature. He began to tire of Matilda. He wanted some new source of the same pleasure. As a tool of the devil, Matilda did not mind being abandoned by Ambrosio, in fact it was just what she wanted. She had already caused him to fall; now she was to lead him further into crime. With Matilda's help he gained possession of another maiden, Antonia, who lived in an adjoining residence, though his first attempt to get her, forced him to kill her mother. After violating Antonia, the monk killed her and buried her in the crypt of a nearby church. Later the devil revealed to Ambrosio that unknowingly he had killed his own mother and sister. The body of Antonia was discovered by some nuns and Ambrosio and Matilda were arrested and brought before the Inquisition. Matilda was carried to safety by the devil. On her suggestion, Ambrosio, fearful of death, eventually bargained with the fiend who delivered him from the hands of the Inquisition, only to drop him mockingly from a great height to his death.

As already noted the sudden transformation of Ambrosio has been criticized as being lacking in probability. The objections are based on the grounds that the spiritual struggle immediately preceding his fall is not strong enough in intensity nor long enough in duration to warrant such a catastrophic fall. Unlike a true tragic character the monk does not excite pity and sympathy, but rather a loathing disgust for his bestiality. He
has become a monster. As Railo remarks

The weakness of The Monk lies in the insignificance of the spiritual struggle preceding the monk's fall—makes him out to be too great a sinner, whose bestiality is almost enough to kill the pity aroused by his fate. Compassion is kept awake only because Ambrosio is helpless and altogether abandoned to the temptations threatening him, so that any balance of conflicting powers or even the possibility of a better fate seem out of the question.

The differences between Ambrosio and Friar Jerome or Father Oswald need scarcely be pointed out, so divergent are they. The two latter men are static characters; Ambrosio is dynamic. The friar and priest continued morally pure; Ambrosio became morally base. In the intellectual order Ambrosio seems less acute than his predecessors, though from his fame as a preacher and confessor, he must have possessed high mental powers. However, his gross sensuality had the effect of dulling these qualities. The predominant vices of Ambrosio are: spiritual pride and sensuality.

We know much more about Ambrosio than we do about his two predecessors. This comes from the fact that Ambrosio is the hero of the story. Lewis was careful to include a complete description of the monk's physical features. The inner workings of Ambrosio's mind were psychologically described. We are given the entire process whereby the monk falls. He knows what is right,

but he has not the will power to act differently.Like similar
weak-willed characters, he attempts to justify his actions in-
tellectually, until the temptations become so strong that he
falls. Spiritual pride makes him procrastinate. Once on the
road to moral corruption Ambrosio's mind and will are so weak-
ened that he cannot stop. His pride and sense of shame again
come to the fore, causing him to lead a double existence. All
his former training in Catholic morals forsakes him. The advice
he formerly gave to penitents that God is always ready to wel-
come back the prodigal son, he now cannot apply to himself. Re-
morse leads not to contrition, but to despair. Wishing to
grasp at the tenuous straw of hope to save his physical life,
he throws his trust on the untrustworthy word of the father of
lies, the devil, and meets not only physical, but in all pro-
bability, spiritual destruction. The moral of the novel is
quite plain. In ascetical language it is principis obsta,
"Check the beginnings."

The monk character in the hands of the youthful Lewis was
suddenly brought to maturity, though there remained various
refinements for his successors to make. The pious, hermit type
is gone. Now he is endowed with the qualities of strong passion,
mystery, plotting, terror, and immorality. As a model, Ambrosio
will continue the arch-villain tradition of the monk for the
next decade and slightly beyond.

Mrs. Ann Ward Radcliffe had published The Mysteries of
Udolpho in 1794, perhaps her most popular novel, a book which
encouraged Lewis to write *The Monk* a year later. Mrs. Radcliffe in turn read *The Monk* and though shocked by its realism determined to use the monk character in her next novel. In 1797 she wrote *The Italian, or The Confessional of the Black Penitents*. The monk in this novel, Father Schedoni, is a copy of Abbot Ambrosio, though his character portrayal is definitely peculiar to Mrs. Radcliffe and superior to that of Lewis's monk. She also may have followed Lewis in using the Inquisition, but the plot of the story, the scenic background, and character portrayals in general, are definitely her own.

Mrs. Radcliffe's chief contribution to the progress of the novel is her vivid descriptions of the scenic background. She describes in minute detail places she has visited and places she has only heard or read about. She had travelled in France, but not in Italy, so when she placed the locale of *The Italian* that romantic country she employed a vivid creative imagination.

She therefore drew upon her imagination to provide settings often more admirable than her method would lead us to suppose. Idealized as they are, they breathe a feeling for beauty which adds to much to the story that henceforth novelists dared not disregard the newfound necessity for harmony between environment and incident.14

What was the source of this clever gift of imagination which proved so helpful in giving to her stories a beautiful background? In this her

fancy was probably fed by sentimental adventure novels of Prevost, and his imitators in France and England; by the German romantic poets, especially Schiller; and by her demonstrable familiarity with the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, Macbeth in particular.  

Unlike her predecessors Mrs. Radcliffe is more interested in the plots of her stories than in the characters. For this reason some of her plots are sometimes very complicated. The characters belong to the usual Gothic type begun by Walpole. Cross critically summarized her use of characterization:

Mrs. Radcliffe wrote for the story, and not for the characters, which are all types, and soon become conventional. There is always the young lover, a gentleman of high birth, usually in some sort of disguise, who, without seeing the face of the heroine, may fall in love with her 'distinguished air of delicacy and grace,' or 'the sweetness and fine expression of her voice.' The only variation in the heroine is that she may be either dark or fair. The beautiful character is confined in a castle or convent because she refuses to marry some one she hates. Finally she has her own way and marries her lover. The tyrant is always the same man under different names.  

The Italian has perhaps the most dramatic plot of her novels. Its essential theme is rather trite, for it is the old story that true love does not run smooth. But in Mrs. Radcliffe's hands the obstacles to this smooth running of true love appear malignantly enhanced from the close association of

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17
a disappointed mother and a crafty monk against the background of lonely castles, silent cloisters, and the awful machinery of the Inquisition. Clara F. McIntyre summarizes briefly the plot:

... Vicentio di Vivaldi has seen Ellena Rosalba at church, and has fallen in love with her. He forms an acquaintance with her and her aunt, and visits them at their villa. His father and mother, however, object to the connection. The monk, Schedoni, conspires with Vivaldi's mother, the Marchesa, to get Ellena out of the way. She is first taken to a convent, but Vivaldi finds her, and effects her escape. They are about to be married, when they are arrested in the name of the Inquisition. Vivaldi is imprisoned at Rome; Ellena is taken to a lonely house on the seashore, where occurs the scene ... in which Schedoni, about to kill her, recognizes his own picture about her neck, and thinks she is his daughter. At the end of the book, Schedoni poisons himself and the monk who has betrayed him. Ellena finds her mother in the nun who has befriended her; she learns that she is the niece, not the daughter of Schedoni; and she and Vivaldi are happily married.18

Father Schedoni is a more complex character than his predecessors Friar Jerome, Father Oswald, and Abbot Ambrosio. Railo succinctly notes this complexity of character and Mrs. Radcliffe's technique in portraying it.

He is no longer a young and inexperienced saint preserved from temptations, but a person long hardened in the ways of crime and vice, alarmingly gifted and strenuous, hypocritical, unfeeling and merciless, more like Monvel's Laurent. It was impossible for Mrs. Radcliffe to write a novel dealing with erotic strayings, and so such sins were relegated to the monk's past, and a dark mystery in that line only hinted at with faint sugges-

From this we see obvious differences between Schedoni and the Abbot Ambrosio. The Abbot was inexperienced and was never hardened in the way of crime and vice like Schedoni. On the other hand Schedoni is not the sensual criminal that Ambrosio was; at least, his crimes of an erotic nature, if he did commit such, are merely vaguely hinted at.

Following the method of Lewis, Mrs. Radcliffe describes in detail the physical appearance of Father Schedoni. The similarity to the Abbot is evident, but the connection between the hardened nature of Schedoni and his physical appearance is much closer.

There was something terrible in his air, something almost superhuman. His cowl, too, as it threw a shade over the livid paleness of his face, increased its severe character, and gave an effect to his large melancholy eye which approached to horror... There was something in his physiognomy extremely singular. It bore the traces of many passions, which seemed to have fixed the features they no longer animated. An habitual gloom and austerity prevailed over the deep lines of his countenance, and his eyes were so piercing that they seemed to penetrate, at a single glance, into the hearts of men and read their most secret thoughts.

Schedoni was supremely ambitious for power. He wanted to become a powerful churchman. To achieve this ambition he needed the sponsorship of influential friends outside his...
order, since he had too many enemies among his own brethren.
The Marchesa di Vivaldi, mother of Vicentio, to whom he was
confessor, would be such a patroness. This ambition had been
noticed by his religious brethren.

Ambition... was one of his strongest motives
of action, and he had long since assumed a
character of severe sanctity chiefly for the
purpose of lifting him to promotion. He was
not beloved in the Society of which he was a
member.21

Since the Marchesa opposed the plans of her son to marry Ellena,
Schedoni naturally approved her opposition. He here saw an
opportunity to help both the Marchesa and himself. The young
Vivaldi was suspicious of the monk's frequent visits to his
mother and in a quarrel with the monk struck him so forcefully
that the latter fell to the floor. Schedoni vowed that the
youth would rue his rash conduct. When the news of this insult
reached the monastery there was great rejoicing.

... many of the brotherhood who had laboured
to disappoint his views and to detect his er-
rors, who hated him for his pride and envied
him for his reputed sanctity, now, gloried in
the mortification he had received and endeavored
to turn the circumstance to their own advantage.
They had not scrupled already to display, by in-
sinuation and pointed sneers their triumph, and
to menace his reputation; and Schedoni, though
he deserved contempt, was not of a temper to en-
dure it.22

21 Ibid., p. 580.
22 Idem.
Schedoni now had a further motive for keeping the Marchesa in her resolve to prevent the marriage. He must revenge his honor for the stinging insult to his dignity. Cleverly he schemed to direct the actions of the Marchesa.

He wished to prepare her for measures, which might hereafter be necessary to accomplish the revenge he meditated and he knew that by flattering her, he was most likely to succeed. He praised her therefore for qualities he wished her to possess, encouraged her to reject general opinions, by admiring, as the symptoms of a superior understanding the convenient morality upon which she had occasionally acted; and called sternness justice, exalted that for strength of mind, which was only callous insensibility.23

The Marchesa had suffered much from the disobedience of her son Vincentio in his love for the poor peasant girl, Ellena. Schedoni artfully increased this pain by representing to her the base ingratitude of her son while at the same time attempting to excuse his actions.

... so far was he from attempting to soothe her sufferings that he continued to irritate her resentment and exasperate her pride, affecting at the same time, with such imperceptible art, that he appeared only to be palliating the conduct of Vivaldi and endeavoring to console the distracted mother.24

Against her wishes Ellena was taken to a convent where she was confined as a prisoner preparatory to being forced to take the veil, and thus be removed from all reach of Vivaldi.

23 Ibid., p. 581.
24 Ibid., p. 606.
With the desperation of a lover, Vivaldi discovered the convent of his beloved's confinement and on the day when she was supposed to take her vows he entered the convent as a pilgrim and escaped with her. On their way to a friendly refuge they were captured by an armed force claiming authority from the Inquisition. Vivaldi was taken to the prison of the Inquisition at Rome, while Ellena was borne away to an abandoned castle near the seacoast. All this on orders of Schedoni. There seemed to be only one way of keeping the two lovers apart. The priest conferred with the marchesa. The monk's duplicity and hypocrisy appeared at its height when he brought her to suggest as the best way out of the difficulty, the very plan which he had long been meditating—the murder of Ellena. The Marchesa was bewildered and scrupulous.

'I have not the shield of the law to protect me.' Schedoni reassured her, 'But you have the shield of the Church. You should have not only protection, but absolution.'

From this last statement of the monk we see that the infamous charge frequently made against the Jesuits that "The end justifies the means" was attributed to Schedoni by Mrs. Radcliffe. To encourage her Schedoni said he himself would absolve the Marchesa from any participation in the crime, if crime it had to be. But the casuistry of the monk went even further: he strove to convince her that there would be no sin involved. And this was the method of reasoning he followed:

25 Ibid., p. 609.
This girl is put out of the way of committing more mischief, of injuring the peace and dignity of a noble family; she is sent to an eternal sleep before time—where is the crime, where is the evil of this? On the contrary, you perceive, and you have convinced me, that it is only strict justice, only self-defense.

That Mrs. Radcliffe may have had the common portrait of the misunderstood Jesuit in mind when she penned the lines above seems quite probable. The Marchesa was flattered to think that she had convinced the learned priest. She yielded to his flatteries and with Schedoni made plans to carry out the deed. Whatever Schedoni thought best, would be perfectly agreeable to her. The priest now had an opportunity of evening scores with an old enemy named Spalatro, who being in possession of damaging evidence against the monk's past life, had blackmailed him for many years. Schedoni, therefore, commissioned Spalatro to poison Ellena, now imprisoned in the lonely castle along the seacoast. Schedoni hoped to gain some power over Spalatro to use to his own advantage in the future. Suspicious of Spalatro's actions Ellena refused the milk which he had poisoned. Repulsed in this, Spalatro refused any further attempts to carry out the monk's will. Schedoni decided to attempt to carry out his plan himself to insure success. The point where Schedoni is about to drive the cold steel into Ellena's sleeping bosom is a masterpiece of suspense. The monk stopped short when he thought he recognized the medallion worn about the girl as a picture of himself. Before becoming a monk

26 Ibid., p. 609.
Schedoni had had a daughter whom he had abandoned. Ellena awakened in wonder at the presence of the monk. Schedoni questioned her about the picture. Her answers confirmed him in his suspicion. His familiarity with the history of the medallion seemed credible to Ellena, though she hesitated to admit that he could be her father. The mood of the monk now changed. He reasoned that he must get Ellena to a safer refuge in some convent and at the same time must get Vivaldi out of the hands of the Inquisition. He was as anxious now to promote their marriage as he had previously been determined to prevent it. But what would now become of his plans of ecclesiastical preferment? How could he win over the Marchesa to a course of action diametrically opposed to the one which he had urged her to take.

