

1988 MAASA Presidential Address:

Utopia, The Kingdom of God and Heaven: Utopian, Social Gospel and Gates Ajar Fiction

Elmer Suderman

From 1888, when Edward Bellamy published *Looking Backward*, to 1900, at least 160 utopian works, mostly novels, were published in the United States.¹ It is probably no exaggeration to say that in the last decade of the nineteenth century “the utopian novel was perhaps the most widely read type of literature in the United States.”²

In the same period, the social-gospel novel was only slightly less popular. Without any attempt to be complete, I found a minimum of fifty social-gospel novels published in the 1890s alone. In the period between the Civil War and World War I, more than seventy social-gospel novels were published.³ A more thorough search would probably turn up as many social-gospel novels as utopian.

Most American studies scholars are acquainted with both the utopian and social gospel novels. They are represented by two of the best selling novels of the late-nineteenth century. Edward Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* (1887) sold half a million copies by the end of 1891 and Charles M. Sheldon’s *In his Steps* (1897) sold at least eight million, although some estimates place the number at thirty million.⁴ We are less acquainted with another kind of novel, the gates-ajar novels. In their own way they reflect the utopian tenor of the last years of the nineteenth century. They, too, have a best seller, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps’s *The Gates Ajar* (1868). By the end of the century 80,000 copies were sold in the United States and 100,000 more in England.⁵ Phelps’s novel inspired, if that is the right word, at least six other novelists in the next thirty years to locate and describe the interior decorations and the activities of the citizens of that ultimate utopia: heaven. Although there are fewer gates-ajar novels and although they are not as well known, they are, nevertheless, an interesting sub type of the utopian novels and worth looking at, for their description of the interior decorations of heaven interestingly resemble the landscape of the utopian communities.

Because they were widely read in the last decade of the nineteenth century and because they have much in common, the social-gospel, utopian and gates-ajar novels are worth considering together. Two hundred novels should tell us something about American society in the late-nineteenth century, in particular more about how popular novelists and their readers saw that society.

These novelists looked at American society with a critical eye, and wished to reform that society, often by similar methods and on the basis of similar presuppositions. Howard Mumford Jones' characterization of William Dean Howells' *A Traveler from Altruria* as a "book about the American dream published during an American nightmare," is true as well of *Looking Backward*, *In His Steps* and *The Gates Ajar*.⁶ Focusing on these three best sellers, but not limiting myself to them, I will try to show how these novelists reacted to the American nightmare with varying degrees of honesty and supplanted it with a not very satisfactory or convincing American dream.

These genre need a few comments. The utopian novel is the most familiar. Like *Looking Backward* these novels present the reflections of an observer from the older, less satisfactory culture responding to a more perfect state. Sometimes, as in Howells' *Traveler from Altruria*, the narrator has left utopia and responds to contemporary society. In either case utopia is juxtaposed to dystopia, just as the Kingdom of God on earth is contrasted with present society in the social-gospel novel, and the pleasures of paradise with the woes of earth in the gates-ajar novels.

The social-gospel novel reflects the tenets of social Christianity. These tenets are also basic to most utopian novels and the gates-ajar novels. Important in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century American religious thought, the social gospel held that God is immanent in this world, working out his purposes through institutions as well as through individuals. Since all people are God's children, all share alike in his goodness and are organically related to and responsible for each other. Institutions as well as individuals must be changed. The Kingdom of God is an earthly as well as heavenly kingdom. Jesus was the great social reformer whose teachings were destined to become the rule of life among nations. His followers must work to eliminate injustice and poverty and to improve the common life. The basic pattern of the social-gospel novel was to place a character, usually a minister, in a situation in which he would have to face and attempt to eradicate corruption in a society. In *In His Steps* the Reverend Henry Maxwell discovers that he must do more than save souls. He must change society. He must ask the question "What would Jesus do?" and apply the answer to that question to poverty, alcoholism, slum conditions and injustice in Raymond. Like *Looking Backward*, *In His Steps* shows the possibility of a far more perfect state, possibly the Kingdom of God on earth.

