

The Women's Page of The Times-Dispatch

A Woman's Choice

While many of her longer and more important works are not so generally read, George Eliot's "Silas Marner" has become a school classic, a book that is probably put into the hands of more young people and more widely appreciated than most other literature of the same standard.

Silas Marner was a weaver living in Raveloe, a village community of the mid-England farming district. He was a lonely man, whose life had been brightened and sweetened by his adoption of a baby-girl that strayed into his humble dwelling one night from the outside cold and snow, in which her mother had perished.

Years afterward, when the child of Silas Marner's adoption had grown up, she was offered an opportunity to make her home with her father, whose tardy conscience moved him at this late day to acknowledge her. She made her choice then in saying to her father and the wife he had married after her mother's death:

"Thank you, ma'am—thank you, sir. But I can't leave father Marner, nor own anybody nearer than him."

"But I have a claim on you, Eppie, the strongest of all claims. It is my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She is my own child; her mother was my wife and I have a natural claim on her that must stand before every other."

Silas spoke. "Then, sir," he answered with an accent of bitterness, "then sir, why didn't you say so sixteen years ago, and claim her before I'd come to love her instead of coming to take her from me now, when you might as well take the heart out of my body. God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her. You've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door it falls to them as take it in."

"I should have thought, Marner," said Godfrey Cass severely, "I should have thought your affection for Eppie would have made you rejoice in what was for her good, even if it did call on you to give up something. You ought to remember that your own life is uncertain, and that she's at an age now when her lot soon will be fixed in a way very different from what it would be in her father's home. Though I'm sorry to hurt you after what you've done, and what I've left undone, I feel now it's my duty to insist on taking care of my own daughter."

"I'll say no more," answered Silas, "speak to the child. I'll hinder nothing."

"Eppie, my dear," said Godfrey, "it'll always be our wish that you should show your love and gratitude to one who has been a father to you so many years. But we hope you'll come to love us as well; I wish to do my utmost for you and provide for you as my only child. And you'll have the best of mothers in my wife."

"Thank you, ma'am, thank you, sir for your offers," answered Eppie, "but my father here's took care of me and loved me from the first, and I'll leave to him as long as he lives. Nobody shall ever come between him and me."

"But you must make sure, Eppie," said Silas in a low voice, "you must make sure you won't ever be sorry because you've made your choice stay among poor folks, and with poor clothes and things, when you might have had everything of the best."

"I can never be sorry, father," said Eppie, "I shouldn't know what to think on or to wish for with fine things about me, as I haven't been used to. And it 'ud be poor work for me to put on things and ride in a gig and sit in a place at church, as 'ud make them as I'm fond of think me ungrateful company for 'em. What could I care for them?"

"But there's a duty you owe to your natural father," said Mrs. Godfrey Cass, mildly. "When your father opens his home to you, I think it's right you shouldn't turn your back on it."

"I can't feel as I've got any father but one," said Eppie impetuously, while the tears gathered. "I've always thought of a little home where he'd sit at the corner, and I should do everything for him; I can't think of no other home. I wasn't brought up to be a lady, and I can't turn my mind to it like the working folks, and their victuals, and their ways. And, she ended passionately, while the tears fell, "I'm promised to marry a working man as 'll live with father, and help me to take care of him."

Godfrey looked up at his wife with a flushed face and a smarting dilation of the eyes.

"Let us go," he said in an undertone.

Medea, the Magician.

Had the beauty doctors of to-day the powers attributed to the famous magician, Medea, daughter of Aetes, King of Colchis, it is quite certain that they would have more work than they could possibly attend to.

When Jason came to Colchis in quest of the Golden Fleece, Medea became enamored of him. On his return to his native country there was a great celebration for the success of his undertaking, but the aged father of Jason, was unable to take part in the ceremonial because of his infirmities.

So the aid of Medea was invoked. She removed all trace of weakness from the old man, by drawing the blood from his veins and filling them again with juices distilled from certain plants. In this way the vigor and vivacity of youth took the place of the burden of years. Now if such a magician as Medea were to make known her presence and power in Richmond, just think of the number of clients, both men and women, that would flock to her and have time turned backward in its flight for a score or two of years or more.