At the very instant, when his heart reproached him with the crime he had meditated, he regretted the ambitious views he must relinquish if he failed to perpetrate it and regarded himself with some degree of contempt for having hitherto hesitated on the subject.27

Schedoni dreaded his next interview with the Marchesa. He felt a strange shame of confessing his failure to kill Ellena; besides he was in a quandry as to how to tell her of his change of heart toward the marriage. He could not bring himself to tell her that he was the father of Ellena, as he did not think the Marchesa would believe his story, but would think that he was trying to counter her desires.

27 Ibid., p. 632.
... and from its approach [the interview] the cool and politic Schedoni often shrank in such horror; that he almost determined to avoid it at any hazard and secretly to unite Vivaldi and Ellena without even soliciting the consent of the Marchesa.

A desire, however, of the immediate preferment so necessary to his pride, constantly checked this scheme, and finally made him willing to subject every honest feeling and submit to any meanness, however, vicious, rather than forego the favorite object of his erroneous ambition. Never, perhaps, was the paradoxical union of pride and abjectness more strongly exhibited than on this occasion.

An incident occurred during the return journey which helped to keep the monk in an agitated frame of mind. At a country fair he and Ellena saw reënacted the drama of Virginius killing his daughter Virginia to save her chastity. The thought of what he had almost done, preyed on his mind.

He wanted to leave the place; his complexion changed colors. Ellena saw his strong emotions, but ignorant of their cause, looked tenderly at him, always interpreting his emotional changes favorable to him.

Schedoni placed Ellena in a nearby convent and prepared to present himself before the Marchesa. His plans for preferment would have to be bolstered with new arguments if he intended to admit his change of mind toward the marriage.

However painful it must be to Schedoni to meet her now that he had discovered the depth of guilt in which she would have involved him, he determined to seek this

28 Ibid., p. 644.
29 Ibid., p. 654.
A further anxiety troubled his peace of mind: he could not tell the Marchesa that her son Vivaldi was in the hands of the Inquisition at Rome, nor that Ellena was in a nearby convent, since he feared that she would use unscrupulous means to thwart all his plans. His delay too in advancing the Marchesa's plans might bring him into disfavor. As a matter of fact the lady had considered changing her ghostly confessor.

On hearing his story the Marchesa accused him of weakness of will, but she apparently agreed with his opinion that perhaps Ellena was of noble birth and that there would be no disgrace coming to the Vivaldi family.

Immediately after this conference with the Marchesa, Schedoni went to Rome to seek the release of Vivaldi from the Inquisition. But here he met unexpected trouble. One of the members of the Holy Office was a monk to whom Spalatro had gone to confession and to whom he had related some of his own past crimes together with some of Schedoni's both past and present. This monk, named Nicola, now made use of the information at the express command of the Inquisition and Schedoni found himself trapped. Vivaldi testified further against the monk. Under

30 Ibid., p. 661.
torture Schedoni confessed his crimes and was sentenced to death. In the courtroom of the Inquisition he dramatically avenged himself by stabbing Father Nicola with a poisoned dagger and then plunging it into himself. The young Vivaldi was released and returned to his father. The Marchesa had died but not before she had discovered the truth about Ellena's noble birth and that she was the niece and not the daughter of Schedoni. The two lovers were soon united and their nuptials solemnized.

Father Schedoni is an improved character over Ambrosio. The Abbot's crimes were mostly personal and of a sensual nature, entailing little conflict of will with other characters. Schedoni on the other hand suffered opposition from his brethren, from Vivaldi, and from Spalatro and from his enemies on the board of Inquisitors. The proud spirit of Schedoni hungry for power and employing every intrigue to obtain it, is more dynamic than the lusty desires of Ambrosio. Schedoni was Ambrosio, and more, for he had already passed the Abbot's sensual phase and was now prepared for greater conquests. Like the Abbot, Schedoni was spiritually proud; both used this pride as means to an end, Ambrosio to keep Matilda in the monastery and Schedoni to win the patronage of the Marchesa. Schedoni is a more thoroughly criminal monk. His fall comes not through weakness of character but from its very strength. His is a case similar to that of Macbeth, vaulting ambition overreaching itself. Schedoni shows control over his emotions even to the very moment when he is condemned by the Inquisition. And after his condemnation,
admitting that his cause is lost, he coolly rids himself of the one who has caused his downfall and, just as coolly, takes his own life.

Intellectually, Schedoni is superior to all of his predecessors. He is more scheming. He knows more about the wiles of women, of whose nature we have seen Ambrosio was quite ignorant. He knows how to bring others to suggest that which he himself desires to do. He plans carefully, watchful of every detail. If others cannot carry out his will, he himself attempts the work. He is facile in adapting himself in his various changes of fortune. His will is strong, always looking for his own ends, but flexible enough to go along with the plans of others. Once determined, he is not easily turned from his goal. In this Schedoni shows an opportunism in keeping with the complexity of his character.

Morally, Schedoni is a more seasoned criminal. His conscience is not only dull, it is erroneous. He deliberately does anything to achieve his ends and what is more wonderful, he is able to justify his actions as morally good. Ambrosio always felt some remorse to the last, but he was too weak to profit from it. Only the strong passions of the flesh kept him in his pursuit of crime. Schedoni is on a higher plane spiritually and for this reason his lofty pride in himself is more serious a vice than Ambrosio's lust of the flesh, although it creates less disgust in the reader than the Abbot's bestial sins. In this spiritual pride Schedoni is more nearly like Satan himself.
According to Railo, Schedoni is just outside the circle of great tragic heroes:

If Schedoni had only possessed a high guiding principle he might have become a truly magnificent tragic creation, but as Mrs. Radcliffe's talent was unequal to making of him anything more than a tool in the hands of the Vivaldi family for the persecution of the young Vivaldi's beloved, . . . he is left outside the circle of great tragic figures, in the gallery of sombre criminals. But even as such, there is more of the atmosphere of romantic terror around him than in any preceding type, and the picture of the criminal monk is raised by him to more dreadful heights.31

Thus we see that Schedoni stands out among the villains of the Gothic novel. His suggested evil past, his terrifying physical appearance, his crafty, unscrupulous intellect, his strong malevolent will have made him Mrs. Radcliffe's most famous character, and perhaps the nearest approach to a perfect Gothic villain. His scheming nature will be seen in the monks which followed him.

That the villain monk was now foremost in the minds of the Gothic novelists was shown by the appearance in the same year (1796) of Santa Maria; or, The Mysterious Pregnancy, by Joseph Fox. In this novel we have a Carthusian monk, Father Conrad, who is closely modelled on Ambrosio and Schedoni. Montague Summers in his Gothic Quest gives an account of this novel. The story opened with the intended nuptials of Santa Maria and Prince Rinaldo, but the bride is found ill of a very malignant fever.

The next day she is discovered to be seriously pregnant. Father Matalone, confessor to Santa Maria, is summoned to examine her conscience and finds her innocent of any unchaste actions. After some time the confession of another monk, Father Conrad, clears up the mystery. The remorseful monk abandoned to his death in a cave is troubled in conscience about his past crimes and in a great emotional panic begins his confession:

"Once a monk in the Carthusian monastery—youthfully initiated in the luxuries and debaucheries of that order—I dedicated my whole time and thoughts to the gratification of my lusts and passions." After various incidents of poisoning those who stood in his way, "by stratagems the most diabolical" he cried: "My blood thickens and congeals; I shake with terror at the thought.—My flesh creeps upon my very bones as I do ruminate upon it. —But it must come forth—then forthwith let it come—deed of darkness; hell's own direct progeny!—"32

After a pause the monk continued his story. The villainous Count Philip Contarini, an enemy of Count Rodolph, father of Santa Maria, wanted to marry the young girl. Since she refused him in favor of the Prince Rinaldo, he determined to plot with Father Conrad to obtain possession of her for a time long enough to allow him to satisfy his passions of revenge and lust. While Father Matalone was ill, Conrad contrived to be sent as the representative of the holy priest to the palace on a feast day. During this visit he complained of thirst and asked Santa Maria for a cooling drink and invited her to join him since it was a fiesta. Summers quotes the monks own words:

And alas! you but too readily acquiesced; for during that short interval, I secretly contrived to mingle a strong sleeping potion, which upon its taking due effect, I too well knew would answer the seeming appearance of death—Oh! wretched me, too well I said I knew it.—33

At this point Conrad went on to explain how he had used the same drug to gain possession of the more virtuous females of his convent, whom he afterward buried alive in the graves of the convent. He continued his narration:

This same sleeping potion had all its intended effect on thee, thou loveliest sacrifice; and as thou were supposed to be deceased, I was dispatched for to sing requiem over your beauteous body. In this solemn, office, Count Philip attended me disguised as a brother monk, and in the absence of thy mother, the Lady Isabella, fully and grossly satisfied his impious lusts.—. . . Modesty forbids me to repeat the vile abuses he made of all his opportunities, nor the horrible satisfaction he enjoyed in the idea of sending thee vilated to the bed of Prince Rinaldo.—I can no more—Stung now with remorse, guilt, fear, I fled the monastery and retired to this cave—-34

As a result of this confession Count Philip Contarini is beheaded on a public scaffold, while his two accomplices undergo death by torture on the rack. Santa Maria and Rinaldo are then married.

Father Conrad is similar in character to the Abbot Ambrosio. He is driven by his sensual lusts to commit many crimes in order to satisfy them. Unlike the Abbot his remorse and confession at

33 Idem.
34 Idem.
the end seem to save his soul from perdition. Like Schedoni he cooperates in a conspiracy against an innocent girl. Unlike him, his character completely falls to pieces in the end. Fear of the consequences of his guilt breaks down the early strength of will which he had shown.

Fox does not employ supernatural means to strike terror into his reader. The sole recourse to anything above nature is the use of the strong sleeping potion administered by the monk to achieve the success of his plot with Count Philip to gain possession of the maiden, Santa Maria. We might also note here that the author betrays his ignorance of the life led by the Carthusians. Traditionally they have always been a rigidly ascetical order in the Catholic Church. Fox probably liked the name and merely used it by way of convenience.

The importance of Father Conrad shows the continued use of the monk as a suitable character in the Gothic novel. He has long since become a stock character who is treated along more or less the same lines by different authors, some of whom went to extremes in making him out to be a monster of iniquity, while others, though considering him a villain, depicted him somewhat more gently. Some portrayed his character skilfully; others, quite amateurishly.

William Henry Ireland gained some notoriety as a forger of several supposedly original MSS of Shakespeare which deceived such men as James Boswell, Joseph Warton, Dr. Parr, and the poet-laureate Pye. When the fraud was exposed, Ireland's Summers, Op. cit., p. 341.
literary career seemed at an untimely end. He tried to write plays but with little success. On the suggestion of some friends, who apparently realized his imaginative powers, he turned to writing novels. Since the Gothic novel was in high favor at the time, he applied his vivid imagination to writing fantastic and terrifying stories of convents and monasteries. His first novel, The Abbess, (1799) was well received as he himself tells us in the preface to his later novel Gondez the Monk (1805): "Such generous praise as made my Abbess live." It was considered a fine novel in the best style of the Lewis school. In fact the plot and characters are quite similar to those of The Monk with this difference that an Abbess Vittoria Bracciano plays the villainous role of Abbot Ambrosio. There are voluptuous scenes, trials before the Inquisition, and a terrible punishment for the guilty parties. Ireland wrote several other Gothic novels after The Abbess, but we are interested chiefly in Gondez the Monk, one of the most stirring of Gothic tales, named after the wicked Abbot Gondez.

In a verse dedication Ireland acquaints the reader with the story he is going to narrate. We quote but a few lines:

Of you shall hear a tale will make you start,
For never yet had monk so black a heart.
Never did owls and ravens scent such blood;
Never stood convent in so drear a wood;
Never was witch so foul, as you shall hear;
Never had damsel cause for so much fear
As her of whom I write; 36

The plot of the story is very complicated; we summarize it at some length in order to understand the roles played by the principal actors and especially by the Abbot Gondez himself. The tale opens against an historical background—the defeat in 1306 of Robert Bruce VIII of Scotland by the English Earl of Pembroke. The King and his followers, among whom is Huberto Avinzo, an unknown youth who had saved the King's life three times, retreat with difficulty and sail to the small isle of Oranza where they beg shelter at the monastery of St. Columba. The cold welcome they receive urges the King and his men to assume false names. They are fed and lodged but more like prisoners than as travelers. By way of retrogression, the story of the youthful hero, Huberto Avinzo, is told. He had been born in Italy and brought to Scotland by a Roman named Alzarro who committed him to the care of Sir Alan MacDonald before he was forced to return to Rome. Alzarro told Sir Alan that the boy was of noble birth. Sir Alan is killed in battle and Huberto and Lady MacDonald are taken prisoners to London. Here Lady MacDonald dies, but Huberto escapes and soon makes his way north where he joins the forces of the King with whom he is now sharing the disgrace of defeat.

At the monastery one friar, a Father Anthony, who is in disgrace with the brethren, alone looks favorably on Huberto and informs him of a secret means of escape from the monastery.

One night by accident Huberto discovers a beautiful maiden who is being held prisoner by the Abbot. Huberto first leads the king and his men to safety through the secret passageway and then returns to effect the rescue of the beautiful girl. While exploring the subterranean caverns, he discovers in chains John of Dunbar, formerly the bosom friend of Gondez. He nurses the monk back to life and with his help plans the rescue of the maiden Ronilda and her brother Donald. Word is sent to the King to send an army to apprehend the Abbot, who, on the word of John of Dunbar, is guilty of the most heinous crimes. A vessel arrives from Italy on which it is suspected that Gondez will attempt an escape to Italy with his stolen treasures and his fair captive. The Abbot's plans miscarry and Huberto rescues Ronilda. Gondez is captured aboard the ship and taken to Scotland to stand trial for treason because of his rude treatment of the King and his followers.

At this point in the narrative, the author makes another digression to inform the reader of the past history of Gondez before he became Abbot of St. Columba at Oranza. In brief, Gondez was Giovanni Maldichini, son of Cardinal Nicolo Gonzari and Madre Aluzzo, Abbess of the Convent Della Pieta. In order that the Cardinal may obtain the possession of his nephew, Duca Gonzari, Maldichini had attempted to assassinate him, an endeavor which led to a meeting with Rosanna the Duca's beautiful wife. Maldichini then lured the Duca to Rome on a false report of the Cardinal's illness and abducted Rosanna who was then
placed under the care of Madre Aluzzo. The Cardinal himself visited the fair prisoner and lusted for her. Maldichini also had the same abandoned desires and with the help of his mother poisoned his father, the Cardinal, to rid himself of a rival. Rosanna had conceived before her capture and soon gave birth to a baby boy (Huberto) who was secretly entrusted to Count Azimo, or as we have known him, Alzarro. Rosanna died from the rigours of her imprisonment. To further his ambitions, Maldichini changed his name to Gondez, assumed an air of sanctity, and with the wealth which the death of his father gave him, acquired much ecclesiastical influence. He himself nominated Abbot of Oranza. Before leaving to take up his new duties, he determined to rid himself of the Duca Gonzari, the only one who could contest his claim to the Cardinal's fortune. With his close associate in crime, Domenico, he poisoned the Duca and buried his body in the same grave with Rosanna. Alzarro, who we saw, had taken the Duca's son Huberto to Scotland and returned to Rome to track down Maldichini, was now forced to return to Rome. So he left for the monastery of St. Columba at Oranza to continue shadowing Gondez as the simple Father Anthony.

