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John J. Iorio

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MARY ELLEN CHASE AND THE NOVEL OF  
REGIONAL CRISIS

By JOHN J. IORIO

WHEN Mary Ellen Chase was born in 1887, many of the forces of cultural change that were to shape and sustain her fiction a half-century later were already engaging the energies of a continent. The old agrarianism, allied with maritime power in New England, and centered on handicrafts, individualism, and the town, retreated before the new capitalism with its aggressive gods of technology, progress, and megalopolis. Long before the end of the century, that sacred ethos that had produced Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne and Melville had exhausted its motive concept. Neither Hebraic injunctions nor the newer Victorian decorum could cope with the fissures of the new imagination. By the time Miss Chase had published her first story in 1908, this cultural metamorphosis, revealing itself more often in grotesquery than in beauty, had established a new metaphor of national experience and meaning. In this metaphor we see not only the baffling, Titan-face of modern America, but more important for Miss Chase's writing, a new pattern of regional energy and assertion—a pattern in which power and poetry fall away from the shaping hands of New England.

Despite the fact that most of the writers in New England, from Henry Adams to Thomas Bailey Aldrich, expressed concern with what they believed to be the metaphor of their time, it was left to a few writers to engage fully the drama and pathos of change itself. It was left to a few writers such as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mary Wilkins Freeman, and Sarah Orne Jewett, who saw the decline of New England as material for fiction, and who sentimentally, moralistically, and realistically chronicled this decline. The greatest of these is Sarah Orne Jewett, who before her death in 1909, was an inspiration and guide to Miss Chase. In our time it has been left to Miss Chase to carry the chronicle forward and to see in the decline of a region not only a meaningful relationship to twentieth century realities, but the source of a people's strength and a continuing spiritual heritage. In so doing she has used the regional novel on its most significant level.

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It has been fashionable in some circles to see regional writing as an inferior commitment. This view is not without some justification inasmuch as the regionalist too often surrenders to meretricious description and counterfeit emotions. It would certainly be a critical failure, however, to see only sentimentality and cheap adornment of nature in the best of regional writing, especially when such writing deals with regional contradictions and crises that have given American culture its physiognomy and American literature its strength. To belittle such a commitment would be a failure to recognize the most important meaning of the regional novel, for on its highest level it becomes an instrument of sanctification. Through the regional novel a writer and a people pay homage to the past, and thereby give wholeness, vision, and meaning to the fragments of memory. Through the regional novel the old virtues and ancient ways that have become remote, perhaps lost amidst clamorous realities, are once again given leviathanic significance and presence.

This process of sanctification (which might explain in part the amazing religiosity of the literature of so secular a country) finds considerable success in the major novels of Miss Chase. In them she engages the innermost fears and sorrows of a region in which history has turned around. In them she succeeds in raising the old Yankee-Puritan virtues to the level of living myth. In the end, the landscape, the sea, the atmosphere, the myths and accents, the taboos and mannerisms, the sentiments and attitudes of New England, and of Maine in particular, are given shape, voice, and soul.

In an early novel, *Mary Christmas* (1926) we are introduced to the premises of her faith and loyalty. We see also the motifs that are to be developed in her later works—love of land, loyalty to family and tradition, the sense of history and continuity, the fusion of a static society with the dynamic outsider. Here are the beginnings of spiritual homage to ancestral virtue and strength.

In this story the narrator returns to the Eden of her childhood to tell an unpretentious, well-controlled, and compact story about the Wescott family and its encounters with Mary Christmas, a colorful Armenian peddler who pushed her red cart of goods across the bleak Maine countryside. The novel

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is organized around the visits of Mary, the growth of the Westcott girls, and the narrator's final realization of Mary's significance. Certainly not a complex story. Yet the character of Mary has a curious resonance. Expansive, imaginative, and flamboyant, she seems to point up the limitations of New England Congregationalism. Beyond the obvious contrast, Mary Christmas seems to supply to the New England scene what Herman Melville once saw as the insufficiency of the Hebraic Godhead in its lack of the principle of love and maternity—a lack which made the Calvinistic God, for Melville, an unbearable tyrant.