Beautiful Democratic Future.

Myrtle C. Ogden, a girl who has written an excellent foreign novel, "The Girl of To-Morrow," is to be, by virtue of her superior educational opportunities and training. The article appears in The Craftsman for June and some of its paragraphs say:

In the beautiful democratic future to which all idealists look forward, the farmer who provides us with luscious fruit and sound vegetables will be more honored than the minister whose service is dull and uninspiring, whose words are clogs in the wheels of progress, because he has undertaken, for conventional and social reasons, the work for which nature never designed him. In like manner, because of her actual worth in the world, the girl who learns to be an expert laundress will win greater respect than she who through embroidery draws her monthly salary for making costly gowns.

The highest democracy is only possible with a place for everybody and everybody in place, and in the future the special aptitude of the child will be duly studied with this idea in mind.



SMART FRENCH COSTUMES, SHOWING TYPES OF THE SHORT JACKET.

L'Art de la Mode.

JUST FROCKS---BUT

Jean Carrington in the Columbian Talks About Yoke Effects For Slender Women and Touches On the Individuality Introduced Into Summer Dressmaking.

The very slender woman who must avoid all collarless effects may have a yoke and carefully fitted stock collar of infinitely thin net, or of two layers of flesh-colored chiffon which, when adjusted, is almost invisible. Sometimes the net or lace yoke and collar are lined with flesh-colored chiffon on which has a trick of plumping out the contours. A yoke of this sort was used in the lovely chiffon restaurant frock which emphasizes its wearer's slenderness and makes her look like a swaying willow wand. This beautiful frock is an imported model and is built of pale biscuit-colored chiffon draped over crepe de chine of the same delicate shade. At the foot of the tunic the chiffon turns back and is draped under the panel of crepe de chine which extends down to form a moderate train. The embroidery on this pale biscuit costume is done in shades of cream, light tan and faint coral pink. The revers and sleeves are of Mechlin lace and the yoke—as has been said—is of cream net lined with flesh tinted chiffon. Three strands of brown velvet across the bodice lend a touch of emphatic color.

Identical, Yet Different.

It is amazing what variety and individuality the dressmakers have been able to put into creations that are all quite identical in general style. A little bodice, simply itself as to the soft lines which outline the shoulder, arm and bust; an equally simple skirt, sometimes all in one, sometimes in tunic effect—and there you are with the pattern of almost every summer frock turned out this year.

Prices of Frocks.

It is a modest little gown indeed that can be bought nowadays for \$10. On the Rue de la Paix one pays that amount for the simplest lingerie dress

fashioned from a handful of mull and a dozen or so yards of lace. When it comes to a dinner gown misty with chiffon veilings over gleaming gold tissue, or an opera costume heavy with intricate broderies of pearls and even brilliants, the price may easily reach \$500 or \$600.

Dinner Dance Gown.

A charming dinner dance gown for a youthful matron, or a young widow just emerging from mourning, is illustrated in the costume of black net and oscurlat lace. The feature of this gown, which is gay enough to be youthful and stately enough to be dignified, is the square train made of a rich lace scarf. This scarf train hangs free from the skirt and may be looped over the arm for the evening's dance, though, of course, it is trailed on the floor in its full panoply of dignity when its wearer enters and leaves the dining room. A touch of steel embroidery on the net and lace skirt relieves a too sombre effect.

The Additional Ten.

A well-meaning Washington florist was the cause of much embarrassment to a young man who was in love with a rich and beautiful girl.

It appears that one afternoon she informed the young man that the next day would be her birthday, whereupon the suitor remarked that he would in the next morning send her some roses, one rose for each year.

"That night he wrote a note to his florist, ordering the delivery of twenty roses to improve on it, said to his clerk:

"Here's an order from young Jones for twenty roses. He's one of my best customers, so I'll throw in ten more for good measure."—Edwin Tarriss.