To return to the imprisoned Gondez. During his trial before the King, Gondez denied all charges made against him, and appealed to be sent to Rome, where he hoped his influence would free him from his sad position. However, a mysterious voice told the court that crimes unheard of would be charged against the Abbot in Rome. Gondez is taken before the Roman Inquisition
where he denies three times all the crimes imputed to him. On
the third denial such a preternatural disturbance rocks the
courtroom that the Abbot in terror confesses his numerous and
heinous crimes. He is sentenced to a slow death by fire. Father
Anthony then solemnized the marriage of Huberto and Ronilda.

Ireland shows the influence of his Gothic predecessors. The episode of Maldichini and Domenico and their dialogue when
they poisoned the Duca is closely modelled on Schedoni and
Spalatro when they discuss the assassination of Ellena in The
Italian. The use of the Inquisition had been used frequently
before. The influence of Macbeth is seen in the two witches
who appear to Huberto to tell him of his fate. After the wedding
they appear for the last time and prophesy good fortune for the
wedded pair.

Gondez is similar in character to his famous predecessors
Ambrosio and Schedoni. He too has an evil past which is not
hinted at but described somewhat in detail. Like Schedoni his
capital vice is ambition for power. Being the illegitimate son
of a wealthy Cardinal, he is in a much better position to see
the fulfillment of his wishes. Like Ambrosio he is erotic,
though none of his sex crimes is described. He had never
attacked Ronilda while she was his prisoner at Oranza, but had
hoped to prevail upon her will to consent. Like Schemoli, whom
we shall discuss next, he is actuated partly by a revenge motive
against John of Dunbar who had crossed his desires. The in-
ordinate desire for power and wealth are his predominate vices.
Ireland used the now conventional method of suggesting the horrible character of his monk by giving a detailed description of the Abbot's physical appearance. The similarity to Ambrosio and Schedoni is clearly indicated.

His person, which was arrayed in the sumptuous embroidered trappings with which he was invested from his elevated station, became from this circumstance, even more conspicuously repugnant, as his stature was considerably below the common standard, and his air diametrically opposite to every motion which characterized dignity and elegance of deportment. Yet, notwithstanding this insignificance of stature, his features were strikingly prominent, and marked with every line that portrays internal craft, malice, cruelty, and revenge.39

Like the other monk characters Gonzalez had sharp, piercing eyes:

His small piercing eyes emitting a look of malign enquiry, were bent by turns on each of the nobles, but fixed at length on the person of the monarch himself, the lineaments of whose manly visage he proceeded to scan with the most determined effrontery;40

The author continues his physical description to show what a horrible appearance the monk gave:

his nose though short, was peculiarly aquiline, and gave to his general appearance an air of ferocity, which was in a great measure heightened by the cadaverous complexion of his countenance and the falling in of his cheeks, added to which, his mouth was hide-

40 Ibid., p. 147.
ously wide, round the falling extremities of mingled deceit and ineffable contempt. His chin was thickly covered with a beard short and bushy, the dye of which coincided well with the red complexion of the hair, which by the rules of the order of St. Columba he was obliged to keep closely shaven. In short, every feature of the Abbot Gondez, seemed alone framed to harrow up the soul of the observer and present to the contemplative mind some dreadful picture, replete with sin and horror.

We have mentioned a revenge motive in the actions of the Abbot. John of Dunbar, a monk of Schedoni's appearance, had been a close confidant of the Abbot. But when he failed to carry out a harsh command of his superior relative to the imprisonment of Ronilda, he fell into disgrace, and was imprisoned himself by Gondez in the lowest caverns of the monastery chained to the floor and just out of reach of a quantity of food and left to starve to death. Daily the Abbot came to see his prisoner to watch his slow death. In his explorations, Huberto had come on the dying monk and had given him a small portion of the food. Hearing the footsteps of Gondez, Huberto hid himself. John of Dunbar feigned death and the Abbot thinking he was dead flew into a rage. He was furious that he had missed his death agony and gave expression to his horrible thoughts:

'I am too late, and my revenge is incomplete. Oh! that I had witnessed his agonizing tortures! my soul would then have glutted on the sight, and the full measure of my wishes had been accomplished. Well, well, the reptile is no more who would have crossed me in my purposes. . . Cold blooded wretch, didst thou believe thou couldst escape me? Didst thou imagine Gondez

41 Ibid., p. 147.
sensuality, revenge, and pride. As a result the next monk characters will be somewhat less evil in their deeds, though they will be thoroughly bad men. The reaction against the monk character had already set in. Here and there the old portrait of the monk will be drawn, but it will be by way of exception. Before we reach this stage introduced largely by Sir Walter Scott, we shall have to discuss two more monk characters.

Charles R. Maturin was an Irish protestant minister noteworthy for his bitterness towards the Catholic Church. He carried this acrimony into his pulpit from which he preached many sermons against the "errors of the Roman Church." This anti-Catholic bias he also showed in his Gothic novels which were published between 1807 and 1824. His first, The Fatal Revenge, or The Family of Montorio (1807) we shall treat in detail since it contains in the pseudo-monk Schemoli, a worthy successor to Ambrosio, Schedoni, and Gondez. Although Schemoli was not a monk in the strict sense of the word, having posed as one only in order to carry out his "fatal revenge," still he was intended by his creator to embody all the villainous traits of a Catholic monk. For this reason I feel justified in considering him as a type of the monk-character. Maturin doubtlessly was familiar with the preceding monk characters which we have treated. His anti-Catholic animus urged him to use the monk as the villain of his novels.

The plot of The Fatal Revenge shows similarity to Shakespeare's Othello. Unfounded suspicion leads to tragic revenge.
Rallo points out this similarity when he summarizes the plot of the story:

In revenge for his refusal by Erminia, distantly resembling Desdemona, the beautiful wife of his brother Orazio, the wicked brother, like a second Jago, succeeds in inflaming Orazio-Othello to a catastrophic jealousy, using as his assistant his own base-minded wife and acting with her the persecutor couple played earlier by Ambrosio and Matilda against Antonia. After the death of Desdemona-Erminia comes a continuation of the Othello story in which the deceived Orazio having learned the truth sets out as the monk Schemoli to seek a fateful revenge on his brother. In this person the author has created an impressive and worthy successor to Ambrosio, though he lacks the stamp of true originality.43

For fully three-fourths of the story the action deals with Schemoli's efforts to carry out his "fatal revenge" on his brother. The last fourth clears up all the mysterious events by the confession of the pseudo-monk. The death of Erminia has occurred before the action of the novel begins. Schemoli as Orazio Duke of Montorio had been happily married to Erminia, by whom he had two sons. His brother had loved Erminia in his youth but had been rejected. Envious of his brother's successful marriage and his own unhappy marital life, he sowed the seeds of jealousy in the heart of Orazio by telling him that Erminia was having clandestine relations with a handsome gallant named Verdoni. Orazio shadowed Verdoni and discovered him visiting a little girl who was being kept outside the city in the care of an elderly woman. This lady told Orazio that the child's father

was Verdoni and that Erminia also came frequently to visit her. Orazio immediately concluded that the child was also Erminia's. When she showed her sadness when Verdoni departed for war, Orazio's cup of poisonous jealousy was filled to overflowing. In a rage he ordered his servants to stab Verdoni to death before Erminia's eyes. Overcome by the sight she too dies over his bleeding body. Too late Orazio discovered that Erminia had been invalidly married and that the girl was actually their daughter. Because of this crime Orazio's brother now forced him to leave Italy. In addition his two sons were taken from him. His brother now assumed the title of Count of Montorio. Orazio wandered through Asia and Africa preparing his revenge. While in the Orient he cultivated the occult sciences and became a master in the black arts. In Greece he took on the disguise of a monk before crossing over again into Italy. Arrived in Italy he became the confessor to his brother. At this point the novel begins.

Schemoli's plan was to gain control over the minds and persons of his brother's two sons, Annibal and Hippolito and force them to kill their father. As has been mentioned most of the novel deals with his efforts to effect this end. Schemoli worried the two sons with all sorts of preternatural phenomenon and promised them deliverance only when they shall both have run their swords through a man he will point out to them. During this long process which becomes very monotonous reading several obstacles obstruct him. One is the attraction of Annibal for
Idelphonsa who resembles Erminia and who turns out to be her daughter. She so reminded Schemoli of Erminia and was such a distraction in his efforts to get Annibal under his thumb, that he determined to kill her and eventually did so. There are many appearances of ghosts, discoveries of old graves, conflicts in dark caverns of monasteries and convents, etc. Schemoli pursues the two brothers far and wide. Finally, in desperation they give in and kill Schemoli's brother, who is apparently their own father. Schemoli's revenge boomerangs when he discovers that the two youths are actually his own sons who had been mysteriously substituted in childhood for the two dead sons of his brother. For the crimes of Schemoli and his two sons, the house of Montorio is dissolved by the Inquisition. The countess, wife of the Count of Montorio, dies when the decree is read. Schemoli realizing his guilt and the horror of the crimes he forced his sons to commit, dies in a spasm while embracing them. The two sons are then banished from Italy.

The first glimpse of Schemoli's mysterious character is given when Annibal describes to his brother Hippolito the impression the monk made upon him:

...'I never saw a form and air more unearthly, a whole appearance more remote from the beings of business of this world, than this man's, whose name is Father Raffaello Schemoli. In his large fixed eye all human fire appears to be dead; his face is marked with the traces of past rather than the expression of present passions or events; it seems like the bed of a torrent that has flowed away, but whose violence may yet be
traced in its deep, dry, unlevelled furrows. The very few who have seen or known this man speak of him with a hint of obscure fear.

From this point on we know Schemoli only as the mysterious monk who seems to be ubiquitous in his attempts to gain control over the minds of Annibal and Hippolito. One incident occurs in which Schemoli proudly shows his resolute will. He has been conspiring with the superioress of a convent where Idelphonsa is staying until the time has arrived for her to take the veil against her will. Since her amour with Annibal is stalling his plans, Schemoli has decided on her death. "Tomorrow night, then reverend mother, this serpent shall be crushed in the dark: may I rely on your assistance?"—'As firmly as on your own resolution, Father.'—'That has never failed,' said the monk emphatically.

Face to face with the success of his revenge which has turned out in a manner otherwise than he had intended, Schemoli reveals in full his own character and the plans for his revenge. In preparation for the execution of his purpose he had gone to the East—to Turkey, Syria, Persia, and Egypt where the study and practice of black magic were far more advanced and understood than "the dark wisdom of Rosicrucian, or Sully's or Nostradamus, or Albertus Magnus; had I been a student in the wizard halls of

45 Ibid., p. 204.
Salamanca, I must have bowed to the wands of the Oriental and African sages."

Schemoli then went on to describe some of the wonderful powers these Orientals possessed, as that "of disarming serpents and noxious reptiles;" powers which "they pretend to exercise with spell and charm, but which when I acquired, I found to be obtainable by means merely physical." Schemoli then told why he was interested in this black art:

..."I mention these things merely to intimate the line of operations, I sought, and the powers I acquired amid the luxuries of nature and the labors of art, the wonders of antiquity or the magnificence of recent dominion; in the mosque or in the cavern, the desert or the bazar, I purposed but one object; my labor was never remitted, nor my tenacity ever relaxed."49

All this training over a period of years was merely a preparation and a means to carry the fulfillment of the predominant passion which controlled his every action—revenge. In his own words the monk continued to describe this passion:

..."With me, ambition was only the ornament of life... I saw without a groan, the palace and castle built by my ancestors—I saw their jewels, their treasures, their magnificence, sparkling round the forms of those who had undone me—I saw without a thought of resumption, but with a determination of revenge. Ambition had not left a shadow on my mind; of love,
only the soul subsisted still; but, of revenge, both body and soul lived within me in a state of vigour and vitality still capable of the most powerful functions, still imperiously demanding their sacrifice. From my own experience I am convinced that revenge is the most livid of passions. . . I had but one faculty, one passion, one appetite. My body was but a corporal vehicle for revenge; its spirit seemed to actuate me instead of a soul. 50

Some of his hearers may have wondered at the rashness which prompted Schemoli to undertake a plot apparently so impossible of fulfillment. Let them not wonder, for he was fully prepared intellectually and physically for the execution of his plan.

'Let those who wonder at the temerity of my undertaking, think on the requisites I possessed for its success, and the train of preparation those requisites had long been in. My body was a body of adamant; my mind was capable of filling and directing the energies of such a frame. I was invincible to the fatigues of famine, sleeplessness or of toil; no difficulties could exhaust, no dangers could repel; the world, its temptations and its terrors were like dust beneath my feet. I possessed a knowledge of the human temper, deep and accurate, together with a patience of caprices and anomalies which only experience can teach. No sallies of violence could intimidate, no vigour of obduracy could weary me. With regard to the means of affecting my purpose, my mind or rather my memory was a perfect thesaurus terrorum. I had powers to confound the deliberate, and to scare the bold. My body as well as my mind conspired with my purpose. My figure was gigantic, my countenance scarce bore resemblance to humanity; the intonations of my voice were like the roar of the storm and cataract it

50 Ibid., p. 242.
had been my delight, in the rages of insanity, to imitate, and, above all, I possessed from memory, a perfect knowledge of secret passages and subterranean recesses, both at Menalto and the palaces at Naples. 51

Schemoli's control over other characters was masterful. Witness his success in influencing the mind of his usurping brother to whom he was acting as confessor.

