

The Barber County Index.

PAINTER & HERR, Publishers.

MEDICINE LODGE, KANSAS

The Silence of Fernwood.

BY ALICE NORES SAULET.

THE Clifford station was crowded; like every other small town the arrival of the passenger train was the supreme recreation of its inhabitants. Vehicles of every description lined each side of the platform, whatever the circumstances; not so with population that the weather alone at times cruelly disappointed. But neither weather nor circumstances ever prevented the presence of a man who for several years almost every day stood in the same place, in the same unobtrusive position; and most curious did it seem, for he was apparently unconcerned. Still, a close observer might readily see that while no muscle moved, his deep-set eyes searched each halting car; then as they slowly again moved away, gradually increasing their speed, and the shrill whistle rent the evening air, something of his dreariness fell upon this man's soul as he retraced his steps homeward. At times some few would meet him on his way back to his suburban villa, and as he quietly blew upward the smoke of his cigar his apparent insouciance would bring forth the remark: "Here comes the colonel from his evening stroll."

Colonel Hunt was of medium height; his square shoulders, erect carriage and energetic countenance, even to the curve of his grey mustache, revealed the officer. Years before, while fighting the Indians, a wound about the eyes caused him to retire with a modest income. At 40 he was married to a gifted woman, who was ambitious and abstract of all new ideas. The married state soon became to her one of dull monotony; inasmuch as Mr. Hunt's complete retirement from public life had been a keen disappointment to her. She was not prepared to appreciate the quiet waters in which her bark was moored, nor the change in her husband brought about through inevitable circumstances as well as through her vagaries. The little interest shown by him in the great movements in her world exasperated her to a degree. This gradually brought on a state of mind and of things that eventually destroyed all hope of happiness between them.

One day after weeks of silence, growing more painful every day, Colonel Hunt with enforced calm advised his wife to realize her dream and leave for the great city where, of all others, social problems were ever questions at issue, and he added sarcastically: "I must be in touch with the times, if not educated to follow the trend of thought; the new idea seems this; not so much of a home, but good men without it. You desire to provide for yourself; I will see to that, consider all settled."

This ambition which caused such a painful estrangement between two beings eminently fitted to understand one another, seemed to have warped Mrs. Hunt's generous nature. Frank to a fault, she had become strangely secretive. Col. Hunt had been keenly alive to the mystery which pervaded his home, and when what he feared had come at last he felt no surprise. He had long been aware that his wife carried on a secret correspondence with some one, but Helen remained coldly impenetrable, and with the easy dignity that characterized the man, her husband left her free.

Strange to relate, Helen did not realize her husband's anguish or the pride which made him withhold any expression of regret. Besides his disappointment in her, the thought that he could not interest her or fill her life galled him into stern silence. After her departure his carriage became more erect, his mouth more firm. Those who wondered learned that she had at last decided to cultivate her wonderful voice; he was supposed to see her at times, which he never did.

Five years had gone by. The old servant still attended to the lonely home, which was still closed but for a few windows. The Colonel was always impenetrable, as could be expected of a supremely proud nature. As the shadows of the evening deepened he would stroll back from the station to the outskirts of the picturesque town towards the quaint house nestling among the oaks and wrapped in gloomy silence. One evening the moon had risen upon a silver cloud that loomed up from great mountains of blackness, the shadows of the stately trees wrought exquisite traceries upon the eaves; the fragrance from the wealth of flowers brought back such memories as almost to overpower him. Here was a winding path, a rustic seat and table where she had sat and read; through yon archway, formed by two slender olives and trailing roses, could be seen a huge marble vase; beyond was a stone bench where, years ago when seeking her, he would find her dreaming there, those dreams, alas! which had taken her from him. And from the silvery radiance that so vividly brought his past into life again he turned away with anguish, sternly entered his study, and as on similar occasions the wee, small hours found him working at his civil engineering plans.

But to-night he seemed destined to suffer yet more intensely. While looking among his papers he came across a scrap found long ago, a half-burnt fragment of one of those accursed letters from Helen's mysterious correspondent. It read thus: "My sympathy, even love, you have won through your depth and nobility of character and your majestic presence and enthusiasm must break down all barriers once beyond the seas. Here was a mystery such as had never confronted him. Which was it, ambition or this influence? And dawn found him thus, while he braced himself to face life, silent and alone, amid the silence of his shattered hopes and home.

"It is with its main outline I am here concerned."