Mary Christmas, in fact, reaches Madonna-like dimensions in her actions and words. She tells the children, for example, that she comes from the Garden of Eden, that only someone holy like the Virgin Mary could see the shadow of the ark atop Mount Ararat and that she had seen it. She undergoes the suffering and death of her only son in World War I "to alleviate, if but for a little time, the suffering of the world. . ." And the book ends with a final hymn to Mary Christmas whose spirit, now that she has gone, pervades the places she has been like an everlasting presence. In one of the girls, Cynthia, Mary has passed on the significant words of "silent, holy, high, garden," and the word *old* which "opened the gates of ancient cities, led over desolate, hoary plains and hot, sand-swept deserts, carried one to remote gardens within gray, crumbling walls, brought before one's eyes a time-worn, weary land."

What Van Wyck Brooks meant when he said that the decline of New England was brought about when "alien races pressed on the native race," is refuted here by this life-giving Armenian. Mary is one of those archetypal women recurring in Miss Chase's work who are earth-rooted, life-sustaining, and timeless. Like some of William Faulkner's women, they are intimate with ancient knowledge, intuitive, and endowed with mystical endurance.

In *Uplands* (1927) these qualities reappear in the principal characters. The emphasis, however, falls on the idyllically and elegiacally told story of romantic love and love of soil. Martha Crosby is secretly married to Jarvis Craig in North Dorset. Before long Jarvis dies from a haying accident (the reality of chance plays an increasingly important role in Miss Chase's

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works) and Martha retires to a convent. The novel goes on to develop the tender friendship between Martha and Colin Halliday, a sensitive young man and writer of religious poems.

Here is found the harshness of life of upland people with their ironies, religious sensitivity, people who communicate with silence, who have the durability of the rock ledge beneath their feet, and who end by drawing their truth from the sounds, the smells, and the mysteries of earth. It is, for example, Colin who finally learns the meaning of his experience from a flowing stream and is given renewed hopes. Yet Miss Chase here seems to be interested not so much in the subject as in the idyllic, elegiac, and nostalgic tones that suffuse her story, and in her language which reaches again and again towards the poetic.

Up to this point there seems to be a subdued quality about Miss Chase's writing and a seeming satisfaction with a narrow engagement of human experience. The characters and situations and actions do contain some important literary possibilities, but they are not yet treated with dimension and complexity. The novels strike one as preliminary sketches. Good stories as they are, they have not yet engaged the full force of crisis and decline that would give them that hard quality of greatness.

In *Mary Peters* (1934) and *Silas Crockett* (1935) Miss Chase finds the subject that measures her talents. These are complex and profound chronicles of decline. They are elegies, catalogues of defeat, monuments to loyalty and heritage, affirmations of ancestral strength, and hymns to permanence. Both novels present us with individuals caught in the impossible conditions of change as Maine and New England maritime power is vanquished, their shipping swept from the seas as surely as if they had suffered a major naval disaster in war. Man is caught in that most terrifying moment when the "will of the gods" proclaims his end. Both reach towards tragedy; both are ironic.

*Mary Peters* is more than its story would indicate. When we first meet Mary at the age of nine, she is aboard her father's ship. The ghostly, white city of Cadiz is the panoramic, scenic reality which is soon to become the nostalgic dream that haunts the novel until the very end when Mary spiritually returns to

the sea. Mary is sent to school in Maine and later goes into teaching. She loses her lover, loses her best friend, witnesses the death of her brother, and finally marries Jim Pendleton, the son of her mother's lost lover. Jim seems to be symbolic of the worst that the region can produce—unstable and lacking all integrity and dignity. Mary is soon forced to sell family treasures to support him, and when he is accidentally killed while on a love affair with her own sister-in-law, Mary provides a home for the invalid survivor. Betrayed and victimized, Mary submits to the inevitable. She is saddled by the weary sense of defeat and decline until she finally learns the meaning of her experience at the very end.

One is struck immediately by the formal quality of the story as if the form itself—that symmetry of organization and balance—is a comment upon the necessity to hold on to meaning and decorum in an inscrutable universe. Like a symphonic structure, the recurring motifs, sympathetic movements and patterns emphasize through their very insistence the essential meaning beneath disparate experience and appearances.