'The influence I had obtained over the mind of the count was mixed and extraordinary. My austerities, my superhuman abstinence, and contempt of fatigue and pain, and watching, had raised me to the highest pitch of his estimation as a devotee... He certainly regarded me as a being not of this world; his mind, weakened by the perpetual harassings of guilt and danger, reposed on the idea of a visionary protector; and timid and jealous of its security, pleased itself with the thought of employing a secret and resistless minister of death. Hence he would at one time employ me as an assassin without remorse, and at another, consult me as a saint without superstition... he called on me without hesitation for that assistance, which he believed could be conferred by me without a crime. 52

When Schemoli saw his plans realized in the death of the count, he was momentarily gratified, until he realized that the innocent instruments of his death were his own two sons. At this his strong character disappears, his stoicism vanishes, and his gaunt exterior turns tender in a flood of tears. He was not sorry for the death of his wicked brother, but that his two sons might have to pay for his revenge with their lives, was too

51 Ibid., p. 246.
52 Ibid., p. 246.
much for him to bear. A strong paternal affection came over him, and he seemed in a way sorry for what he had done: The tender emotion with which he pleaded for their lives, an emotion so inconsistent with his former character, can only be explained by the resurgence of a strong love for his sons. Between sobs he pleaded before the Inquisition for mercy toward them:

'I do not adjure compassion—I appeal to justice. They are not criminals—frenzy is not criminal. Their intellects were extinguished; fatigue, and sleeplessness, and visionary horrors, and all the train of devilish enginery that I had brought against them, had impaired the noblest frame of faculties that ever was abused by the wit or malice of devils... they were impelled beyond all power of human resistance....'53

For himself he craved no mercy. He admitted his crimes and begged for the most severe punishments.

'...I provoke, I sollicit punishment. Bury me under manacles, macerate me with your tortures, let every hour bring more than the pangs of death, yet let me be many hours dying.

'I feel my crimes deserve it; I am a monster, beneath whom the earth groans. To one demon passion I have sacrificed the whole of existence; in revenge I butchered Verdoni; in revenge I murdered my wife, in revenge I—Oh! let me not say—I have destroyed my innocent sons. I have been sated with revenge, and let revenge be now sated on me.'54

The revenge theme which only partially directed the actions of Schedoni and Gondez, is the predominate motive behind the deeds.

53 Ibid., p. 250.
54 Ibid., p. 251.
of Schemoli. In all three cases injured pride led each of the monks to seek revenge: Schedoni's pride had been injured, first, by the many slights given his talents when inferior brethren had been promoted to ecclesiastical posts over him, and second, by the insult given to his dignity and person by the hot-tempered Vivaldi. Gondez attempted to work vengeance on his former accomplice in crime, John of Dunbar, because the latter had refused to carry out a base command. Schemoli had been led on by the false accusations of his brother concerning his wife to kill an innocent third party, and indirectly to cause the death of his wife. In revenge for this betrayal by his brother, he was determined to stop at nothing to achieve his death, and this by means of his brother's own two sons. Thus, in Schemoli's case we see that revenge was the main principle of action.

From his own description of the long years in working out his revenge, we see both the keen intellect and persevering will of Schemoli. Maturin, knowing the traditional interest of monks in scientific studies (cf. Friar Laurence in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet) endowed Schemoli with acute, almost preternatural powers. Only at the end when a latent paternal love bursts forth, does the control of his will fail him. There is a further similarity between Schemoli and Schedoni, in the supreme confidence each placed on his own individual powers. Schedoni's attempt to kill Ellena when his accomplice Spalatro refused is similar to Schemoli's conspiracy with the superioress of the convent to kill Idelphonsa. In the end he must dispatch her himself. At
another time his companions feared to follow him: "The ruffians I employed though hardened in horrors, recoiled from visiting a haunt which was said to be the abode of a departed spirit, and I was myself compelled to perform the parts of spy and tempter at once."

Maturin ends his tale of terror with a moral to the reader which reminds one of his love of sermonizing:

'Such, said the narrator, was the fall of the Montorio family in whose fall the dispensation of a higher hand is visible to the most weak and limited eye. He who sought his own elevation, and the aggrandizement of his own children [the brother] was defeated and destroyed by him [Orazio-Schemoli] whom he had sacrificed to his ambitious wickedness. He [Schemoli] who sought revenge as atrocious as the crime that provoked it, found it poured out on his own children; and they who desired the knowledge of things concealed from man, found their pursuit accompanied by guilt, and terminated by misery and punishment."

Maturin continued to write Gothic novels and also perpetuated the monk character. In The Milesian Chief published in 1812, the monk now named Morosini, as the influential and unscrupulous confessor to an aristocratic family, continued the work of Schepdoni and Schemoli, darkening with his sombre appearance and wily intrigues the romantic background of a novel already filled with terror. In 1820 appeared Melmoth the Wanderer, considered by many critics as Maturin's masterpiece, in which several criminal monks appeared to show the author's continued hatred of things

56 Ibid., p. 255.
Catholic. In 1824, years after the vogue of the Gothic novel had passed its peak Maturin published *The Albigenses*, a novel entirely in favor of the Albigensian heretics and completely devoid of historical truth. In all these novels Maturin used the monk more out of hatred for the Catholic Church and to ridicule Catholic institutions, than for the inherent qualities of the monk, or because other novelists were doing the same. For as a matter of fact, years after most Gothic novelists had ceased using the monk, Maturin continued to feature him.

Here we may pause for a moment to note Maturin's aesthetic treatment of Gothic fiction, a method indicative of that employed by the other Gothic authors we have studied. As already seen in the novels so far considered, the aesthetics of this genre of romance consisted chiefly in an appeal to emotions of fear excited by the author's clever use of supernatural machinery, natural suspense in the action, and terrifying plots and horrifying deeds. In his first novel, *The Fatal Revenge*, Maturin explains his technique and purpose. We quote from Walter Raleigh:

'I have presumed' he Maturin says, 'to found the interest of a romance on the passion of supernatural fear, and on that almost alone.' Love he urges is felt in its purity by comparatively few; fear on the other hand, especially that arising from objects of invisible terror, is universal and irresistible in its appeal. Objects of terror, by no means always invisible, abound in this spectre-haunted, corpse-ridden story [*The Fatal Revenge*].

In his treatment of the supernatural Maturin's secret of success lies almost entirely in his power of suggestion. Schelloni is suggested to possess diabolical powers, though he is actually no more than a clever magician. His presence is made to be felt everywhere, always by suggestion, for he seems to appear from nowhere throughout the entire story. In this method of suggestibility he follows the example of Mrs. Radcliffe before him, endeavoring as she did, to explain all phenomenon by natural means.

The last of the villain monks to be treated is the monk Udolpho who appears in The Monk of Udolpho published in 1807 by T. J. Horsely Curties. Udolpho was suggested by Mrs. Radcliffe's novel The Mysteries of Udolpho; the character of the monk however shows similarities with Reginhald, Schadoni, and especially Gonzalo.

The story opens with the self-administered poisoning of Duke Angelo of Placenza, who in his death agony confessed to his daughter, Hersilia, that he had lost all his fortune on the throw of a dice and now must leave his kingdom to a foreign lord. All that he could leave her was the Castle of Alberi. Suddenly Father Udolpho entered the room even though it was midnight and demanded why the Duke had done such a rash deed.

The physical appearance of the monk is typically Gothic:

His dress was singular, it was of sable baize, reaching from the head and flowing round his feet, which were laced only in sandals; his stature was tall, and even gi-
gantic, inclined rather to the robust than meagre; he wore a full hood, which was generally drawn over his whole face and fastened under the chin, so that the real expression of his saturnine features could never be distinguished; across his eyebrows was bound a white linen forehead cloth, upon which was displayed in the centre the ghastly grinning ensign of a Death's head, said to be the emblem of an order of monks founded by Udolpho, and delineated in his own person with such pertinacious exactitude as to render its first sight too horrible for a repetition.58

Before the stupefied princess could cry out the monk, "displaying the hideous features of a demon," plunged a dagger into the heart of her father to hasten and insure his death. At this Hersilia fainted and was ill in bed for some days. Her lover, Lorenzo-Val-Ambrosio, came to console her. She next learned that the monk, Udolpho and Cosmo, Duke of Parma, were now her guardians, and that the title to the principality of Placenza had fallen into the hands of the Unknown who had won the title from the Duke Angelo before his death. This Unknown had then given it to Duke Cosmo. As guardians Udolpho and Cosmo refused to sanction the marriage of Hersilia and Lorenzo. The monk then produced a mysterious scroll which was purported to be the will of her father which proved that Hersilia had forfeited her dowery. Hence, she could not marry. The Compte Benvoglio Guestella, father of Lorenzo who had been her friend, now also forbade the union. In a last attempt to see his beloved, Lorenzo following his impetuous model the young

58 Montague Summers, The Gothic Quest, p. 337.
59 Ibid., p. 338.
Vivaldi in *The Italian*, struck the monk Udolfo and unceremoniously hurled him to the floor. The monk, like another Schedoni, swore revenge:

... The countenance of the Confessor was now blackened with an expression of every baleful passion that could deform the human character; it was dreadful, it was terrific, and even horrible; as was the tremendous oath of revenge which still in his prostrate attitude issued from his gnashed teeth: 'I will wring his heart with torments of never-ceasing anguish... Audacious renegade! in blood and ruin shalt thou rue this hour... Yes! By Heaven's host I swear to accomplish thy destruction. Escape me, if thou canst! A horrible grin of demoniac exultation confirmed this impious vow.

Hersilia urged Lorenzo to yield to his father's demands. However, the councillors of Placenza ignored the forged will of the Duke her father and proceeded to invest her with the emblems of sovereignty. Cosmo then seized the dukedom and announced that Hersilia was to be the bride of his son Sangedoni. This corrupt youth immediately pressed his suit beyond all decency; The plot of the story is here complicated by the entrance of Signora Hortensia della Corsenti, a strong willed mistress of Sangedoni, who will not easily permit a rival for his affections.

The monk Udolfo suddenly appeared in Hersilia's apartment urging her to accept Sangedoni's hand. As she refused a hollow sepulchral voice was heard saying: "But the grave of death cannot forever bury in endless silence the voice which will be heard and will proclaim aloud the malefactions of the murderer

The monk was startled but being a hardened villain soon recovered himself. Duke Cosmo also urged Hersilia to accept Sanguedoni, but on her refusal showed that he too was now a rival for the fair maiden by quarreling with Sanguedoni in the presence of Hersilia. To forward his schemes Sanguedoni sought the help of a page named Astolpho. Udolpho persuaded Hersilia that she must place herself under his protection in order to avoid a forced marriage with Duke Cosmo. Accordingly she went to the Castle of Alberi with Benedotto and Astolpho and was shown to a remote chamber of the house by the housekeeper Beatrice. A sudden noise was heard and Beatrice cried out: "The Ghost! Holy Saints it is the ghost of the murdered Eloisa!"

Udolpho himself soon arrived at the Castle and demanded an interview with Hersilia and again bade her become the bride of Sanguedoni. When she again refused the monk threw off his habit and revealed his true identity:

...'the cowl and its forehead cap, with all its horrid trappings which had so long and so well concealed his person and real countenance, disappeared, and in all his terrible attributes Sanguedoni stood revealed: bold in guilt, triumphant in the success of his dark destroying projects.'

Curties continued to give us more of the past history of this thorough villain:

63 Ibid., p. 340.
The history of this bad man was one endless tissue of crimes and enormities, so enmeshed, that not the eye of wisdom, nor yet the keener penetration of experienced age, could develop his true character. Cruel, blood-thirsty, and self-trained from boyhood to manhood in every vice... hypocrisy was in him personified.\(^54\)

Sanguedoni di Ubaldi was the second son of the eldest sister of Duke Cosmo and after embracing the monastic state, had led a double existence as the monk Udolpho and the rakish youth Sanguedoni. He had established a fearful order of men who outwardly appeared ascetic, but who were nothing less than an organized band of cutthroats. It was Sanguedoni who had forged the will of Duke Angelo. Now in the power of Sanguedoni in the Castle of Alberi, Hersilia's cause seemed lost. She learned that Duke Cosmo, Sanguedoni's uncle and rival for her had been put out of the way and that her lover Lorenzo and his father were prisoners in the same Castle with her. Hortensia in an attempt to poison Hersilia was stabbed to death by Sanguedoni. The villain's triumph seemed complete. He summoned a meeting of his secret council and bade them bring Lorenzo to be tortured on the rack. The company removed their robes and revealed themselves, not as henchmen of Sanguedoni, but soldiers under the leadership of Lorenzo's father, the Compte de Guestella. Sanguedoni is bound and turned over to the Inquisition. One of his many revealed crimes was the seduction of the nun Eloisa, whom he had supposedly done to death, but who had taken the disguise of the page Astolpho to work out her vengeance on Sangue-

This fact explained the outcry of the woman Beatrice at the castle of Alberi when Astolpho accompanied Hersilia. With curses on his lips Sanguedoni confessed a long list of crimes and then suddenly plunged a dagger, which he had concealed under his robes, into Eloisa's bosom, and then drove the same steel into himself. Of course, Hersilia and Lorenzo were then happily married.

As can be readily seen the plot of the story is cleverly developed. The usual Gothic events occur, but various themes are introduced such as the double character of Udolpho as monk and as the sensual youth Sanguedoni, and the jealousy of Hortensia which keep interest at a high pitch. Like Schedoni and Gondze Udolpho is ambitious and sensual; he is strong-willed and self-controlled to the point of cheating the Inquisition of a victim and getting revenge on one whom he had betrayed and who had finally brought him to justice. This last incident calls to mind the Spalatro-Schedoni feud in The Italian, which also ended in a murder and suicide in the very courtrooms of the Inquisition.

In the short space of twelve years from 1795 to 1807 the six monk characters just treated marked the climax in the development of the monk from the simple hermit type of Friar Jerome in The Castle of Otranto to the arch-villain represented by Father Udolpho in The Monk of Udolpho. Except for varying differences in treatment and some diversity in the vices attributed to them, these monks are all of one stamp. Their physical
appearances may be reduced to the same terrifying elements: gigantic stature, rough facial lineaments, sunken and sharp, piercing eyes, pale and gaunt faces, or sometimes, fat and sensual faces, sombre sinister exteriors, whose movements always betoken craft and suspicion. All are endowed with scheming, devilish intellects which know no end of intrigue and machination. All of them are experienced hypocrites at the art of playing saints. Their wills are strong and unbending, never thwarted by the obstacles that may be placed in their way. Morally they are either grossly sensual as Ambrosio and Father Conrad, or proud as Satan like Schedoni, or are a combination of both as exemplified by Gondez and Udolpho. With such a surfeit of criminal qualities, it is no wonder that readers of Gothic romances began to tire of reading about the monk's escapades. Nothing new could be added to the stock plots so common to interest the reader and certainly the monk character could not be made more wicked.