The gates-ajar novels, like the utopian and social-gospel novels, describe an ideal society, but it is a society outside of this world. In *The Gates Ajar*, her most popular novel, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, in a series of entries in the diary of twenty-four-year-old Mary Cabot, records Cabot's grief for her brother Royal, who has

been killed in the Civil War, and the comfort she receives with the coming of her Aunt Winifred, who knows a great deal about Royal's new home in heaven. Winifred's husband had arrived at that destination earlier, and she has taken the trouble to have a long look beyond the gates, which have been conveniently left ajar. It was not long before the gates were not merely ajar but wide open, allowing Phelps and her followers to take a very close look at what was within the gates.

In the gates-ajar novels there is either a character whose apparently deep spirituality makes it possible for her to comment perceptively on the afterlife or one who in a dream or vision enters the afterlife and acquaints us with the landscape and the activities of its inhabitants.

That the nightmare and instability of American life were present in the late-nineteenth century can be easily documented. The nightmare was the great depression that hung over the country from 1893-1898. It was enormous trusts fixing prices and controlling whole industries. It was laboring men, fighting for shorter hours and more pay, clashing in the streets with paid private armies. It was strikes that threatened what conventional wisdom considered sacred: property and business. It was anarchists cooking dynamite in tenement kitchens. It was Coxey's army marching on Washington.

It was more. As seen in these novels the nightmare was divorce threatening the stability of the family. It was the desecration of the Christian Sabbath by beer and baseball. It was the danger of women going mad from using the typewriter for too many hours a day, of people permanently injuring their spine riding bicycles, of people going blind because they were drinking too much coffee. It was the exclusion of the working class from the churches or, depending on one's point of view, the attempt of the working class to attend churches. The Rev. Mr. T. DeWitt Talmage, pastor of one of Brooklyn's wealthiest churches—Central Presbyterian—had aroused the ire of Mark Twain by saying that the odor of workmen among his congregation was offensive to more genteel nostrils.⁷ The nightmare is clearly illustrated in Bellamy, who is critical of banks, capitalism, monopolies, robber barons. He presents the nightmare of six-year-old coal miners and sixteen-hour workdays.

The nightmare is most vividly presented in *Looking Backward's* final chapter. Julian West, after living in utopian Boston, returns in a nightmare to the Boston of 1887. He is appalled at the news of impending war between France and Germany, of fraud in New York City, corruption in Chicago, bribery and burglaries, murder and mayhem, human destitution and material decay, illiteracy and insanity. He is struck by the arrogance, envy, greed and ambition of his family and friends. He is horrified by the squalor and malodorousness of Boston, by the contrast between those who lounge in silk and those who work long hours in prison-like conditions and wear rags, between the overfed and the hungry. Having lived in a moneyless society, he is frightened by the "debauching influence on mankind . . . [of] the root of all evil."

The "squalor and human degradation" of human beings living in "fetid air," walking in streets "reeking with effluvia of a slave-ship's between decks"

contrasts graphically with his dinner that night at a table glittering with plate and costly china. Surrounded by sumptuously dressed women wearing the jewels of queens, the company enjoying laughter and jests, he can only remember the squalor of the Boston he had seen earlier that day. "I have been in Golgotha," he tells the affluent, who become angered at his outburst of indignation. "I have seen humanity hanging on a cross," he says and goes on to ask the conspicuous consumers:

"Do none of you know what sights the sun and stars look down on in this city, that you can think and talk of anything else? Do you know that close to your doors a great multitude of men and women, flesh of your flesh, live lives that are one agony from birth to death? Listen! Their dwellings are so near that if you hush your laughter you will hear their grievous voices, the piteous crying of the little ones that suckle poverty, the hoarse curses of men sodden in misery turned halfway back to brutes, the chaffering of an army of women selling themselves for bread. With what have you stopped your ears that you do not hear these doleful sounds? For me, I can hear nothing else."⁸

Such contrasts between the affluent and the poor recur in other utopian novels, in *In His Steps* and other social-gospel novels, and at least by implication, in the gates-ajar novels.