This formal pattern, which must be placed on the side of affirmation as against loss, betrayal, and chance, is underscored also by the recurring experiences in the lives of the three principal characters—Sarah Peters; her daughter, Mary; and her son, John. Sarah brings to mind Mary Christmas and Martha Craig in her earthiness and endurance. Bed-ridden, betrayed in love, she loses her husband and son to death; yet she affirms life and maintains serenity in a chance-ridden world. John, like his mother, is close to the soil, suffers the loss of his beloved and finally loses his son and his own life. Mary, as we have seen, is afflicted most terribly and emerges with the greatest dignity.

Interwoven with this recurring pattern of loss, betrayal, and dignity are larger counter-movements of decline and affirmation—counter-movements involving the larger dimensions of region and earth.

The movement of decline is that of maritime Maine. Miss Chase takes us from the Maine and New England of seafaring glories when the best men the region could produce were in every major port of the world down to the time when sea captains become characters for summer visitors, and Viking spirits

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are tamed to taking parties on the water for picnics. In the end boys no longer dream of sea adventure and remote places but of caddying on golf courses and all too conscious of the tips in their pockets. The tools of a dynamic culture become finally the dead pieces of antique dealers. It is a line of defeat that extends from those of the living tradition down to those of weak tradition and those imitators and parasites who are always death to a life-force. This movement of failure recalls in some ways Faulkner's genealogy in his novel of another region, *The Sound and the Fury*. And like Faulkner's people, her people are always seen against the larger social and historical patterns. Miss Chase, we should note, holds to the Ciceronian view of man as a social and political being—a point of view that has suffused so much of Southern and New England writing.

Opposed to this line of defeat is the growing affirmation shaped and nourished by the very adversity that assails it. It is mystical, all-embracing, and set in a context of elemental forces. The nomenclature of the four sections and their cyclicism underscore this affirmation—"The Sea," "The Village," "The Land," "The Sea." It is a joyful, insistent, growing theme in which the earth abides forever and those closest to it are, as Thomas Jefferson would have put it, God's chosen people. If Miss Chase's people never exist apart from a social context no matter how isolated they might be, neither do they exist divorced from a nature that is capricious and destructive, but also sustaining and benevolent. "Earth was still the ancient lifegiver, and the broadbacked sea the dispenser of many gifts," she writes. Ultimately nature is, as it was for the Puritans, an analogue of divine wisdom. It is the sap always alive beneath winter's sinister silence and apparent death.

*Mary Peters*, therefore, with its four sections and its insistent themes and counter-themes suggesting the structure of a symphony, honors Puritan virtues and Stoic nobility. It is a symphony which for all its pervading sadness and tragedy celebrates the eternal strength of life, dignity, and serenity in the midst of adversity. The very control and rigorous form imposed upon the material by the author becomes the most affirmative gesture.

To say that the novel is concerned with form, of course, does not deny the novel's solidity and its respect for factual

density. Miss Chase has gathered an amazing amount of life in its pages. As the story moves into metaphysical probing of man's existence, it never leaves the world of specific detail beginning with the cataloguing of ports, crews, weather, and animals, to the minutiae of education, feminine dress, description of twenty below zero weather, the buying of cod at three cents a pound, the making of hooked rugs, to the time of dragonflies in the still air of late summer. It is this specificity that gives the novel its overwhelming authenticity and life-ness.

If *Mary Peters* is symphony, *Silas Crockett* is history. It has polarity in the magnificent portraits of its characters; it has periodicity in its acute consciousness of time and experience and it has that disturbing, implacable look of factuality and destiny. This historical sense gives *Silas Crockett* a good deal of its emotional force, and also gives to it that quality of classical Greek and Hebraic literature in which fact and fiction—history and imagination—often merged to produce those great syntheses of perception.

It has already been pointed out that this commitment to history on the part of the regionalist is inevitable. It is expected that he be concerned with his region in a spatial sense—with its land and people. But more than this, he must be concerned in a temporal sense with its past. He must give life to the entombed experience of the people or he has failed. If he fails in a spatial sense, he ends up writing sentimental tales about the old times; if he fails in a temporal sense, he writes travelogues. Miss Chase manages to escape both failures. Not only does she treat her people and land with compassion and honesty, but history for her seems to be what Benedetto Croce once called "a spiritual act."