Thus we come to the end of the high tide of the Gothic novel. But Gothic features still influenced succeeding writers. Sir Walter Scott himself knew the Gothic romance well and showed Gothic tendencies in his early novels. However, he chastened the novel of hideous features and by means of a better historical insight and improved character technique gave us his famous historical novels. To show the link between the decline of the Gothic novel and the new method of Scott and also to consider Scott's treatment of the monk character, will be the purpose of our next chapter.
CHAPTER IV

THREE MONK CHARACTERS FROM THE NOVELS OF SCOTT

Sir Walter Scott wrote Ivanhoe in the year 1819 and The Monastery, in 1820. In the former novel Scott gives us his version of the Friar Tuck of the Robinhood legends in the character of the Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst. In the second, he describes two monks who held high ecclesiastical posts, Abbot Boniface and his sub-prior Father Eustace. The clerk is typical of the friars found in the old ballads who profess to follow the religious life of monks, but are equally at ease dressed for battle. The Holy Clerk is a worldly monk, but not the villain of the Ambrosio-Schedoni-Schemoli-Gonzalez-Udolpho school. The Abbot and sub-prior are even less worldly than the rustic clerk. Thus with these three characters we see a return in the development of the monk character to the type exemplified in Friar Jerome and Father Oswald. The pendulum has swung from a good to a bad monk and back again to a good monk. Scott, of course, has further improved the monk character in a more careful delineation of his qualities.

Neither Ivanhoe nor The Monastery are Gothic novels stricto dicta, but since Scott wrote during the period of decline of the Gothic novel, was himself greatly influenced by Gothic novelists, placed many of his novels in Gothic or medieval times, and frequently deals with the Catholic clergy, we have considered it
proper to include him in our discussion of the monk in the Gothic novel, to show how this particular character went out of vogue as a villain, due in part to the influence which Scott himself was to have on his contemporary novelists.

Scott's most Gothic character is perhaps the Knight Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert. The Knight was a member of a military order and had taken special vows, including one of chastity; but since he is not a monk in the sense in which we have taken him, and since he never throughout the action of Ivanhoe is seen to perform priestly functions, we cannot consider him as a monk in the same class as those we have treated. We should rather not consider him a monk at all, though he belonged to a military religious order. Railo, however, does consider him a monk, and makes some appropriate remarks regarding him:

Even at the heels of Sir Walter Scott's muse can the shadow of the criminal monk be discerned, although his healthier romanticism declined to accept the type in the fantastic form depicted. . . . The nearest approach is in Ivanhoe, in the shape of the Good Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a soldier and priest who in the manner of Ambrosio joins the band of monks as the victim of a broken promise and a conflict between a forbidden, unhappy love, passion and duty. Of all the types here dealt with, his is the fate most consequentially and logically developed and described, rising to true tragedy. In creating his character Scott used with fine discretion traits from the composite tragical monk, at the same time joining to them such features from the tyrant-type as manlihood, cruelty and wildness; the keen, searching gaze has not been forgotten, any more than the surviving mysterious gloom.1

1 Railo, The Haunted Castle, p. 181.
We first meet the Clerk of Copmanhurst when Richard Coeur-de-Lion finds him humble abode among the old ruins of a wayside chapel where the knight hopes to receive refreshment and rest for the night following his victories in the Tournament at Ashby. Monkish duplicity is shown from the very beginning, for there is a progressive unfolding of the clerk's character beginning with a certain reluctance to allow the stranger to know of his peculiar mode of life. "Pass on, whosoever thou art," was the answer given by a deep voice from within the hut, "and disturb not the servant of God and St. Dunstan in his evening devotions." After further exchange of words the hermit opened the door. The monk marvelled at the physical proportions of the knight, but not more than Richard who gazed with wonder at the immense size and strength of the hermit. The holy man showed the knight in and offered him shelter and a bowl of pease which he had placed on the table. The monk said grace in very poor Latin and began to eat; whereupon Richard took off his plumed helmet to follow suit. The hermit was much impressed as the knight showed his features, but not to be outdone, he himself revealed his own physical appearance.

The hermit, as if wishing to answer to the confidence of his guest, threw back his cowl, and showed a round bullet head belonging to a man in the prime of his life. His close-shaven crown, surrounded by a circle of stiff curled black hair, had something of the appearance of a parish pinfold begirt by its high hedge. The features expressed nothing of monastic austerity, or of

ascetic privations; on the contrary, it was a bold bluff countenance, with broad black eyebrows, a well-turned forehead, and cheeks as round and vermillion as those of a trumpeter, from which descended a long and curly black beard. Such a visage, joined to the brawny form of the holy man, spoke rather of sirloins and haunches, than of pease and pulse.3

The sensual monk of the Gothic novel is clearly seen in the description given by Scott. The revelation of his physical prowess was to be the friar's undoing, as the knight soon perceived certain obvious incongruities which indicated some duplicity on the part of the hermit. Richard asked him how he could have grown so strong on such a poor diet as pease and water. At first the monk in holy hypocrisy attributed his strength to the super-nutritious effects of the simple food—a continual miracle wrought through the favor of Our Lady and his holy patron. The hermit then realized that his knight guest had undoubtedly been accustomed to better fare, so he "remembered" the food which the keeper of the forest had left him. He immediately brought out a large baked venison pasty for the knight. The hermit's hypocrisy would have left him very hungry in the sight of a guest who was doing justice to such a meal, had not Richard invited him to share the food. The hermit "for once departed from his rule," and soon surpassed his guest in the race to empty the contents of the dish. The knight hinted that the same good keeper must surely have left some wine to accompany such a feast; and in the same manner the hermit reluctantly fetched a large bottle of wine.

3 Scott, Ivanhoe, p. 259.
The hermit goaded on by the sly taunts of the knight, began to boast of his prowess as a warrior:

"Sir Sluggish Knight, I drink to thee," said the hermit; "respecting thy valor much, but deeming wondrous slightly of thy discretion. If thou wilt take equal arms with me, I will give thee, in all friendship and brotherly love, such sufficing penance and complete absolution, that thou shalt not for the next twelve months, sin the excess of curiosity."

The two men pledged each other and the knight asked the hermit to name his weapons. The hermit then opened another cupboard and brought forth several broadswords and bucklers. Among these weapons the knight perceived three long bows, a cross-bow and some arrows, and also a harp. He had seen enough to be convinced of the manliness of the hermit and had also discovered the source of the excellent venison. Richard suggested a contest on the harp. Both men then began to play and drink and sing ballads far into the night. After about three hours of carousing they were interrupted by the knock of Locksley the yeoman who was gathering volunteers to take up arms against the kidnappers of Cedric, Rowena, Isaac of York, and his daughter, Rebecca.

The monk fearful for his reputation of sanctity quickly removed from sight the evidences of their revelry and began to chant in a loud voice the De profundis in which he asked the knight to join. The hermit admitted Locksley with his two com-

5 Scott, Ivanhoe, p. 265.
companions, Wamba and Gurth. Further to safeguard his own reputation the clerk lied about the identity of his companions, saying he was a brother of his order. Locksley, of course, had remembered the Black Knight at the lists, but he thought it better not to embarrass the monk by exposing the lie, since he wanted him to join their forces. Richard quickly joined himself to the expedition. The hermit hurriedly changed his religious garb for the green of a forester with sword and buckler, bow and arrow. Wamba was hesitant to help transform the hermit to a sinful forester. "'Never fear,' said the hermit; 'I will confess the sins of my green cloak to my gray friar's frock, and all shall be well again.'"

In his new outfit the Clerk seemed to change personalities. He began to curse the unprincipled men who had carried off the defenseless women in the party of Cedric. When the knight showed surprise at such strong language, the hermit took pains to assure him that he was no longer a monk:

'Clerk me no Clerks,' replied the transformed priest; 'by Saint George and the Dragon I am no longer a shaveling than while my frock is on my back.--When I am cased in my green cas-sock, I will drink, swear, and woo a lass, with any blithe forester in the West Riding.'

The hermit divested of his religious trappings was like any other forest adventurer. Confident of his strength as a fighter he took his place with the party of warriors.

6 Scott, Ivanhoe, p. 304.
7 Ibid., p. 308.
No account is given of the deeds of the hermit in the storming of the castle of Reginald Front de Boeuf, but we can suppose that his actions did not speak much less loudly than his words. He was last seen by a miller attempting to force his way into the wine cellar of the castle. The company feared he was lost in the fire, but soon the hermit appeared leading captive Isaac the Jew whose capture he quickly described:

"By Saint Dunstan," said the Friar, "I found him where I sought for better ware! I did step into the cellarage to see what might be rescued there; for though a cup of burnt wine, with spice, be an evening's draught for an emperor, it were waste, me thought, to let so much good liquor be mulled at once; and I had caught up one rumlet of sack, and was coming to call more aid among these lazy knaves... when I was advised of a strong door. Aha! thought I, here is the choicest juice of all in this secret crypt; and the knave butler, being disturbed in his vocation, hath left the key in the door. In therefore I went, and found just naught besides a commodity of rusted chains and this dog of a Jew, who presently rendered himself my prisoner, rescue or no rescue."

The friar then described how he had refreshed his thirst after this fatigue and was about to go forth with his captive when the castle began to fall in heaps about him. He thought it a disgrace to die with a Jew and was about to beat out his brains when he considered it would be better to convert the Jew. Which according to his story, he proceeded to do. Isaac confessed that he hadn't understood one word of all the monk had said. Evidently the monk had drunk too much. But he continued to insist that Isaac had promised all his substance to the holy

8 Scott, Ivanhoe, p. 508.
order of St. Dunstan. When the Jew denied this, the monk would have struck him on the head, had not Richard intercepted the blow. The clerk then transferred his resentment to the knight telling him to mind his own business. Richard then reminded him that they were friends, but the hermit would have no share in this friendship, and retorted that if the knight did not watch himself, he would bestow a buffet on him. The knight agreed to receive any blow the hermit would give him, provided the hermit would take his blow in return. The friar bared his arm and delivered a blow to the knight's head that would have knocked over an ox, but Richard remained erect without a stir. The monk then received the knight's blow, but not as successfully, for he was knocked off his feet and rolled head over heels upon the ground. Apparently sobered by the blow, the monk got to his feet and shook hands with his conqueror and the quarrel was patched up. He made no excuses, but took his humiliation with a smile.

After a short while he was again in an argument. This time with the Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx, who had sought refuge with Front de Boeuf, but who had been captured in the storming of the castle. He was now brought forward to answer the demands of his captors. The hermit was commissioned to carry on negotiations with his nobler religious brother. The clerk quickly donned his friar's frock over his green forester's cassock and told the Prior that his only chance for freedom was to pay tithes to his captain. The amount to be paid could not be
agreed upon; so the Jew was invited to set the Prior's ransom, and the Prior, the Jew's. Isaac set the Prior's ransom at 600 crowns. In desperation the prior agreed, but warned them of the judgment that would follow, if the sacred things of the Church were handled by lay hands. The hermit offered to meet this warning by wearing the jewels, and taking care of the sacred vessels himself. With high dignity the prior cautioned the hermit to take care of how he would answer to his superior for his share in the day's work. The monk defiantly replied:

"'You are to know that I belong to a little diocese, where I am my own diocesan, and care as little for the Bishop of York as I do for the Abbot of Jorvaulx, the Prior and all the convent.'" The Prior answered this boast of independence bitterly:

"'Thou are utterly irregular... one of those disorderly men, who, taking on them the sacred character without due cause, profane the holy rites, and endanger the souls of those who take counsel at their hands; lapides pro pane condonantes iis, giving them stone instead of bread, as the Vulgate hath it.'" The hermit resented this insinuation: "'I say, that easing the world of such misprond priests as thou art of their jewels and their gimcracks, is a lawful spoiling of the Egyptians.'" In great wrath the Prior pronounced the words of excommunication on the hermit, an act which so incensed the monk that he determined to use the argumentum ad baculum and strike

9 Scott, Ivanhoe, p. 531.
10 Idem.
11 Idem.
the aged Prior. "Ossa ejus perfringam, I will break your bones, as the Vulgate hath it." The yeomen standing by had to separate the two priests.

-114-

. . . who continued to raise their voices, vituperating each other in bad Latin, which the Prior delivered more fluently, and the Hermit with the greater vehemence. The Prior at length recollected himself sufficiently to be aware that he was compromising his dignity, by squabbling with such a hedge-priest as the Outlaw's chaplain, and being joined by his attendants, rode off with considerably less pomp, and in a much more apostolical condition, so far as worldly matters were concerned, than he had exhibited before this encounter.13

Later to his great consternation the hermit discovered that the knight whom he had struck in their test of strength was actually King Richard. He was much distraught at his sacrilegious action in striking the Lord's anointed.

'Confiteor! Confiteor!' exclaimed a submissive voice near the King's side—my Latin will carry me no further—but I confess my deadly treason, and pray leave to have absolution before I am led to execution:'

Richard looked around, and beheld the jovial Friar on his knees, telling his rosary, while his quarterstaff, which had not been idle during the skirmish, lay on the grass beside him. His countenance was gathered so as he thought might best express the most profound contrition, his eyes turned up... Yet this demure affection of extreme penitence was whimsically belied by a ludicrous meaning which lurked in his huge features, and seemed to pronounce his fear and repentance alike hypocritical.14

12 Scott, Ivanhoe, P. 531.
13 Ibid., p. 532.
14 Ibid., p. 658.
The King then asked him if he were downcast or "afraid thy diocesan should learn how truly thou dost serve Our Lady and Saint Dunstan?—Tush, man; fear it not; Richard of England betrays no secrets that pass over the flagon." The king told him to forget about the affair, as he had received punishment enough in the blow he had received. The monk, however, still wanted some penance. Instead of answering this, Richard began seriously to consider the benefits that would accrue to the church and to the hermit if the latter were unfrocked and kept as a yeoman in the king's service. This last suggestion did not please the friar, as he was unwilling to give up his easy and carefree life as a hermit. The king readily understood and promised to assign him three bucks a season along with a plenteous supply of sack. The friar then humbly knelt before the king, paid his obeisance, and fell to the rear of ranks.