Like the utopian novel, the social gospel novel graphically described America's nightmare. Sheldon's *In His Steps* depicts the slum district that held the worst and most wretched people in Raymond, people "too dirty, too coarse, too sinful, too awful for close contact," a dirty, drunken, impure, besotted mass of humanity. Sheldon's nightmare was the saloon rearing itself "like some deadly viper hissing and coiling, ready to strike its poison into any unguarded part" of the world.⁹

The social-gospel novels reek with vivid descriptions of dirty streets, filthy stairs, diseased, shrunken, cold, dirty, hungry people. They are peopled with human beings standing "half-naked in the scorch of intense furnaces . . . where the crash of exploding slag or the accidental tipping of a ladle might mean death," of "gaunt and stunted creatures, hollow eyed, with bleared and sodden faces, whose incessant toil to keep alive had crushed out the look of manhood, and left them silent, hopeless, brutish, with one certainty in their stupefied souls: 'men don't grow old in the mills'"¹⁰

Both the social-gospel and utopian novels, then, made Americans aware that their economic-chance world created the shame of American slums and poverty and resulted in poor wages and working conditions in an affluent society. To awaken from the nightmare the structures of society would have to be changed. Not so obviously and not so frequently, but still there, were the criticisms of the

gates-ajar novels. Even more than in the utopian novel the criticism of conditions on earth are here contrasted with more ideal conditions in heaven.

In her second novel about the afterlife, *The Gates Between*, Phelps depicts Dr. Thorne, a skeptical doctor who does not believe in an afterlife.¹¹ Killed in a carriage accident, he finds himself still on earth unheard and unseen. He is surprised that he is dead and that he is still conscious after death. It was not what his science had taught him. Before he can take up his celestial education and enter the land of eternal spring and sunshine where fragrant gardens are in perennial bloom and luxuriant trees bear blossoms and succulent fruit together, where birds are a riot of color and sing Te Deums accompanied by the murmur of a river nearby, he must stay on earth a while to discover how foolish his values have really been. He discovers that the world he valued is one in which people lose their money on the stock market, beg in order to keep from going hungry, are harassed with work, face wars and rumors of wars, lose their way and get lost, are homeless, get sick and suffer and finally die. Phelps in her other novels, especially in *Hedged In* (1870) and *A Singular Life* (1897), was poignantly aware of the American nightmare.

The utopian, social-gospel and gates-ajar novelists looked at American life and did not like what they saw. They knew that life was often miserable, and they made Americans aware that all was not right in the gilded age. But they did not despair. Something could be done. They also had a dream. The utopian and social-gospel novelists were sure that America could rise to the challenge, especially with a little help from them. We must now consider the dream, for it is important in understanding their view of American society and their accommodation to the nightmare.

Edward Bellamy in *Looking Backward* and its sequel *Equality* has America usher in the dream by a bloodless revolution early in the twentieth century. Bellamy's dream was of a nation in which all industry is nationalized, money abolished and an adequate income, based on the credit of the nation, made available to all. It is a dream of machines providing adequate economic goods for all. The establishment of an industrial army, composed of all citizens between the ages of twenty-one and forty-five, eliminates any exploitative and parasitic class and allows the maximum latitude possible in the adjustment of the individual talent to its appropriate class. In short, Bellamy's utopia places humanity forever beyond the reach of insecurity and want.