*Silas Crockett* develops the lives of four generations of a seafaring family presented in four powerful tableaux. The geographical focus is the imaginary seaport of Saturday Cove, which is typical of those coastal towns—Boothbay, Owl's Head, Camden, Belfast, and Searsport among others—that gemmed the hard coast and gave every indication of growth and prosperity before they became the picturesque summer towns for the dreaming of summer visitors. This was the golden age of sailing when fifteen hundred ships put in at Boston in one year, and when the genius and character of a people were reflected in



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the beauty and strength of its sailing ships. But already the dark portents are here as Silas Crockett (1830-1850) refuses to acknowledge the coming of steam and sails proudly out of Saturday Cove with his wife. Very early we are introduced to the uneasy life of a man who has completely identified himself with a world on the verge of collapse.

With Nicholas Crockett (1850-1875) we are given a man who is capable of seeing the inevitable defeat and has the character to confront it. But fate betrays him and he dies frozen aboard a fishing vessel in a scene of remarkable and memorable power.

Then there is Reuben (1875-1910) who goes to sea on a coastline steamer. By this time the old shipyards are covered with weeds with only the remnants of wharves and docks to remind one of former glories. Even the character of the Crockett family has changed. It has become patient, cautious, and restrained.

Finally we are carried into the 1930s with Silas II, who works in a factory.

The generations and their destinies are an index of decline—from Silas who adventured on the high seas, to his grandson who was glad to get a job in a herring factory for twenty-five cents an hour. The downfall is movingly dramatized when Silas II one day visits his ancestral home at Saturday Cove. The house is now in the hands of an owner who is away and seems to be ignorant of the tradition. In a significant scene Silas is denied admission by the butler. Later, motivated by compassion, Silas lies to his dying father about what he had seen inside the house. The entire episode becomes a symbol of the pathos and agony of failure.

Yet out of this decline again comes new strength and affirmation. It is Reuben, himself, who articulates this stony attitude that pervades the novel when he muses upon the coastline that has remained inviolable for three hundred and thirty years while the affairs of men have seen change again and again. As he looks upon it, his worldly anxieties pitted against the rugged durability of mute nature, he sees in it “something that must endure, outlast the passing of the old and the coming of the new, and prove triumphant over time and chance.” At the end of the novel this view is reasserted by Silas II who, while

looking at the tombstone that needs to be righted in the family cemetery at Saturday Cove, sees that it is his heritage that cannot be denied and cannot be changed. It is this heritage and tradition that is "the everlasting triumph over time and chance." Out of the great but dead past this spirit rises once more to its triumph.

The novels written after *Mary Peters* and *Silas Crockett* deal not so much with decline as with the search and celebration of the old virtues, of those life-giving forces that give man control over the chaos of the world and dignity in the face of what he cannot control. But *Windswept* (1941) returns to many of the former themes. Philip Marston searches for the Adamic land where nothing mean must happen. He finds it in the wind- and tide-carved coast of Maine. His ambition to build a house is cut short, however, when he is accidentally shot by the carpenter's boy with a rifle given to him by Philip's own son, John.

The novel's main direction and action is taken up by what could be called the education of John Marston. Fatherless, shy, scholarly, and noble, he takes possession of the land and all the intangible qualities of heritage. The house is built in 1881 and John, who must move through time and its great responsibilities, is looked after by Jan Pisek, an immigrant once befriended by John's father. From the first sighting of *Windswept* to the final fears and hopes of a people in a strange new world on the eve of World War II, John's education includes war and death, suffering and sacrifice.

Perhaps the greatest impact upon young Marston was made by the land itself—by *Windswept*, which is dramatically active throughout the novel. Miss Chase explains the influence of the land:

Here even sadness must be sharpened and refined to understanding and acceptance; here, Earth was still the ancient life-giver, increasing joy. Here, away from the roar of the world and the confusion of themselves, men might grow into heroic mould as in those early ages of the world, their spirits chastened and cured, seeing in these bare and rugged outlines the sure and simple design made for them in the beginning of things. For this was an old and wise land, a long uninhabited and forgotten spur of a new world, which elsewhere seemed to grow newer instead of older. Here, Philip Marston thought, one could, if he would, catch something of that wisdom which life in most places and under most circumstances leaves unfinished, even undiscovered.

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For Miss Chase the land is obviously vital in the molding of character. But change is also a vital reality in shaping the character of a region, Miss Chase believes. This character, therefore, will depend on the region's ability to amalgamate the best of the new with the best of the old. This fusing of diverse cultures works symbolically in the spiritual education that Jan Pisek gives to John, and in the coming together of the Roman Catholic Mother Radegund, of Adrienne Chartier and her daughter, Julie, who finally becomes the foster child of the Marstons.