The role of the hermit in this novel is of secondary importance. He has not the importance which belongs to Ambrosio, and his fellow monks. Nor was he entirely Scott's creation; he is, however, typical of what the Gothic novelists thought the ordinary monk not holding high ecclesiastical positions must be. As we have mentioned earlier in this thesis, there is some truth to their position. The Clerk of Copmanhurst is lazy, preferring to live off the bounty of others; he is worldly minded and at times as much given over to the pleasures of the world as any merry yeoman. His sanctity is somewhat feigned, being more

15 Ibid., p. 658.
reputation than fact. His main purpose seems to be to assure himself of a life of ease and comfort. He will kill and steal a deer on the sly. He loves rich foods and strong drinks, although he professes to be a man of long fasts and strict abstinence. He says Mass and offers up his prayers for his benefactors, chief of whom is the lord who tolerates him, but it is implied that his knowledge of Latin or of what he is doing is so poor, that he has little realization of the dignity and sacredness of the life he professes to lead. The hermit is in truth a disgrace to his order, though his many and manifest faults are glossed over by the faithful. He is a hypocrite. This does not mean that he is immoral, though he himself hints that when dressed in the green of a forester, his monastic rules are no more binding on him, and he will behave as any other youth of the time, even to the extent of "wooing a lass." The monk is certainly not a debauched character like Ambrosio. He is for the most part a humorous character much like Wamba and Gurth. Scott pokes a deadly satire at monastic institutions through the ridiculous situations in which he places the hermit. Yet there is a certain strength in his character which is shown in his encounters with King Richard and the Prior Aymer. He is not a villain monk of the Ambrosio class. He is a likeable character, though we regret that he is more sturdy yeoman, than holy monk.

The two priests in Scott's The Monastery will serve as the final examples of the development in the monk character which we have been tracing. These characters are: Boniface,
the Abbot of St. Mary's monastery, and his Sub-Prior, Father Eustace.

The action of this novel takes place during the reign of Queen Elizabeth against the background of the growth of Protestantism in Scotland and of her efforts to gain control of the Scottish throne. The monastery of St. Mary's was the center of Catholic feudalism in Kennaquhair, the Melrose of Scott's time. A Scottish force had recently been defeated by the English, a defeat which left as widows Lady Alice of Avenel with her daughter Mary, and Elspeth Glendinning of the Tower of Glendearg with her two sons, Halbert and Edward. Forced by the English to leave her castle, Lady Alice took refuge at Glendearg. When the English forces retreated, Julian Avenel, brother of the deceased Lord Avenel, seized the castle of Avenel. Within a few years the Lady Alice took sick and both Father Philip, sacristan of St. Mary's and Father Eustace went to prepare her for death. Elspeth told both of them of a mysterious black book which Lady Alice used to read to the household. Eager to attack the first outbreak of heresy both Fathers on different occasions got possession of the book, only to lose it to "the White Lady of Avenel." This spectre made itself known to Mary Avenel and also to Halbert and Edward Glendinning. Lady Alice died leaving the book to her daughter Mary. Christie of Clinthill, a henchman of Julian Avenel, visited Glendearg while the sub-prior was there consoling the family. Provoked when the sub-prior refused to inform the Abbot that Julian intended to
hold the funeral feast for Lady Avenel at the monastery, Christie argued violently with the monk and on the latter's return to the monastery attempted to kill him, but his efforts were thwarted by this same "White Lady" who had taken the black book from the priest. Rather than risk the enmity of Julian Avenel, Eustace gave the border thief his freedom. The "white spectre" then gave the black book, evidently a Protestant version of the Bible, to Halbert. Hob Miller accompanied by his daughter Mysie, made his annual visit at this time to the Tower to examine the grain which was to be sent to his mill. Another visitor came in the person of Sir Piercic Shafton, a refugee English Catholic gallant, exiled from the court of Elizabeth. In a duel resulting from an argument with Halbert over the girl Mary, Sir Piercic was killed by the youth. Halbert in fear fled the country with a stranger he met, Henry Warden, a notorious heretic. Both went to the castle of Avenel where Warden hoped to gain protection. The zealous heretic spoke out of turn against the ruffian's immoral life, and was thrown in prison. Halbert refused to join up with the border gang, and he was also kept under guard. He escaped, however, and began a journey to Edinburgh with a letter of recommendation from Warden to Lord Murray. In the meantime Sir Piercic appeared at the Tower unhurt, where he was immediately charged with the murder of Halbert whose whereabouts was unknown. Edward planned revenge for the murder of his brother. Piercic escaped before he could be brought to trial, and travelled northward with Mysie Happer who had helped him escape. To punish
Warden for his preaching Julian Avenel sent him under the guard of Christie to the sub-prior who was at Glendearg with the hope that he would meet the fate of a dangerous heretic. Eustace left Warden at the Tower on his promise that he would not escape and he himself returned with the young Edward who was determined to enter the monastery as a novice, now that he knew from Warden that Halbert was living. Boniface realizing that he was not the proper man to direct the destinies of the monastery in the crises that were soon to arise, resigned in favor of Eustace. Halbert joined the party of Murray and soon abandoned his Catholic faith to procure advancement in the military forces of Murray. This Scottish lord was headed for St. Mary's to head off a force of attacking men led by Sir John Foster. Eustace appointed Julian Avenel to lead the men of St. Mary's against Foster. Before Murray could prevent it, Foster had attacked the monastery and defeated the defenders under Avenel, who was himself killed. Not wishing to risk an engagement with Murray, Foster retreated to leave Murray to deal with the Abbot. Father Eustace courageously faced the Scottish leader and threatened to turn over the monastery and its property to the Queen of Scotland unless favorable terms were granted. In the negotiations a compromise was reached in which the monastery suffered little harm beyond the loss of a small amount of property. Halbert who had risen to high rank in the Murray army was then married to Mary Avenel by the heretical preacher Warden who had also turned her away from her Catholic faith. Sir piercie Shafton's claim to noble rank was
exposed and he was banished to Flanders with his wife Mysie Happer. Edward "miserably" returned to the monastery while Halbert took over his wife's rightful claim to the castle of Avenel.

Halbert Glendinning is the hero of this story, but Father Eustace, the sub-prior is the outstanding character. We shall compare him with the Abbot Boniface, since the two men were frequently opposed to each other, and then compare him with the previous monks we have already discussed.

As Scott erred in many historical points in his novels, so does he err in his attempts to treat the Catholic Church objectively. His bitter dislike of the Church frequently intrudes itself into the pages of The Monastery. We shall mention but a few instance of his dislike. Commenting on Father Eustace's resolution to do his duty as a priest and preach against heresy he says:

Thus spoke, at least thus thought, a man according to his imperfect knowledge, confounding the vital interests of Christianity with the extravagant and usurped claims of the Church of Rome and defending his cause with ardour worthy of a better.16

Some pages later Scott tries to explain the pure motives of the earlier reformers:

Indeed, the Lady of Avenel, however she might privately doubt some of the doctrines announced by the church of Rome, and although she had probably tacitly appealed

from that corrupt system of Christianity to the volume on which Christianity itself is founded, had nevertheless been regular in her attendance on the worship of the church, not, perhaps, extending her scruples so far as to break off communion. Such, indeed, was the sentiment of the earliest reformers, who seem to have studied, for a time at least, to avoid a schism until the violence of the pope rendered it inevitable. 17

Scott doubts the efficacy of praying for the dead. "Elspeth left the monk, who employed himself in fervent and sincere, though erroneous, prayers for the departed spirit." When Halbert after slaying Sir Piercie Shafton was in a quandary as to what he must do for his soul, Warden told him not to worry about the dead:

'It is not for the soul of thine enemy I would exhort thee to pray, that has already had its final doom from a Judge as merciful as He is just; nor, wer't thou to coin that rock into ducats, and obtain a mass for each one, would it avail the spirit." 19

A further instance of Scott's anti-Catholic bias: In the Protestant Bible which Mary Avenel had received from her mother, she found some slips of paper "in which by an appeal to and a comparison of various passages in Holy Writ, the errors and human inventions with which the Church of Rome had defaced the simple edifice of Christianity were pointed out." We shall cite one more instance: When Halbert joined Murray's party,

17 Scott, The Monastery, p. 126.
18 Ibid., p. 127.
19 Ibid., p. 284.
20 Ibid., p. 372.
"The ministers in Murray's company found an easy convert in Halbert Glendinning... who listened eagerly to more reasonable views of religion."²¹ (Italics ours.)

This anti-Catholic bias naturally colors Scott's portrayal of Catholic life in Scotland and his delineation of the monk characters. The monastery is practically rolling in wealth at the expense of the poor feudal tenants. The monks from the Abbot down, loved to feast and were blessed with delicate appetites. On one occasion Dame Glendinning had prepared a feast for the Abbot and his party who had visited the Tower. The impatient Abbot could not wait to attack the food. He therefore ordered the sub-prior to say grace and cut up the haunch. But the sub-prior hesitated since it was Friday. The Abbot, however, quickly dispensed the group, and legitimately, since they were travellers. He himself took the lead in the meal.

While the abbot was stating the conditions on which his indulgence was granted, he had already half-finished a slice of the noble haunch, and now washed it down with a flagon of Rhenish, modestly tempered with water.

'Well is it said,' he observed, as he required from the refectioneer another slice, 'that virtue is its own reward, for though this is but humble fare, and hastily prepared, and eaten in a poor chamber, I do not remember me of having had such an appetite since I was a simple brother in the Abbey of Dundrennan...'²²

From our earlier description of Abbot Boniface we have

²² Ibid., p. 235
seen that in the troubled times through which the Church of Scotland was passing, he was not the ideal man to guide the destinies of the monastery and the interests of the Church.

In quiet times no one could have filled the state of a mitred abbot, such was his dignity, more respectably than this worthy prelate. He had no doubt, many of those habits of self-indulgence which men are apt to acquire who live for themselves alone. He was vain, moreover; and, when boldly confronted, had sometimes shown symptoms of timidity not very consistent with the high claims which he preferred as an eminent member of the Church, or with the punctual deference which he exacted from his religious brethren, and all who were placed under his command. But he was hospitable, charitable, and by no means of himself disposed to proceed with severity against anyone. In short, he would in other times have slumbered out his term of preferment with as much credit as any other 'purple abbot,' who lived easily, but at the same time decorously, slept soundly, and did not disquiet himself with dreams.23

Thus it was that when letters from the primate of Scotland or from the Queen came to him asking for advice upon this subject or requesting information on that, he received the messages with a troubled mind, not knowing just what to do. The primate realized his deficiencies and sent him a helper in the person of Father Eustace

a man of parts and knowledge, devoted to the service of the Catholic Church, and very capable not only to advise the abbot on occasions of difficulty, but to make him sensible of his duty in case he should from good-nature or timidity, be disposed to shrink from it. 24

24 Ibid., p. 105.
But the Abbot resented the interference of the sub-prior and was always recommending him for promotion to another abbey as a means of getting rid of him. An opportunity came after the sub-prior's apparently miraculous escape from the deadly thrust of Christie's spear. The abbot insisted that such a man who had found favor with the blessed patroness of the order should not be forced to remain under the spiritual authority of one so unworthy in comparison. Father Eustace was to prepare for a speedy removal to Aberbrothwick. But the sub-prior first asked to be given a chance to tell what actually happened on his way back from the tower to the monastery. Under the seal of confession he then related how he had been deprived of the mysterious black book in somewhat the same manner as Father Philip by the "White Lady of Avenel." On hearing this confession the Abbot seemed to change his mind about the necessity of encouraging the sub-prior's promotion. Up until now he had looked on Father Eustace as being a faultless character, but now he had made a discovery which he could use to his own advantage. He immediately took an unjust advantage of the monk's humiliating confession and began to berate him for having held such a high esteem for his own opinions, showing him how he had fallen victim to the snares of the devil. However, he told him that his advice would still be asked in important matters and if it was found useful would be announced at chapter meetings as emanating from the abbot himself. Not satisfied with the new power he held over the sub-prior, Boniface took pains to lower the esteem of the brethren for him.
For instance the Abbot seldom mentioned him to the other monks without designing him "our beloved Brother Eustace, poor man! And now and then he used to warn the younger brethren against the snares of vainglory and spiritual pride which Satan sets for the more rigidly righteous, with such looks and demonstrations as did all but expressly designate the sub-prior as one who had fallen at one time under such delusions. 25

To the sub-prior's credit he suffered these humiliations with great courage:

... Upon these occasions it required all the votive obedience of a monk, all the philosophical discipline of the schools, and all the patience of a Christian, to enable Father Eustace to endure the pompous and patronizing parade of his honest but somewhat thick-headed superior. He began himself to be desirous of leaving the monastery, or at least he manifestly declined to interfere with its affairs in that marked and authoritative manner which he had at first practised. 26

Soon, however, Abbot Boniface was humble enough to realize that he was incapable of coping with the serious situations now confronting the Church and monastery. Perhaps it was another subtle form of pride which tempted him to resign his abbots-ship and so escape the humiliations which were sure to follow if he failed in his duties. At any rate he resigned in favor of Father Eustace, The opinion of the sub-prior with regard to his superior had never been very high, but his resignationord raised him somewhat in his regard.

26 Idem.
Even Father Eustace had held his spiritual superior hitherto as a good-humored, indolent, self-indulgent man, whose chief merit was the absence of gross faults; so that this sacrifice of power to a sense of duty, even if a little alloyed by the meaner motives of fear and apprehended difficulties, raised him considerably in the sub-prior's estimation.

The Abbot Boniface was a good man, but claimed no outstanding traits of character. He had no strong vices, but neither did he shine with resplendent virtues of talents. He was completely overshadowed by his sub-prior, Father Eustace. The Abbot along with almost every other character in the story, was a source of opposition to the sub-prior, whose personal qualities we now treat.

Had Scott so wished he might have joined Father Eustace to that select circle of tragic heroes of Ambrosio, Schedoni, and their school, but he preferred to make the object of the priest's ambition not merely his own glory, but mainly that of his monastery and his Church. Scott must have secretly admired Eustace, for he gave him many lofty virtues to make of him a strong character in the best interpretation of the word "strong." Scott had no intention of making a monster out of his priest-character. His good taste and abhorrence of the bizarre prevented him from depicting Father Eustace as sensual, avenging, scheming, or overly proud. Both Boniface and Eustace are proud, but not in the degree which would bring about their own destruction as was the case with the monks already treated.

In physical appearance Father Eustace differs somewhat from his predecessors.