Bellamy's dream is of a world in which no one needs to be in a hurry. No one works more than a few hours a day. Business is run on a cooperative rather than a competitive basis. It is the social-gospel dream of a change in the whole economic system in which the root of all evil has been abolished; consequently no one loafs, or overeats, or steals, or kills or goes insane. Gone is the view that man is essentially evil. Instead the Reverend Mr. Barton holds that "human nature in its essential qualities is good not bad, that men by their natural intention and structure are generous, not selfish, pitiful, not cruel, sympathetic, not arrogant,

godlike in aspirations, instinct with divine impulses of tenderness and self-sacrifice, images of God indeed. . .”¹²

Bellamy’s dream, like that of the social gospel novelists, is of a passionate impulse of brotherly love more dependent on the innate goodness of man than on the doctrines of a church. Indeed the church, along with the other institutions of society, has been greatly altered, has become almost superfluous. In Bellamy’s utopia, houses of worship are unnecessary, for mechanical means make it possible and preferable for people to worship in their own homes. An intelligent classless society has “outgrown the ceremonial side of religion, which with its forms and symbols, its holy times and places, its sacrifices, feasts, fasts, and new moon . . . meant so much in the child-time of the race”¹³

Bellamy’s dream is of a time when God is worshiped as a spirit in spirit and in truth. With the collapse of the traditional theologies people were no longer bound to the past, and they could now approach God directly and look forward to “a dazzling future.” “Humanity,” the Rev. Mr. Barton concludes, “has burst the chrysalis. The heavens are before it.”¹⁴ In short, the Kingdom of God had arrived in Boston in the year 2000.

Sheldon’s dream, like Bellamy’s, is of God’s kingdom on earth. Like Bellamy, Sheldon looked for a solution to economic and social problems through self-sacrifice and love. The love of fellow-men is for Sheldon “the greatest practical remedy for all the troubles of the world.” The Reverend Frederick Stanton in Sheldon’s *The Heart of the World* tells the members of the mill union of Lenox that “‘not bigger wages, fewer hours, more land, bigger houses, finer clothes, better food, but love for one another,’ is the only remedy for human troubles of every description.”¹⁵

Sheldon’s dream, as his most famous novel makes clear, is of a nation committed to the teachings of Jesus, teachings that would solve all the major social, economic and individual problems of the time. If Christians would only ask “What would Jesus do?” before they acted, as the members of the Reverend Henry Maxwell’s church do, the American dream would replace the American nightmare. Labor problems would end if more employers would follow the example of Milton Wright and develop more loving relations with their employees by considering them chiefly as souls to be saved. If politicians were to ask that question and act on it, politics would achieve a higher moral tone. If editors asked the question they would eliminate all accounts of prize fights, crimes and scandals, and the moral fiber of the nation would be strengthened. If more ministers would ask the question, they would spend more time fighting what Sheldon and many others, particularly Kansans, considered the greatest social evil of the day: the liquor traffic.

Sheldon’s dream is for the regeneration of all people. “If men would only seek the Kingdom of God, if they would only love God instead of themselves, we would see the millennium,” Sheldon has his spokesman John King say, and King goes on to argue that a good revival “‘will solve more hard questions in social economics than all the politicians have been able to answer for ten centuries.’”

Sheldon is sure that if the capitalists and the laborers could kneel one night side by side at the altar, all the complex problems of economics could be solved the next morning.¹⁶ And Henry Maxwell in *In His Steps* argues that “if every Christian in America did as Jesus would do, society itself, the business world, yes the very political system under which our commercial governmental activity is carried on, would be so changed that human suffering would be reduced to a minimum.”¹⁷

Sheldon’s dream of an alcoholic-free America without strikes, slums, hunger, unemployment, graft, greed or war is, at least to some, appealing, but his solutions are naive. Later he came to understand that the regenerated individual was not enough, but even in his Christian socialist novels in the early twentieth century, he still relied primarily on the quiet, continuous, loving work of the Holy Spirit for the changes that would make the dream possible.¹⁸

“The world now is heaven compared to what it was in your day,” Edith Leete tells Julian West in *Looking Backward*.¹⁹ Twenty years before *Looking Backward*, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps had peeked into heaven through the ajar gates. Five years before Bellamy’s *Looking Backward* Phelps wrote *The Gates Between*, and fifteen years later she would have no hesitancy to go *Within the Gates*. What she saw within the gates bears a striking resemblance to Bellamy’s utopia.