The Poet's Water Lily

Flowers that thrive only if their roots can be under water, their names are many, their colors varied, the forms of their leaf and blossom almost infinite. The white water-lily as queen of them all must be mentioned first. She is queen not just because she is beautiful, but because her heart is of gold and her robe of purest white, even though she has arisen from dark places—she is deeply symbolic. A poet mentioned this flower, asking why she dropped from heavenly places to rest upon dark waters. The flower gives the answer that has so enticed her to all mankind:

"White souls fall not, oh, my poet! They rise from the lowliest place."

The water-lily is grown by removing the roots from some lake overstocked with them in the fall, or by buying just emerging from mourning, is illustrated in the costume of black net and oscurlat lace. The feature of this gown, which is gay enough to be youthful and stately enough to be dignified, is the square train made of a rich lace scarf. This scarf train hangs free from the skirt and may be looped over the arm for the evening's dance, though, of course, it is trailed on the floor in its full panoply of dignity when its wearer enters and leaves the dining room. A touch of steel embroidery on the net and lace skirt relieves a too sombre effect.

What Each Heard.

The Ladies' Aid ladies were talking about a conversation they had overheard before the meeting, between a man and his wife.

"They must have been to the Zoo," said Mrs. A. "because I heard her mention a trained deer."

"Goodness me!" laughed Mrs. B. "What queer hearing you must have! They were talking about going away, and she said, 'Find out about the train, dear!'"

"Well, did anybody ever?" exclaimed Mrs. C. "I am sure they were talking about musicians, for she said 'a trained ear,' as distinctly as could be."

The discussion began to warm up, and in the midst of it the lady herself appeared. They carried their case to her promptly, and asked for settlement.

"Well, well, you do beat all!" she exclaimed, after hearing each one. "I'd been out to the country overnight, and was asking my husband if it rained here last night."

—W. J. Lampton.

THE JUNE BRIDE

Novel Entertainment, With Hats for Place Cards and Bonbon Cases and a Very Unique Centrepiece.

Hat place cards are used in a charming way to give a bride, flower, center and white tuffs, black pumps and silk stockings complete this very charming French maid.

The Menu.

The menu may consist of fruit-cocktail, creamed sweetbreads in ramekins or pastebord cases representing men's top hats, green peas and potato-straws, a salad of chopped hearts and hard-boiled eggs, moistened with French dressing and served on romaine leaves, and large strawberries in dolls' straw hats. The berries are unshelled and are eaten dipped in sugar. Black coffee and candies complete the repast.

Hair Trimmings.

Like trimmings, like hair ornaments. The lighter the general character of your gown, the daintier, in form and material should be your hair decorations.

A velvet or satin band will serve with a toulard or flowered organite or a sheer frock over a strong color or dowered silk slip, though bands of iridescent beads or silver and gold galloon are suitable with a light silk. Light tints in satin, metal tissue in gold and silver and delicate shades form the hair ornaments for light gowns of better quality, while the hair accessories for the cheapest, most supple materials are made in exquisite combinations of ribbons and flowers.

The Finest of Silk Linings.

A curious change takes place in sheer and supple fabrics when silk linings are used. Immediately they become more dignified, somewhat heavier in feeling and so can draw with comparative impunity on winter stores in less striking with white silk lining, but a colored or figured slip, according to the depth and brilliancy of its coloring, can give a summer gown an almost winter character, so that velvet easily enters into its adornment and heavy weaves that would be utterly out of place over a muslin underdress.

A Pioneer Writer and Thinker

Although one hundred and fourteen years have passed since the death of Mary Wollstonecraft, of England, her "Vindication of the Rights of Women" causes her to be remembered to-day as the first Englishwoman "to put her declaration of independence into the form of a precise statement."

She lived and taught at the end of the eighteenth century, and her teachings are still ahead of the every-day philosophy of the twentieth century. When she went to London to become a reader and translator for Johnson the publisher, and became also a contributor to his Analytical Review, she did so with the full consciousness that she was a pioneer in a new path, that the majority of women had never trodden.