After several excursions into other areas, Miss Chase comes back to the literary territory of *Mary Peters* and *Silas Crockett* in *The Edge of Darkness* (1957). The story, however, is tighter and simpler. Its physical action revolves about the gathering on one day of Maine coastal folk to bury Sarah Holt, the town's matriarch. Its interior spiritual action develops the transformation of the people who knew Sarah in life and now in death. All are touched and changed by her as they are slowly enveloped in a gathering sense of loss.

If the physical action is slight, Miss Chase saves her novel from becoming static by developing the spiritual action in terms of opposites—decay and regeneration, weakness and strength, the virtues and their particular antitheses. These opposites stand like the dark spruce and white birch massed in the Maine landscape and generate the dramatic action. In this clash of opposing spiritual forces Sarah remains always the still center of the novel—the central image or central symbol. Like the great women of the earlier novels—Mary Christmas, Mary Peters, and Solace Crockett—Sarah serves as a link between two ages and symbolizes a world that was and never will be again. In the end, this matriarch who had reached her nineties, becomes in death the apotheosis of the old virtues which now continue to govern the lives of the people, thus symbolizing that necessary metamorphosis of physical power into spiritual power characteristic of the novel of regional crisis.

Miss Chase's latest work, *The Lovely Ambition* (1960), continues the search for a way of life that is balanced, serene, and rational in a world of loss. More broadly, it is a search for sanity in a world awry.

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The story centers about a Methodist minister, John Tillyard; his wife, Hilda; his son, Ansie; and daughter, Mary, who after some time in Suffolk, England, come to Pepperell, Maine, and make their adjustment to life in America. This adjustment is contrasted by the maladjustment of Mrs. Gowan, the inmate of the state hospital who becomes an annual visitor to the Tillyard household. Mrs. Gowan recalls Mary Christmas in her love of life, expansiveness, and talent for storytelling. Like Mary Christmas, she appears like a strange intruder at the very beginning of the novel in the dreams of the narrator. And like Mary Christmas, she finally imparts some basic truth about life and the world. In both women can be seen tragedy and hope, the extremes of human experience, and the ability of the human heart to survive all catastrophe.

In the memorable character of Mrs. Gowan, Miss Chase has created a symbol of modern psychic disruption, and Miss Chase seems to be interested in showing the importance of family strength in healing the wounds of such disruption. She tells us that it is a story "for those who still believe that in the character of families lies our chief hope, or despair, for the redemption of this erring, perplexed, and overburdened world." While the Tillyard family, for example, is shown to possess some inner strength which enables it to be transplanted without withering, the chronicle of Mrs. Gowan's family reveals a background of perversion and nightmare. Mrs. Gowan tells of her father who froze to death in that unfinished land of Aroostook and of her mother who "stayed frozen" all her life. She goes on to relate her mother's religious fanaticism and love affair, and her own misshapen childhood in the loneliness and isolation of the north. She tells the poignant tale of her acceptance of the love of a man who had advertised for a wife in a newspaper, her subsequent travail, loss of child, and her mistreatment in a world ready to exploit without compassion. It is significant that in her mind Mrs. Gowan returns to a heroic period of American history as she holds to the belief that she is Betsy Ross commissioned to make the flag. This return to beginnings in a curious way gives her order and strength.

The narrator of the story learns in the end the value of heritage and family, of the past and present together, of freedom and of hope; in short, she learns of that force of life which no

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matter how dormant will always spring again, and of the importance of the family in conserving and preserving this force.

In formulating any final judgment of Miss Chase's novels up to this point in her prolific career, one is first of all struck by her realism—a realism that stands closer to the Emersonian embrace of the common and the familiar than to the dark, swampy world of the Naturalists. Primarily, it is a realism characterized by the amount of detail she has seen in the life around her, detail that shapes a solid world in space and time. It is detail that becomes the raw root of life itself, and in her best works becomes strangely acquisitive; it starts by engaging our interest and ends by claiming our affection. In this respect her works have escaped a fundamental failure of so many contemporary ambitious novels which, like Ariosto's horse, can claim every quality but the one of life.