Phelps, too, knew about a nightmare: the awful slaughter of Americans in the Civil War. For her the end of the nightmare could come only in another world. For Phelps, the fulfillment of the dream is in heaven.

Phelps reasoned that if God made this world beautiful, heaven will be much more so and people’s appreciation of it will be heightened and intensified. Phelps and the other gates-ajar novelists present tour guides who in stultifying clichés are overwhelmed with monotonous regularity by eternal spring and sunshine, by fragrant gardens in perennial bloom, by paths of spotless and pure pearl winding through murmuring groves, by sparkling fountains and crystal-clear rivers flowing over stones of gold, and in the middle of all, half hidden by trees, elegant and beautiful houses of strangely attractive architecture, a picture not so different from what Julian West sees from Dr. Leete’s home in the Boston of 2000.

Life is pleasant in heaven. Taste is gratified at need, but is finer and gives keener pleasure than its prototype on earth. Available with even less drudgery than the meals in *Looking Backward*, succulent food is everywhere present. And the mess has been eliminated. No contamination exists, for all food that drops from the lips or that remains simply disintegrates. Thus there are no stains on the clothes, an even better innovation than Bellamy’s throwaway paper clothes in *Equality*.²⁰

People live in homes completely equipped with all the modern conveniences. Each has a fine lawn, a friendly dog comfortably stretched on the front step. But there is work to do. It is wrong, Fiske tells us, to imagine “that eternal happiness consists in eternal idleness or continually singing praise around the throne of an exalted Sovereign.”²¹ In heaven as in utopia there is a pleasant hum of activity,

divorced from the fretful haste so conspicuous in carrying on the business of earth. In heaven as in utopia no one hurries, goes insane, breaks down or gets sick. Heaven, furthermore, is superior to utopia, for no one dies.

Work is not only limited to a few hours a day but is always pleasant. Work makes it possible to obtain what people could not have on earth or to achieve what they could not achieve. Clo Bently in *The Gates Ajar*, who hungers for music, will have the piano her parents could not afford. Mrs. Bland, the minister's wife, will have the children she longed for, so there will be sex in heaven. Twain, then, was wrong when he objected that the greatest of this world's delights had been left out of heaven, prayer taking its place.

Deacon Quirk will still have acres and acres of potatoes to hoe (not an entirely satisfactory view of heaven for some readers), and his son, Abinadab, will have a fully equipped machine shop and time to perfect the inventions he cannot find time to perfect in this life.

The human body will be as improved as the world it inhabits. It will be able to accomplish the work and enjoy the play without strain for twenty-four hours a day, for there will be no night there. There will be no more headaches, stomach aches or pains in the joints. On the contrary the heavenly body would seem to be as peppy, lively and beautiful as those on TV advertisements in our century.

There will be play and recreation as well as work, with heaven resembling both a celestial chautauqua society and Disneyland. For the contemplative there will be ample time to read, with large libraries conveniently located (as they are in Bellamy's utopia). The lovers of art will have whole planets turned into art galleries, and for music lovers there will be concerts of Beethoven's works directed by Beethoven himself.

Bertha Sprague in Springer's *Intra Muros* hears Martin Luther speak on "The Reformation: Its Causes and Effects."²² John Wesley also appears on the program. Others hear the Apostle John speak on love. Phelps' characters look forward to meeting Loyola, Jeanne d'Arc, Luther, Newton, Columbus, King Arthur and even Darwin, a relative newcomer to heaven; he died in 1882, and *Beyond the Gates* was published in 1883. Mary hopes to discover what affectionate relationship exists between Buddha, "the man who knew," and Jesus, "the man who loved."²³ This cast of characters reveals a considerable tolerance about those who will be in heaven.