In a short while Mary Wollstonecraft was recognized on a footing of comradeship and equality by men who were leaders of advanced thought in England. For although she declared the fundamental need of women to be economic independence, she was by no means a fanatic on the sex question. Like the broadest-minded writers and thinkers of the present time, she dwelt more on human rights than on the individualized rights of women.

Her famous book, "The Vindication of Women," is pronounced by Mary Wollstonecraft's biographer, G. R. Stirling Taylor, to be "a monument of thought in so far as any individual teaching can stand clear of that stately impersonal process which we call evolution," continues the biographer, "to that extent is the book a landmark in the history of human progress. As so often has happened, the law though it has come before its time of realization."

Mr. Brocklehurst, Patron.

Perhaps some woman who has advanced ideas on the subject of education may be interested to know how charity schools in England were managed early in the nineteenth century. Charlotte Brons gives a very vivid picture of one in which Mr. Brocklehurst is all-powerful, by virtue of being its patron. The description is taken from "Jane Eyre," and refers to a visit paid by the patron to the school. It represents Mr. Brocklehurst as "standing on the hearth, with his hands behind his back, majestically surveying the whole school. Suddenly his eye gave a blink, and he said in more rapid accents than he had hitherto used:

"Miss Temple, Miss Temple, what is that girl with curled hair? Red hair, ma'am, curled—curled all over!" And extending his cane he pointed to the awful object, his hand shaking as he did so.

"Is Julia Severn?" replied Miss Temple very quietly.

"Julia Severn, ma'am! And why has she, or any other, curled hair? Why, in defiance of every precept and principle of this house, does she conform to the world so openly as to wear her hair one mass of curls?"

"Julia's hair curls naturally," returned Miss Temple, still more quietly.

"Naturally! Yes, but we are not to conform to nature; I wish these girls to be children of Grace; and why that abundance? Miss Temple, that girl's hair must be cut off entirely. I will send a barber to-morrow; and I will see others who have far too much of the excrement. Tell all the first form to rise up and direct their faces to the wall."

He scrutinized the reverse of these living models some five minutes, then pronounced sentence. These words I like the knell of doom: "All those top-knots must be cut off!"

A Song Domestic.

I sing of my kitchen!
Sing you of omelettes; of dim purple
eggs; of dipping brook; of wind-swept grasses; of sun-paganis; of heavy-kissing hills; of dillies; of castles; of festal boards a-glimmer with cheer of silver and crystal.

Sing you of the heart—of tears—of laughter—of love—of that whence emanates the sap of life; of the shrine of things domestic—the kitchen. For birth and death may be achieved without it, but it is life's necessity.

Into the fabric of my song are woven many things. Humble things! My tea-kettle!

A great plump-shouldered vessel singing its time-old bubbly chant.
(The day is great without, with a maine veiling little wind
fumbling at the window-pane.)
My tea-kettle purrs softly on, humming quietly to itself.

What are you crooning, O tea-kettle?

"It is a lullaby I sing. Long ago I learned it—I and my brothers. The first tea-kettle sang it from the hob-corned chimney, while I slept in its cradle by the fire. The mother who sat at her spindle and pushed the cradle with her foot. She sang alone to the child, and her song was of the gray sea and the white-capped vessels and the bleak winds. And when she sang the wind moaned in the chimney and the babe fretted, for her song came from a grieving heart. And the kettle, pondering, knew this, and at length commenced to sing the same lullaby. The child of mine, and the babe slept, and at length also the sad mother."

—By Mary Brecht Pulver.

Esmond's Heir.

There are few descriptions of a beautiful woman that bring up a more pleasing picture to the mind than the following, which is the charming description of William Makepeace Thackeray's "Henry Esmond." Esmond has left a child and found a woman, grown beyond the common height, and of a length of beauty that his eyes might well be surprised and delight at holding her. In hers there was a brightness so lustrous and so melting the eyes of a great assembly followed her as by an irresistible attraction. She was a brown beauty. Her hair and eyelashes were dark, but her complexion was dazzling white. Only her cheeks and lips were crimson. Her eyes were fire, her look was love, her shape was perfect symmetry. So she came, holding her dress with one hand, rounded arm tripping down the stairs to greet Esmond.