These words, reaching through the vast assembly gathered in the rooms of the Progressive club, caused the listeners to lean forward as if attracted by the well-modulated voice, the eloquent words, and majestic presence of the lecturer. The unusually animated debate lasted two hours; then the reporters, their swift work over, followed the various groups, so expressive each of the foremost thoughts or struggles of the day. For many of these thinkers these meetings held their measure of benefit, received in one way or another, but with a woman like the lecturer they seemed but minutes of delightful interchange of ideas on topics of ever-increasing interest. She felt herself foremost among those who were united in furthering the cause of universal sisterhood. Yet there were times of late when her expressive eyes would fill, times when she felt a sudden terrible void, a heavy silence; then she would shake the burden from her shoulders and think with pride of the final emancipation of woman and the universal moral and mental enlightenment which was the aim of progressive thinkers.

The work accomplished for these holy causes, the enthusiasm she created in whatever circle she moved, caused Helen Hunt years of delightful existence, for already five years had elapsed since silence had fallen upon Fernwood. She had now reached her apartment, very simple but for the handsome desk, easy chairs and valuable books it contained. As she entered, radiant with the exhilaration of an intellectual feast, she plunged her face in a beautiful bunch of flowers handed by her maid. Suddenly she paled, putting them away from her.

"Take them—take them away—that fragrance!" Yes, it haunted her—so did the silence of Fernwood. Was it only to-night it clung to her, that it dimmed the melody of her flatteries, the hum of society, of applause? Her soul was awakening and yearned for some kindred spirit—she thought of the dear friend and correspondent from whom she was now expecting news, such news as would thrill her with its great joy, or turn her cold with a sad foreboding. She was full of contenting emotions now that she had at last yielded and it had been arranged that they would both sail for Europe in the spring.

"It might be the story of Ulysses and Penelope reversed," had sarcastically exclaimed a society woman, which biting remark Helen had overheard. Such comments galled her; and she was annoyed, as well, by the discreet attentions of a wealthy barrister. At this thought Helen arose and walked to the window; as she looked up to the cold radiance of the frosty night, her firm lips quivered, and two tears stole down her cheeks, but bracing herself against any weakness, she turned to the table and took up a paper, for she was more than ever eager to ascertain if, according to the letter received, the departure of the steamer might have been hastened. Yes, there was news, absorbing news.

One dismal February evening the train pushed along the station of Clifford. The town just then was being visited by a severe epidemic. Owing to the inclemency of the weather the station was almost deserted, and the light from its lamps could barely pierce the thick mist, through which a woman who had just alighted tried to find her way. Her anxious look at last discerned a tall form muffled in a gray overcoat; as his keen glance shot across the space, he slowly advanced to meet her. One minute of rigid self-repression—and then, in the same silence with which she had left her home, he led her back to it.

Could any words have been spoken after this barrier of five long years? He led her to the cozy bedroom, always kept in readiness as she immediately saw, and tears sprang to her eyes upon finding there every comfort. As he helped her settle down in the arm-chair near the fire, just as he had done the night he brought her there as a bride, the Colonel spoke for the first time in a strangely subdued voice: "This is your sanctum; all the house is yours, but here live, and do as you please. Good night."

The light kiss on her forehead, as cold and kind as the few words, chilled her. How remote she felt, how little hope there seemed of beginning life anew! He little guessed, it seemed, that through fear of his being taken ill she had left all else behind. The pleasant, gabled house was spared the visitation of illness; all seemed well within; Helen resumed her old habits; she also had hours for herself, and continued her writings for a periodical. As she detected her husband's eyes following her, she felt his look to be like his words—coolly indifferent.

"You must have grown tired of it all," said he, one day, after dinner. She flushed. "Do you say this because I have returned?"

He hesitated. "No—yes—I can see no other reason," and with the slight, rather dreary smile of one who knows much of life and the nature he deals with, he added: "I expected you."

Helen paled but remained speechless; there was that in her which condemned her to silence. Day after day she went about those little duties that added so much comfort to his life. He noticed how perfect had become her beauty, how easy and graceful all her movements, the dignity that rested on her brow. On the other hand she saw how gray her husband's hair had grown, how sad the handsome mouth, how stern the eyes that of yore lighted up so easily.