Mary further speculates on the pleasure of visiting a world inhabited by what would be a wicked assembly of saved souls indeed, the great characters of the imagination:

Was it incredible that Helen, and Lancelot, and Sigfried, and Juliet, and Faust, and Dinah Morris, and the Lady of Shalott, and Don Quixote, and Colonel Newcome, and Sam Weller, and Uncle Tom and Hester Prynne . . . existed? Could be approached by way of holiday, as one used to take up the drama or fiction on a leisure hour, down below.²⁴

Mary assumes that Jesus will be available for friendly chats, to embrace the newcomer, perform marriages and eliminate such little inconveniences as may still be present, serving as a kind of cosmic bell hop whose chief end is the glorification and comfort of his people.

Mark Twain did not buy Phelps' dream. It was too naive, too arrogant, too sentimental, too absurd for his taste. In *Report from Paradise* he satirized the pretensions of every "mudsill" to try to push in and meet heaven's grandees, not to mention the members of the Trinity. He ridicules the idea that heaven will be occupied primarily by familiar faces. The people so important to Phelps are almost unknown in Twain's heaven. Moses and Adam are the only people from earth who have been heard of outside of earth's little corner of heaven and they only by "a few very learned men scattered here and there—and they always spell their names wrong"²⁵

The world, as Stormfield discovers when he reaches heaven's gates, plays a very insignificant part in heaven. When he announces with the customary California pride that he has come from San Francisco, he is amazed that no one has ever heard of San Francisco, or California, or the United States or even of the world. They think they have heard of the solar system, and after painstaking search on a map the size of Rhode Island, and after using a microscope to determine whether it is a fly-speck, an angel discovers the solar system, which in Twain's heaven is know as the Wart.

Most of Twain's heavenly inhabitants, moreover, even in the American section, were not white but red. The majority of heaven's inhabitants think of the whites as "Injuns that have been bleached out or blackened by some leprous disease or other—for some peculiar rascally *sin* mind you. It is a mighty sour pill for us all . . . even the modestest of us let alone the other kind, that think they are going to be received like a long lost government bond, and hug Abraham into the bargain."²⁶

These novels tell us about the garish and self-centered, often indifferent gilded age and its social, political and economic problems. Even more clearly they reveal the flawed vision of popular novelists, particularly their optimistic view of human nature. "Mankind fell in love with itself, for human nature was revealed as essentially good," Edward Bellamy has Dr. Leete say to Julian West.²⁷ "The worst men were only bad boys, whom a little spanking would convert into heroes," another novelist stated.²⁸ Twain thought otherwise, and most of us, I suspect, share Twain's scorn for the dreams of the gates-ajar novels, though they do tell us much about the dreams of the late-nineteenth century. Nor are we today much impressed with the dreams of the social-gospel and utopian novelists, with the possible exception of *Looking Backward* or Howells' two utopias.

What was the effect of these novels on the average reader? The deficiency of vision, the dreary platitudes in these novels did not help readers to see either themselves or the world in which they lived—or another world—with clearer insight. These novels rarely helped the reader revise his usual ways of looking at the familiar world by taking him or her out of it for a time. Indeed, the dull,

stereotyped, narrow, cliché-ridden understanding of human experience to which most readers are prone was not disrupted but enhanced in these novels. Neither disturbing the readers or shaking them up or making them more reflective or perceptive, these novels soothed the readers (or attempted to) by telling them that by walking down the sawdust trail and practicing a sentimental love for their neighbor, they would be able to change not only themselves but the world. They could then live in comfort in twenty-first century Boston all the while looking forward to the ultimate escape to those long walks in heaven on roads paved with pearls, where they would nibble gingerbread and drink nice cold buttermilk on their way to the nearest bird concert. These novelists seemed to be afraid, if not completely unaware, of people's capacity for wonder and joy, not to mention their struggle against immense, immeasurable emptiness.