He was a thin, sharp-faced, slight-made little man, whose keen grey eyes seemed almost to look through the person to whom he addressed himself. His body was emaciated not only with the fasts which he observed with rigid punctuality, but also by the active and unwearied exercise of his sharp and piercing intellect:

A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the puny body to decay,
And e'er-informed the tenement of clay.28

We may note the frequent occurrence of one trait common to all the preceding monk characters and also found in Eustace: the ability "to look through the person to whom he addressed." From Ambrosio on this trait has never been lacking in the villain monk. Scott then compares Eustace with the Abbot:

He [Eustace] turned with conventual reverence to the lord abbot; and as they stood together it was scarce possible to see a more complete difference of form and expression. The good-natured rosy face and laughing eye of the abbot, which even his present anxiety could not greatly ruffle, was a wonderful contrast to the thin, pallid cheek, and quick, penetrating glance of the monk, in which an eager and keen spirit glanced through eyes to which it seemed to give supernatural lustre.29

The inner fire of the sub-prior's soul seemed to charge his small physical frame with energy. For example while speaking to the impetuous Edward Glendinning:

29 Ibid., p. 108.
Notwithstanding his slight figure and thin features, the sub-prior could, from the energy of his tone and the earnestness of his devotional manner, impress his pupils and his penitents with no ordinary feelings of personal reverence. Upon such occasions as the present his puny body seemed to assume more majestic stature; his spare and emaciated countenance bore a bolder, loftier, and more commanding port; his voice, always beautiful, trembled as labouring under the immediate impulse of the Divinity; and his whole demeanour seemed to bespeak, not the mere ordinary man, but the organ of the church, in which she had vested her high power for delivering sinners from their load of iniquity.

The sub-prior's force of character came from a clear knowledge of the conviction of truth and a determined will to carry this conviction into action. His was an observant mind always in thought. For example, when the wet mule of the sacristan, Father Philip, had been found without its rider, Eustace began to give directions before the Abbot Boniface found time to think:

'Santa Maria!' said the abbot, 'our dear brother hath perished by the way!'

'It may not be,' said Eustace, hastily; 'let the bell be tolled--cause the brethren to get torches--alarm the village--hurry down to the river--I will myself be the foremost.'

The real abbot stood astonished and agape when at once he beheld his office filled, and saw all which he ought to have ordered going forward at the dictates of the youngest monk in the convent.

30 Ibid., p. 395.
31 Ibid., p. 111.
Eustace was a good judge of character. He saw in the young Edward a love of piety and interest in learning which his older brother Halbert did not show. To Dame Elspeth he would often talk of the possibilities of Edward’s joining the monks of St. Mary’s, but she would always try to change the subject or make some excuse that he was needed to take his father’s place at the Tower. But the sub-prior had his ready answer:

On such occasions the sub-prior would answer that, even in a worldly point of view, the welfare of the family would be best consulted by one of the sons entering into the community of St. Mary’s as it was not to be supposed that he would fail to afford his family the important protection which he could then easily extend towards them. What could be a more pleasing prospect than to see him high in honor? 32

Later, of his own accord, Edward became a novice at St. Mary’s when his brother Halbert decisively won the heart of Mary Avenel.

Eustace never acted without first carefully considering all arguments for and against an action. One such weighing of pros and cons threw him into a painful dilemma. Edward Glendinning wanted to avenge the apparent murder of his brother Halbert at the hands of Sir Piercie Shafton. The sub-prior tried in vain to check the ire which the universal customs of the times had made as common of avenging the death of a close relative. On the other hand the monastery would be dishonored if it left unpunished the murderer of one of its vassals. But should the monks proceed against Sir Piercie the house of Northumberland

32 Ibid., p. 155.
and other noble northern Catholic families with whom Pierce claimed to have close connections, might easily wreck their
vengeance on St. Mary's. But were the crime to go unavenged
the strong reform party in Scotland would resent strongly the
death of a Scot at the hands of an English Catholic.

The sub-prior well knew how they [the Scottish reform party] lusted after the revenues of the church (to express it in the ordinary phrase of the religious of the time), and how readily they would grasp at such a pretext for encroaching on those of St. Mary's as would be afforded by the suffering to pass unpunished the death of a native Scottishman by a Catholic Englishman, a rebel to Queen Elizabeth.33

But to hand over to Queen Elizabeth an English Catholic knight who had sought protection was an act unworthy in itself. The Queen of Scotland at least was a Catholic and a sudden change might put the entire government in her favor. The welfare of the monastery was also foremost in the sub-prior's mind:

On either side, the sub-prior, thinking, according to his sense of duty, most anxiously for the safety and welfare of his monastery, saw the greatest risk of damage, blame, inroad, and confiscation. The only course on which he could determine was to stand by the helm like a resolute pilot, watch every contingency, do his best to weather each reef and shoal and commit the rest to Heaven and his patroness.34

Fortunately, Father Eustace was spared the necessity of choosing either horn of this dilemma as Sir Pierce made his escape from the Tower with the help of Mysie Happer the Miller's daughter.

33 Scott, The Monastery, p. 338.
34 Ibid., p. 338, 39.
The character of the sub-prior is very balanced. He shows a common sense which prevails over emotional thinking. He earnestly wishes Edward to become a monk, but he does not want him to choose this life impetuously. If the youth is sure he desires to come, he will be admitted, but he must undergo the usual period of probation to see if he really has a vocation. Edward had expressed his desire to accompany the monk that night back to the monastery.

"Not now, my son," said the sub-prior—'not in this distemperature of mind. The wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of; and shall we make our offerings to wisdom and goodness itself with less of solemn resolution and deep devotion of mind than is necessary to make them acceptable to our own frail companions in this valley of darkness? This I say to thee my son, not as meaning to deter thee from the good path thou art now inclined to prefer, but that thou mayst make thy vocation and thine election sure."35

Among his other gifts is the ability to be quick and intelligent in organizing a course of action. We have already seen instances of this gift in operation. He states his purpose and knows how to use the means at hand to obtain the fruition of this purpose. He knows that Sir John Foster will come to attack the monastery and alone, and before Murray can join forces with him or stop him, since he knows that Foster will want the whole of the spoiling of the monastic goods and will not tolerate another sharing it with him. Hence, Foster will attack as soon

as possible, which means that the monastery must recruit immediate help. With characteristic initiative the sub-prior made plans to defend the monastery:

'. . . Sacristan, send for our bailiff. Where is the roll of fencible men liable to do suit and service to the halidome? Send off to the Baron of Meigallon; he can raise three-score horse and better. Say to him the monastery will compound with him for the customs of his bridge, which have been in controversy, if he will show himself a friend at such appoint. And now, my lord, let us compute our possible numbers and those of the enemy, that human blood be not spilt in vain. Let us therefore calculate...’

It was at this point that the abbot became so dizzied at the rapid movements of the sub-prior that he was convinced that the welfare of St. Mary's could only safely be entrusted in the hands of Father Eustace. Father Eustace at first felt an aversion to profit by the resignation of Abbot Boniface-

... but this sentiment did not long contend with those which led him to recollect higher considerations. It could not be denied that Boniface was entirely unfit for his situation in the present crisis; and the sub-prior felt that he himself, acting merely as a delegate could not well take the decisive measures which the time required; the weal of the community therefore demanded his elevation.

The new office had its effect on the newly elected abbot:

The abbot elect carried himself with more dignity than formerly, when giving such directions as the pressing circumstances of the

36 Scott, The Monastery, p. 413
37 Ibid., p. 415.
times required; and those who approached him could perceive an unusual kindling of his falcon eye and an unusual flush upon his pale and faded cheek. With briefness and precision he wrote and dictated various letters to different barons, acquainting them with the meditated invasion of the halidome by the English, and conjuring them to lend aid and assistance as in a common cause. 38

We see a new resourcefulness in the subprior when the defeat of Julian almost renders his cause hopeless. Here the new Abbot Eustace exhibits a keen business sense and tact together with a fearless courage that gave him a compromise with the demands of Murray which kept the losses of the monastery at a low minimum. In fact except for the loss of life before surrender, the monastery came off exceptionally well. Eustace first put the border chief on the defensive by refusing to appear before him, but demanding that Murray come to the monk himself. He then strengthened this advantage by boldly asking why the peace of the halidome had been so ruthlessly attacked. After an exchange of heated language between the two, the abbot began to deal privately with the two earls, Murray and Morton.

... the abbot held serious discussion with the two earls, and, partly yielding to their demands, partly defending himself with skill and eloquence, was enabled to make a composition for his convent, which left it provisionally in worse situation than before. The earls were the more reluctant to drive matters to extremity, since he protested that, if urged beyond what his conscience would comply with, he would throw the whole lands of the monastery into the Queen of Scotland's hands,

to be disposed of at her pleasure. This would not have answered the views of the earls, who were contented, for the time, with a moderate sacrifice of money and lands. 39

Thus Father Eustace always displays complete self-control and a strong manliness in all his dealings with the other characters in this novel, few of whom fail to feel the force of his personality. We have already mentioned his continual conflict with the will of his superior, Abbot Boniface. His struggles with Christie, Sir Piercie, and the heretic Warden will next be related.

On the death of the Lady Avenel, Julian, her brother-in-law, and usurper of the castle of Avenel, decided to hold the funeral feast at the monastery. He deputed Christie to commission the sub-prior who was visiting at the Tower of Glendearg, to inform the abbot of these plans. The sub-prior answered Christie:

'Friend. . . believe not that I will do to the father abbot the indignity of delivering such an errand. Think'st thou the goods of the church were bestowed upon by holy princes and pious nobles, now dead and gone, to be consumed in revelry by every profligate layman who numbers in his train more followers than he can support by honest means, or by his own incomings? Tell thy master, from the sub-prior of St. Mary's, that the primate hath issued his commands to us that we submit no longer to his compulsory exaction of hospitality on slight or false pretences. Our lands and goods were given to relieve pilgrims and pious persons, not to feast bands of rude soldiers. 40

This brave harangue angered the border ruffian and he threatened

40 Ibid., p. 131.
to burn the haystacks of the monastery and to drive off some of the cattle. When the Father further warned him, Christie brought his spear down to a level with the monk's body, an action which only drew from the priest the assertion that he was ready to be slain in defending the rights and privileges of the community. Eventually the borderman left in a mad huff and made his unsuccessful attempt on the life of the sub-prior, who was, as we have noted earlier, saved by the intervention of "the White Lady of Avenel."

Sir Piercie Shafton, Scott's euphuistic knight, also met the opposing will of Father Eustace. Though not clear of the suspicion of having killed Halbert Glendinning, he had mentioned his intention of leaving the Tower of Glendearg and going north; Father Eustace tells him bluntly that he must remain.

"How, reverend father!" said the knight, with an air of the utmost surprise; 'if what you say respects my departure, understand that it must be, for I have so resolved it."

'Sir knight,' reiterated the sub-prior 'I must once more repeat, this cannot be, until the abbot's pleasure be known in this matter.'

Sir Piercie then began to appeal to his high lineage and the low birth of the youth who was supposed to be dead. The answer of the sub-prior warned him that his high birth would avail him nothing. The knight then threatened to use force. To this last the sub-prior replied that there would be sufficient men

41 Scott, The Monastery, p.332.
in the vicinity to stop any attempt on his part to escape. The father had the last word when he informed the knight:

'Besides, consider, were we to send you to your kinsmen at Alnwick or Warkworth to-morrow, he dare do nothing but transmit you in fetters to the Queen of England. Bethink, sir knight, that you stand on slippery ground, and will act most wisely in reconciling yourself to be a prisoner in this matter until the abbot shall decide the matter.'

As we have already seen the plans of Father Eustace were frustrated by the heroism of Mysie Happer who enabled the knight to escape from his room in the Tower and who accompanied him northward.

Even with the youthful Edward Glendinning the sub-prior had to show sternness of will. The youth vehemently demanded revenge on Sir Piercie for the apparent death of his brother. The father's sense of justice prevailed to temper the emotionally upset mind of Edward. Thus he addressed the youth:

'... Father Eustace expects from the pupil whom he nurtured—he expects from Edward Glendinning, that he will not, by any deed or sudden violence, however, justified in his own mind by the provocation, break through the respect due to public justice, or that which he has an especial right to claim from him.'

The priest then continued to comment on the ancient custom of feud which had caused the committing of so many excesses.

'... Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord,'
and I will requite it. ... "The heathenish custom of deadly feud which prevails in this land, through which each man seeks vengeance at his own hand when the death of a friend or kinsman has chanced, hath already deluged our vales with the blood of Scottish men, spilled by the hands of countrymen and kindred." 44

The greatest clash with another character came with the appearance of Henry Warden, a zealous reformer, whom the Church feared, according to Scott, more than Knox. Father Eustace and Warden had both studied together as youths on the continent. The priest had been named William Allen while Warden had gone under the name of Henry Wellwood. After their studies they had gone along diverse paths, Eustace to the priesthood and Warden to the new reformed sects. All along the subprior had been hoping to get possession of a heretic in Scotland whom he might punish as an example to other heretics. Now here was his opportunity for Warden had been delivered into his hands by Julian Avenel. Father Eustace carefully began his thoughtful planning of procedure. If Warden were punished, he reasoned, perhaps he would be made out to be a martyr, and his cause would be espoused by more people. On the other hand he "felt himself called upon to make good his promises to the friends of the Catholic faith, by quenching heresy in the blood of one of its most zealous professors." But this duty was not to be pleasant. Scott seems

to favor the cause of the heretic and makes him appear more reasonable than the sub-prior.

The monk was about, at the utmost risk to himself and his community, to exercise what in his ignorance he conceived to be his duty. The preacher, actuated by a better-informed, yet a not more ardent, zeal, was prompt to submit to execution for God's sake, and to seal, were it necessary, his mission with his blood. Placed at such a distance of time as better enables us to appreciate the tendency of the principles of which they severally acted, we cannot doubt to which the palm ought to be awarded. But the zeal of Father Eustace was as free from passion and personal views as if it had been exerted in a better cause. 46

The two men first exchanged recollections of their student days, but they soon left sentiment behind and began to accuse one another of having been led into false paths. The sub-prior was the first to speak:

'And is this, then the end of that restless activity of mind, that bold and indefatigable love of truth, that urged investigation to its utmost limits, and seemed to take Heaven itself by storm; is this the termination of Wellwood's career? And having known and loved him during the best years of our youth, do we meet in our old age as judge and criminal?" 47

Warden answered this question in the same manner in which it was given:

'Not as judge and criminal,' said Henry Warden, 'but as a misguided oppressor and his ready and devoted victim. I too may ask, are the harvest of the rich hopes excited by the classical

46 Scott, The Monastery, p. 381.
47 Ibid., 382.
learning, acute logical powers, and the varied knowledge of William Allen, that he should sink to be the solitary drone of a cell, graced only above the swarm with the high commission of executing Roman malice on all who oppose Roman imposture? 48

Scott puts into the heretic's mouth the usual canards about the Church, such as the worship of statues, impossibility of purgatory, the tyranny of the Pope, etc. After much wrangling in which neither yielded any ground, Eustace extracted a promise from Warden that he would remain a prisoner until his case could be tried by the Abbot. The sub-prior realizing the zeal of his prisoner, also demanded that he preach none of his doctrine to anyone in the house. This last demand was received coldly.