The evening was dreary; the Colonel had not been in to dinner. It was drizzling and the atmosphere was heavy with sadness. Of late Mr. Hunt was frequently absent, and his silent moods seemed to have become habitual, so much that he spoke with evident effort. Was this home? Was it life? Was this state of affairs the price to be paid for the eminence whence she had shone for a while? Could she keep this up? The great world had not yet forgotten her, she learned from the letter before her. It was one of those letters that had always thrilled her. Should she hesitate? Should she go across the seas with this loved one? The letter fell at her feet while she mused; then, turning to the table, she took up a card requesting that Colonel and Mrs. Hunt would be present at the opening of the Clifford library, and an accompanying note asked "if she would lend the attraction of her voice to the programme, etc." She had given much time to this, years before; now that the good was at last accomplished what did she care?—to be seen with him, smiling her part—what a farce was this!

Her hands were tightly clasped. Five weeks since her return, and not a word of welcome, not a sign of joy; her quiet efforts were met with distrust. Nothing but this intolerable silence! What attitude could she take but to seek refuge in pride?

At last she heard her husband's footsteps in the hall; he hesitated, then walked into the bright sitting room, so elegant and snug since her return.

After a space of oppressive silence, as he stood on the hearth rug, he picked up the letter lying at her feet. The sight of the writing made his heart stand still, his delicacy once more caused him to hesitate; but, suddenly resolute, he turned to the closing words and signature, which ran:

"In conclusion I beg you not to consider my pleasure nor interests at stake. Lady W— knows how you are situated, and, like myself, approves of my noble Helen's choice. With loving friendship, FRANCES."

The letter fell from his hand, and his voice, as he spoke, sounded cold and distant: "Helen, it is a relief to know at last that your mysterious correspondent is the woman whose spirituality has won for her the reverence of two worlds. This choice referred to—" but his wife's listless air, as she gazed into the fire, made him add bitterly: "You must excuse me, I once more intrude upon your privacy."

Again there was silence. "You must be cold," said she, at last, in a voice of studied calm.

"Yes, but I might be still colder in a few days." "How so?" "I might take a journey to the far northwest, and be absent many weeks, nay, months; in fact, it is hard to say how long. The railroad company needs a man of energy in those wilds, and it has honored me with the choice."

Her voice was still cold as she asked: "Is it of much advantage to you? Could the journey be avoided?"

"Yes, there is some advantage, though I have work on hand. I must give a definite answer within 24 hours." "Well," said her clear, proud voice, "you must not go. It is too much exposure; I see a way out of this situation. I feel I have once more disturbed your life, and should not have returned; clearly my presence is unwelcome. No, do not speak. At last you give me occasion to say that which I have long wished to say to you. I intend once more to take up the career I had chosen and in which I met with success." Mistaking the nature of his silence, her pride rose above her suffering, and she continued: "Two persons who have become utterly indifferent cannot thus impose their presence upon one another. My journey to England—" She was near the door against which he already stood; already he caught her wrists in his strong hands and in a hoarse whisper asked:

"Is this your choice?" She remained silent. "Why have you returned? I must have the truth."

With tears in her eyes, she said: "I am not welcome enough to answer." "Welcome! O woman, woman!" Then looking into her upturned face, and pressing her hands against his breast, he cried:

"Speak, speak! tell your husband why you have come back to him." With a radiant smile she said: "Because—because, I could not well help myself; because, the law decrees: A good home to a good man!" And the sweet rippling laughter once more banished the silence of Fernwood.—N. O. Times-Democrat.

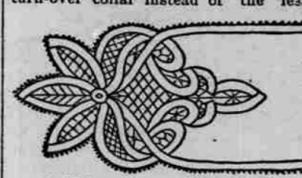
To the Point. Mr. Crusty—Confound it, young man, it's after ten o'clock! Have you no home to go to? Mr. Pert—No, but we were just talking about making one. Funny coincidence that you should mention it.—Smith's Weekly.



FOR THE LACE-WORKER.

The Soft Scarf Is a Nice Christmas Present to Make for Elderly Ladies.

Elderly ladies find the soft scarf very becoming, and now that lace is so much in vogue no better gift can be offered at this time than that modeled after the design in the accompanying cut. A piece of fine net the desired length should be edged with lace braid, and the ends ornamented with lace fashioned from the same braid. The lace design here shown is a comparatively simple one; includes what is frequently called the simple lace stitch, the wheel or spider, and in the stem pattern the single bar is used. If preferred, the lace and net idea may be carried out in stock or turn-over collar instead of the less



A NEAT LACE SCARF END.

common scarf. Speaking of collars, there comes to mind a dainty bit of neckwear recently seen in the shops, and which could easily be made at home; one of the revised old-fashioned sort, a lay-down collar to wear with an old-style brooch. Sew together three strips of fine insertion, finish with a frill of lace, fasten upper part of collar to a neck band. This may be made by the home needlewoman for a few cents, but costs dollars when bought down town.