Solid as Miss Chase's world may appear to be, it still remains, in another sense, a world of physical defeat, and her works belong to that fiction of failure which claims much of America's serious writing since the time of Edgar Allan Poe. Whatever the reasons behind this literary fascination for physical failure, much of American literature has seen and continues to see man's will as impotent and inoperable in its confrontation with external forces. Yet, at the same time, this literature produces a counterforce—a belief, at times mystical, in man's invincibility and endurance. As Santiago puts it in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, "A man can be destroyed but not defeated." In Miss Chase's fiction this belief becomes the heart of her drama and the major metaphor of her vision. If the physical action of her novels gives us a movement towards disaster and pain, moral action is the movement towards man's invincibility. The fiction of failure becomes the fiction of humility and strength.

Support for this belief in man's endurance comes not only in her realism, but in her use of Biblical motifs, her view of history, the mystery and knowledge of the sea, her symbolic house, even in her affinity with Jungian psychology revealed in her cyclic idea of wholeness, the self-realization of her characters, down to the repeated use of the number four. More important than the above considerations, for Miss Chase, are man's alliance with nature, his readiness for hope, and his rationality.

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In that intimate connection with nature—which can be both a benevolent and angry mother—her people participate in its permanence and secret knowledge. Her characters, often resembling those earth creatures in the films of Robert Flaherty, are always seen, puny and insignificant, against elemental forces. Yet, at the very point when the land, sea, and sky stretch their awesome dominion, man writhes out of his obscurity to assert his invincibility and oneness with nature.

In their readiness for hope, with the necessary corollaries of waiting and patience, her people become dynamic. They believe in new possibilities amidst the catastrophes of change. It is this readiness for hope that gives her characters what freedom they possess within the iron frontiers of fate. A world without hope is a world without freedom and responsibility. Man would then have no choice but to submit. Miss Chase never allows her people this ultimate defeat.

Finally, Miss Chase's belief in the durability of man depends upon man's rationality—a rationality that gives him control and serenity in a world of chance. It is significant that John Tillyard holds Thoreau to be central to his thought, for, along with Thoreau, he believes that a broad rationality and truth to oneself are inseparable from freedom, serenity, and the good life.

These are the strengths and virtues Miss Chase hurls against the futility of being in a world in decline. In these times of faltering hearts and parasitic passions, she maintains, in the spirit of Thoreau, "infinite faith in human worth and aspiration." As our culture makes it increasingly precarious for the Thoreauvian individualist, so does such a culture need for its own deliverance from sterile bureaucratization, the voices of heritage to call it back to former sources of strength. Miss Chase is such a voice. However one might wish for a greater devil in her works, she has succeeded in using the regional novel to liberate from time and space the best of a people. Out of the wreckage of time and chance she has salvaged those qualities that were the trademarks of an earlier people and are now the strengths and virtues of a mythology that will continue to suffuse the national life.

Miss Chase has been true to the people and land, to the customs and accents of Maine. In articulating the sad conflict and

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decline of a region, she has rendered honestly the anatomy of failure; in depicting with compassion and truth the life of its folk, she has given us the anatomy of goodness. One need not be from Maine to understand what has happened there and of what she has written. No man is excluded from her metaphor of strength and spiritual affirmation, and hers has always been a human voice understood by all who are willing to listen.



### A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS OF MARY ELLEN CHASE

By RICHARD CARY

A RECURRENT nightmare afflicts the bibliographer who is also a perfectionist. He is reaching out for a card file which contains every item published by the author under scrutiny, every title with correct place of publication, date, volume number, inclusive pages, etc. In short, a complete, *complete*, COMPLETE bibliography. Just as his hand is about to descend upon the file, the ground opens up, swallows it ruthlessly, and closes over with a mocking sigh. The only sound to be heard thereafter is the crackle of subterranean flames as they consume each item, card by card. The harried bibliographer wakes with a start and grimly resumes his task of picking through irresponsible indices, thumbing through interminable leaves of periodicals, and writing frantically to likely sources for succor.

The author himself is frequently helpful, having about the house copies of unindexed ephemera without which the ideal of completeness can never be achieved. But in the present instance I append this warning to future bibliographers: *Do not apply to Mary Ellen Chase!* Of all authors I have known, she is the most monumentally unaware of precise data on what and where she has published. And she will, if you insist, ensnare you with engagingly vague references.