'I know not that,' replied Henry Warden; thou mayst indeed cast me into a dungeon, but can I foretell that my Master hath not task-work for me to perform even in that dreary mansion? The chains of saints, have ever been the means of breaking the bonds of Satan. In a prison, holy Paul found the jailor whom he brought to believe the word of salvation, he and all his house. 49

The two men resumed their intellectual struggle at a later meeting. Scott again compares the qualities of the two men to the detriment of the sub-prior and also exhibits his anti-Catholic bias.

49 Ibid., p. 386.
In truth the chief distinction betwixt them was that the Catholic, defending a religion which afforded little interest to the feelings, had, in his devotion to the cause he espoused, more of the head than of the heart, and was politic, cautious, and artful; while, the Protestant, acting under the strong impulse of more lately adopted conviction, and feeling, as he justly might, a more animated confidence in his cause, was enthusiastic, eager, and precipitate in his desire to advance it. The priest would have been contented to defend, the preacher aspired to conquer; and, of course, the impulse by which the latter was governed was more active and more decisive. 50

In the end the sub-prior suffers defeat as Abbot, when the men of St. Mary's are defeated by the heretical forces of Lord Murray. Warden is victorious in that he converts Mary Avenel to his reformed sect so that she is in a position to marry Halbert Glendinning.

From all that we have seen of Abbot Boniface and Father Eustace, we easily conclude that they are worlds apart from their Gothic predecessors, as Ambrosio, Schedoni, Schemoli, Gonzelz and Udolpho. The English novel reader was no longer thrilled by monkish excesses. A climax had been reached after the turn of the century about the year 1805 with the publication of Gonzelz the Monk.

In the characters of Boniface and Eustace there is no hint of the sensuality we find in Ambrosio; no hint of the lust for power shown in Schedoni; no hint of the yearning for revenge of Schemoli; nor any hint of the gross sensuality combined with a

50 Scott, The Monastery, p. 401.
love of wealth and power exhibited by Gondez or Udolpho. Eustace in his own way was as strong willed as Schedoni; he is as shrewd, but he enjoys a probity of character which Schedoni along with his fellow monks lacked; he possesses a clarity of intellect and a sense of justice which we fail to find in them. The pendulum has swung back to the earlier monk character as presented by Walpole and Miss Reeve in Friar Jerome and Father Oswald. Scott saves his sub-prior from their colorless mediocrity, however, by endowing him with outstanding qualities of character. Eustace is not a vague type, but a man possessed of carefully delineated traits. In spite of Scott's prejudices, he is truly portrayed as a zealous Catholic priest. In Scott's mind, Eustace's cause was hopeless compared with the new reform sect, but the author still treated his hero as a noble character.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Even after Scott wrote *Ivanhoe* and *The Monastery*, there appeared many semi-Gothic novels, several of which continued to treat the monk character in the Lewis-Ambrosio manner. In 1826 William Child Green published *The Abbot of Montserrat; or, The Pool of Blood*. Montague Summers makes passing mention of this novel. Obando is the abbot who invokes the demon Zatanai and through his infernal help becomes abbot, in spite of the opposition of his brethren, and after having strangled to death the Holy Abbot Ambrose who had discovered him in the cloister at midnight holding converse with the demon. Obando, among other crimes, had killed his brother. Soon his crimes came to the notice of the Inquisition. Like Ambrosio he clamored for help from the fiend. At the last moment he repented, but Zatanai hurled him from a tremendous height to his death, a crushed and bleeding mass on the chapel pavement. Before expiring he confessed his enormities and apparently was saved from eternal perdition. Green in his own words stated: "'I have chosen to rescue my hero from the snare of darkness.'" The similarity to Lewis's *The Monk* is too obvious to need comment.

The Gothic novel enjoyed a high popularity for little more

2 *Idem.*
than a quarter of a century. Up to the year 1802, Gothic novels
to the number of about 140 had been written; 180 more by 1818;
and between 1818 and 1830, about 180 more to make a grand total
of approximately 500. Some of these later novels were semi-

Gothic. The high point, as far as the monk character is con-
cerned, was the year 1805, the year of **Gonzalez the Monk**. We can
truthfully say that the Gothic novel was the "best seller" of
its day. Today the only Gothic novels included in anthologies
of English literature are **The Castle of Otranto** and portions of
**The Mysteries of Udolpho**. Though not important in itself as a
literary contribution to literature, since few of the novels are
worth reading for themselves, the Gothic romance was important
for its influence on the future development of the English novel.

As Cross points out:

> The lineal descendants of the Gothic romance
> are the tales of terror and wonder by Irving,
Poe and Hawthorne. The romance of crime such
> as was written by Bulwer and Dickens is a
> realistic treatment of Gothic melodrama. God-
> win and Charles Brockden Brown were the first
to explore the mazes of the detective story;
and the latter began the transformation of
> the Radcliffe romance into the Indian tales
> of Cooper. Mrs. Radcliffe, possessing a real
> passion for deep woods, mountains, storm and
> sea—those aspects of nature which impressed
> Byron,—was able to add a new interest to
> fiction, Her influence, either directly or in-
> directly through Scott, has been felt on

3 Jacob Brauch, *Der englische Schauerroman um 1800 unter Beruch-
sichtung der unbekannten Bücher*, quoted by E. A. Baker, *The
every variety of the nineteenth century novel, whether psychological, romantic, or naturalistic.4

Knight confirms the statement of Cross showing other avenues into which the Gothic novel branched out:

From the Castle of Otranto the avenue of the Gothic romance led to Thornfield, where Jane Eyre was dismayed by maniac laughter, and to the awesome inhabitants of Wuthering Heights. It crossed broad highways in the domains of Poe and Hawthorne; it took us to the haunted houses of scores of ghost stories; very recently it brought us to William de Morgan's Old Mad House. . . . It wandered aside to the realms of the detective story (much of A. Conan Doyle's Hound of the Baskervilles is genuine Gothic romance in its suggestion of the supernatural), and perhaps most important of all, joined with other roads to expand into the important thoroughfare of the historical romance.5

The Gothic romance was an accurate measure of the spirit of the times. We again quote from Knight:

It was . . . the mirroring of the consciousness of many people in the days of its popularity, people whose states of mind were adventurous, credulous, eagerly imaginative, wishful to forget the prosies of war, politics, and business. It was read and written by all kinds of people, by the practical as well as by the sentimental; . . . even the first Napoleon took time to compose one in 1805.6

As the Gothic novel mirrored its times, so the changing spirit of the times affected the Gothic novel and contributed

5 Knight, The Novel in English, p. 86.
6 Ibid., p. 85.
to its gradual decline. We have already mentioned some of these contributory causes—the monotonous repetition of the same plots, characters, and backgrounds began to weary the English reading public; Scott had begun to popularize the true historical romance; the spectacular and bizarre horrors of the Gothic no longer thrilled the reader; with the beginnings of the new spirit of liberalism and the revival of the religious sentiment, Catholic priests and monastic institutions received a greater consideration and respect from the people. This tolerance eventually led to Catholic Emancipation in England in 1829. Jane Austen bitterly satirized the Gothic Novel in her *Northanger Abbey* written in 1798-99, though not published until 1818, when the satire had its best effect. The villain monk, however, remained as a character, but he became another personality—the so-called "Byronic hero", the superman who was above all laws except those of his own making. We find the Gothic villain in the novels of Dickens, as Edmund Rood, the lawyer Mr. Talking-horn, and Fagan. The Gothic background is seen in ghostly rooms and queer characters of *Great Expectations*. From the sensation novels of Wilkie Collins to the Wessex novels of Thomas Hardy (cf. Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native*) we see the influence of the Gothic. Thus we see that although the Gothic novel flourished in the pre-Romantic period of literary England and in a decadent period as far as great literature is concerned, it was not an exotic form or a literary aberration, and greatly influenced the literature which followed it.
By way of recapitulation: In Chapter I we examined the Gothic novel and saw that it was so called because it treated of events which took place against a medieval background of old castles and cloisters; that the name soon came to include any story which dealt with the horrible and the terrible in general. Foreign and native influences joined to mould the Gothic form. Chief among the foreign forces were the robber stories, old folk legends, the poems and tales of Goethe and Schiller, and early Gothic tales from Germany, and the romances from the French, and those especially of the Abbe Prevost. The native soil of England provided the actual development of the Gothic novel, for the seeds of Gothic had been already sown in the novels of Smollett. The ruins of Gothic castles and monasteries excited the imaginations of English writers. A new interest in Gothic ruins and antiquities led Horace Walpole to write The Castle of Otranto. The Gothic proved popular in literature since it provided an escape from the prosaic events of the day. Economic and political slavery was the lot of the poor. The educated and middle classes wanted to ignore the serious problems confronting them and used their leisure to escape to another world of bizarre fancy in the fantastic and, for that time, "hair-raising," pages of Gothic fiction.

We next noted the frequent appearance of the monk character in these Gothic stories. We showed that his frequent appearance was occasioned by the fact that the majority of the tales were laid in Catholic countries of romance as Italy and Spain. In
addition the blissful ignorance of things Catholic on the part of the English Gothic novelists, the mystery connected with the cloister, and their love of the spectacular, freed them from all restrictions on their imaginations, and led them to misrepresent and exaggerate beyond all bounds of credulity what they thought life in the cloister must be. Many authors, among them the Protestant minister Maturin, deliberately showed their anti-Catholic animus.

Abstracting from this bias which was not always intentional we saw that in itself the character of the monk was most suitable for a villainous and tragic role, since his fall from a high place of honor and virtue was great in dramatic potential. The purpose of the thesis was then enunciated--To study, describe, compare and show the role of the monk character in the Gothic novel from the year 1762 to 1826, as exemplified in a number of representative monk characters taken from Gothic novels written during this period.

A three-fold division was conveniently made according to time and type: First, the more or less pious monk from 1762 to 1777; next, the thoroughly villainous monk from 1795 to 1807; and finally, in the novels of Scott, the return to the noble-minded monk by the year 1820.

Chapter II was devoted to a discussion of the monk in this first division. The monk Reginhald appeared in *Longsword, Earl of Salisbury*, by Thomas Leland, published in 1762, two years before *Otranto*. Reginhald was not exactly the pious type, but
since he appeared almost contemporaneously with Friar Jerome, he has been placed in this rough division. He was, moreover, the true prototype of Schedoni, and the other meddlesome monks to follow. The novel itself is considered the first attempt at a true historical romance.

Friar Jerome in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* written in 1764 was next discussed. He was unlike Reginhald, being a serious minded and pious monk whose greatest vice was a weak duplicity of character.

Father Oswald in *The Old English Baron*, published by Clara Reeve in 1777 under the title of *The Champion of Virtue* was closely akin to Friar Jerome. He was even more virtuous and eager for justice, showing a complete trust in Divine Providence and the eventual triumph of virtue over vice.

In Chapter III we came to the second division of the monk character. Here we met the first thoroughly criminal monk in the Abbot Ambrosio in *The Monk*, written in 1795 by Matthew Gregory "Monk" Lewis. Lewis described fully the physical appearance of his monk and then showed the complete evolution from a holy man to a lustful murderer who finally met death at the hands of Satan. The infernal demon, the theme of unconscious incest, and the terrors are also introduced in this novel. In *The Italian*, Mrs. Ann Radcliffe, in 1797, gave us Father Schedoni, an improved monk over Ambrosio in physical delineation, strength of will, keenness of intellect and dramatic power. His predominant vice was a proud ambition which eventually brought him to a tragic end.
In the same year appeared the criminal monk Father Conrad in Joseph Fox's novel Santa Maria: or, The Mysterious Pregnancy. He was also the sensual and scheming type who took advantage of his position to cloak his immoral life. Unlike his predecessors, the worm of conscience devoured his peace of mind and forced him to confess his many crimes before he died a miserable death.

W. H. Ireland in 1805 continued to give a prominent tragic role to the monk in Gondez the Monk, which featured the evil-doings of all monk characters. To satisfy his lusts he killed his own father with the help of his mother. He exhibited a combination of sensuality, pride, and ambition which stopped at no obstacle or excess. To the end he lied that he was innocent, and only broke down under the influence of continued preternatural signs.

The influence of Mrs. Radcliffe continued in Father Udolpho who appeared in 1807 in The Monk of Udolpho by T. J. Horsely Curties. Udolpho was closely modeled on Schedoni. Like a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde he led a double existence as monk and rake. Cloaked by his religious habit, he plotted to benefit himself as an immoral prince and would have succeeded except for the spies of the Inquisition. He is another monk steeped in the vices of sensuality and ambition. The last monk in this group was Schemoli, the creation of Charles R. Maturin in The Fatal Revenge, published in 1807. The revenge motive drove Schemoli to seek satisfaction in the death of his brother who had wronged him. However, this passion rebounded to his own ruin when he perceived that the innocent instruments of his revenge were his own sons,
whom he had made murderers. Similar in character to Father Conrad he lost his strong willed character at the sight of his crimes and he was all remorse and penitence in the denouement. The appearance of Schemoli marked the last of the truly great monk villains altho in 1812 Maturin in The Milesian Chief continued this character under the name of Morosini, and as late as 1820 in his masterpiece Melmoth the Wanderer, he described briefly several corrupt monks. In 1826 there appeared the Abbot Obando in The Abbot of Montserrat by William Child Green. Obando is a weak imitation of Ambrosio, who committed the same crimes, but repents before being hurled to his death by the demon Zatanai.

In Chapter IV we discussed two novels of Scott in the second of which the monk character reverted to his original type of nobility and piety. In Ivanhoe (1819) Scott continued the traditional treatment of Friar Tuck in the character of the Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst, who though professedly a hermit, could by a mere change of clothing turn into a rough and ready soldier. Scott employed the hermit more as a source of humor in the story than as a villain monk, though through him he poked some satire at the Church. In The Monastery (1820) he treated two priests in the persons of Abbot Boniface and the sub-prior Eustace. Of the two, Eustace is the stronger; he in turn is made out to be inferior when compared with the notorious heretic Henry Warden. But Scott declined to join Eustace or Boniface to the Lewis school of monks. He had returned them to their early position of honor and nobility.
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The thesis submitted by Robert A. Pollauf, S.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of English.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

December 19, 1944

James F. Young
Signature of Advisor