HAND-SEWING REVIVED.

All Kinds of Hand-Made Things Now Much in Esteem, Especially Fine Needlework.

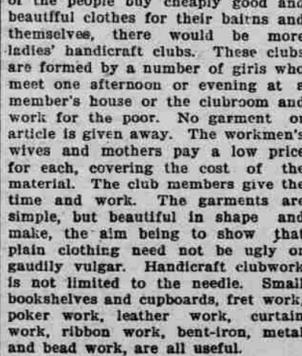
Needlework as an art has long been despised, but is now being revived. The day will soon dawn when, once more, a girl will blush to have to own that she cannot stitch, sew, tuck, hem, gather, whip, and fell linen into beauty and usefulness. Hand-embroidered and crocheted, knitted or netted lace, lasts for years, and puts the machine-made imitations to scorn. With clever fingers a very little money suffices to render a house beautiful, and the pleasure derived from the work of one's hands is priceless. Curtains of serge or velveteen may be transformed into splendor by embroidery and stitchery. Tablecloths that would cost ten times the money in a shop can be made and embellished at home. Pretty underclothing is a necessity to every nice girl, and it is prettiest when she makes it herself in dainty shapes and with fine trimmings of frills, lace or embroidery. A girl never looks sweeter than when occupied with a feminine handicraft. Then there are the poor. "Blessed are they which consider the poor." If girls knew with what delight tired mothers of the people buy cheaply good and beautiful clothes for their bairns and themselves, there would be more ladies' handicraft clubs. These clubs are formed by a number of girls who meet one afternoon or evening at a member's house or the clubroom and work for the poor. No garment or article is given away. The workmen's wives and mothers pay a low price for each, covering the cost of the material. The club members give the time and work. The garments are simple, but beautiful in shape and make, the aim being to show that plain clothing need not be ugly or gaudily vulgar. Handicraft clubwork is not limited to the needle. Small bookshelves and cupboards, fret work, poker work, leather work, curtain work, ribbon work, bent-iron, metal and bead work, are all useful.

USEFUL HAT-PIN HOLDER.

Fills a Long-Felt Want—A Suitable Case in Which to Keep These Pins.

A test-tube inserted in a fancy case makes a pretty and useful receptacle for the necessary hatpin.

Three rows of insertion and three rows beading, sew together, edge top



FOR THE NEEDLEWOMAN.

Pretty jabots are made from fine lace handkerchiefs.

Gilt threads are used with good effect in embroidering white linen collar and belt sets.

Pretty plaited waists of sea-green albatross figure among the least expensive blouses.

The new-old and exquisitely beautiful ribbon embroidery appears on collars, cuffs, belts, bags and gowns.

An ingenious woman made an old white lace shawl into a beautiful evening wrap by lining it with innumerable frills of white chiffon.

Some of the lingerie petticoats have flounces and ruffles cut out in deep scallops, tiny ruffles of narrow lace set on the under ruffle and showing in the fan-shaped spaces.

Embroidered brussels lace cravats are among the pretty models that may be easily constructed at home. They may be of white, cream or black net and the embroidering done in geometrical designs.

A newspaper-cutting book can be contrived by making an outer cover of cartridge paper and inserting between it a blank paper writing pad from which the leaves are loosened all but an inch at the left side. You can paste your paper cover on to it and paint on the outside a large cluster of many-colored pansies to represent the enclosed "thoughts," painting in gold the word "pansies" under the flowers.

BEAUTY NOTES IN GENERAL.

Something About Care of the Eyes, the Hair and the Complexion.

Your druggist will give you an eye-wash of borax and camphor water which will be of benefit to the eyes if they are tired or inflamed. Mix it with a little warm water and apply with an eye-cup. The lashes can be strengthened in growth by use of this ointment: Two ounces red vaseline, one-eighth ounce tincture cantharides, 15 drops oil rosemary, 15 drops oil lavender. Be careful not to let it get into the eyes, for it will smart.

Daily scalp massage and a good tonic, such as eau de quinine, will put your hair in better condition and may check the gray growth. Brush out the dandruff with a stiff brush, penetrating to the scalp, once a week, but do not use the fine comb unless you are skillful with it.