One wonders who would want to live in these pallid and vapid, monotonous and nauseating utopias and heavens. Apparently many Americas did. At least they bought the books. Readers seemed not to be aware that such lives as those offered by the better world would be apt to pall when protracted, perhaps through eternity, and that the brightest prospect they offered was that the people in these ideal societies, where life was one long snooze, would gradually deteriorate into a company of trivial bores. One would think instead that the thoughtful reader would agree with the commentator who insisted that Phelps' *The Gates Between* held out "a prospect so utterly appalling that, in view of virtue being thus rewarded, the book becomes a positive incentive to vice."²⁹ Reading these novels we regret that the dream is flawed, that the novelists' response to the nightmare is less than satisfactory, that, in the end, the dream might be indistinguishable from the nightmare. We can wonder if all visionaries who dream of altruistic communities must be doomed to failure, plowed under by the realities of the nightmare.

But we can also recall Hawthorne's *Blythdale Romance* where Coverdale, a cynic himself, taking pride in having at least once in his life had "faith and force enough to form generous hopes of the world's destiny,—yes—and to do what in me lay for their accomplishment; even to the extent of quitting a warm fireside, flinging away a freshly-lighted cigar, and traveling far beyond the strike of city clocks, through a driving snowstorm" in quest of a better life.³⁰

The popular novelists looked at American society and did not like what they saw. At the same time they were sanguine about human nature and about what could be done to improve that society. They had spit out Adam's apple, so utopia was easy to come by. The social gospel was waiting to usher in the Kingdom of God on earth. Heaven was waiting. The dream of the city on the hill was very much alive. We may despair of the sometimes puerile, often grotesque and foolish dreams of popular fiction, but we can, and I think we must, yearn for better dreams; we must, in Twain's words, "dream other dreams and better."

Notes

1. Robert M. Roemer, *The Obsolete Necessity: America in Utopian Writings, 1888-1900* (Kent, Ohio, 1976), xi.
2. Robert L. Shurter, "The Utopian Novel in America, 188-1900," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 34 (April, 1935), 143.
3. See the bibliography in Elmer F. Suderman, "The Social Gospel Novelist's Criticisms of American Society," *Midcontinent American Studies Journal* 7 (Spring, 1966), 59-60.
4. Timothy Miller, *Following in His Steps: a Biography of Charles M. Sheldon* (Knoxville, 1988), 84-87.
5. Helen Sootin Smith, "Introduction, *The Gates Ajar* by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964), vi.
6. Howard Mumford Jones, "Introduction," *A Traveler from Altruria* (New York, 1957), v.
7. Dixon Wecter, "Introduction," *Report from Paradise* by Mark Twain (New York, 1952), xvii.
8. Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*. (1888, rpt., New York, 1960), 215.
9. Charles M. Sheldon, *In His Steps* (Chicago, 1897), 48, 77.
10. Margaret Deland, *The Wisdom of Fools* (Boston, 1897), 96.
11. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *The Gates Between* (Boston, 1887).
12. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 191.
13. Edward Bellamy, *Equality* (New York, 1897), 258.
14. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 194.
15. Charles M. Sheldon, *The Heart of the World* (New York, 1905), 43-44.
16. *Ibid.*, 181-182.
17. Sheldon, *In His Steps*, 102.
18. Sheldon, *The Heart of the World*, 141.
19. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 70.
20. Rebecca Springer, *Intra Muros, or Within the Walls* (Chicago, 1899), 6. Phelps has similar descriptions.
21. Amos K. Fiske, *Beyond the Bourn* (New York, 1891), 49.
22. Springer, *Intra Muros, or Within the Walls* (Chicago, 1899).
23. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, *Beyond the Gates* (Boston, 1883), 183.
24. Phelps, *The Gates Ajar*, 185.
25. Wecter, "Introduction," *Report from Paradise*, 69.
26. *Ibid.*, 71.
27. Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, 234.
28. W. M. Baker, *His Majesty Myself* (Boston, 1879), 220.
29. "Heaven in Recent Fiction," *The Catholic World* 11 (March, 1885), 845.
30. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Blithedale Romance and Fanshawe*, Vol.3 of *The Centenary Edition*