Leave off cold cream and powder for awhile, and give your face a thorough treatment with castile soap, hot water and the face brush. Use every night, and don't be alarmed at the red spots that at first will appear. They are the blackheads making their way out.

There is no way that straight hair can be made wavy except by use of artificial curlers. Use kid ones, avoid the iron. Water in which quince seeds have been boiled keeps the hair in curl for some time.

Noses have undoubtedly been changed in shape by some of the violent methods employed, but there have also been serious results from the same methods. I should certainly leave my nose as it was formed and to try to be as pretty as possible in other respects. You can make people forget one faulty feature if you will. You had better let your warts be treated by electrolysis. This is the surest and safest method.

This is an excellent lotion for baldness: Eight ounces alcohol, one ounce spirits lavender, one-half ounce glycerin, eight grains sulphate quinine, two and one-half drams tincture rhaphany, one and one-half drams tincture cantharides. Apply twice a day. Shampoo with tar soap once a month and brush dandruff from scalp every week. Massage at night in this manner: Place the tips of fingers on scalp, move them with the scalp in rotary manner, go from spot to spot until the whole scalp has been loosened.

The brown blotches are probably from liver trouble, and the trouble must be corrected by a physician. For freckles try this: One ounce lemon juice, one ounce alum, one pint rose water.

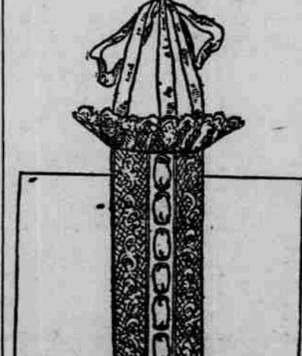
Use the following skin food with massage: Four ounces sweet almond oil, one ounce white wax, one ounce spermaceti, melted together. Add to this mixture one and one-half drams pulverized borax which has been dissolved in one and one-half ounces glycerin and one-half ounce orange flower water. Stir constantly until almost hard, and then add, dropping, one-half dram tincture benzoin and one drop oil neroli.—Washington Star.

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TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

The Paris municipal council has unanimously called on the French legislature to make it a penal offense to cause employes of either sex to work more than six days a week.

The Goldfields Labor Council, of West Australia, has passed a resolution in favor of a six-hour working day, and as a labor ministry is in power the idea is likely to be realized.

Glass houses may soon be made stone-proof. Silesian glassmakers are turning out glass bricks for all sorts of building purposes, and hope that the proverb will soon have no significance.

Fifteen million bunches of bananas were brought to the United States last year by one fruit company, which runs 83 steamers. They came chiefly from Cuba, Costa Rica, Jamaica and Honduras.

The American smelters of the smelter town of Murray, Utah, have organized to ask the employers to discharge all Greek and Austrian employes and to employ only Americans in future, because the foreigners are accused of many recent crimes.

The restriction that salmon may not be taken from the waters of southeastern Alaska until after July 1 of each year has been removed, and, in view of that, it is expected that the catch will be very much larger; this year than previously.

The Journal of Education says: "Taking the country as a whole, one child in five between the ages of 5 and 15 is at work as a wage earner. In Alabama it is one in four, while in Massachusetts it is but one in 200! Massachusetts leads all other states—its far in the lead—in this particular. Her record is 40 times as good as that of the United States as a whole."

Trapped. Sharpe—I see you are mentioned in one of the books just published. Prim—Indeed! What book? "The directory."—Casell's.

HABIT'S CHAIN.

Certain Habits Unconsciously Formed and Hard to Break.

An ingenious philosopher estimates that the amount of will power necessary to break a life-long habit would, if it could be transformed, lift a weight of many tons.

It sometimes requires a higher degree of heroism to break the chains of a pernicious habit than to lead a forlorn hope in a bloody battle. A lady writes from an Indiana town:

"From my earliest childhood I was a lover of coffee. Before I was out of my teens I was a miserable dyspeptic, suffering terribly at times with my stomach.

"I was convinced that it was coffee that was causing the trouble and yet I could not deny myself a cup for breakfast. At the age of 35 I was in very poor health, indeed. My Sister told me I was in danger of becoming a coffee drunkard.

"But I never could give up drinking coffee for breakfast although it kept me constantly ill, until I tried Postum. I learned to make it properly according to directions, and now we can hardly do without Postum for breakfast, and care nothing at all for coffee.

"I am no longer troubled with dyspepsia, do not have spells of suffering with my stomach that used to trouble me so when I drank coffee." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Look in each pkg. for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."