

Woman's Work -:- Drama -:- Music -:- Household Topics

Day of Sordid Books and Plays Has Passed Away

By ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Copyright, 1915, by Star Company. The day of pessimistic literature and plays has passed.

For some years it has been the tendency of those who claim to be exponents of "art for art's sake" to leave their audiences in gloom when the curtain fell or the book ended. The really cheerful novel or play was considered bad form.

The author who suggested wedding bells at the close of his story was supposed to shut the door of art in his own face. The audience that left the theater smiling gave a death blow to the aspirations of the playwright who hoped to be ranked as an artist.

This idea was morbid. It is gratifying to know that the tide has changed. In a recent competition for the best stories offered by a prominent magazine, an extremely well-written story, by a successful and well-known author was declined on the ground of its gloomy climax.

The play of a famous author was changed by the managers and a happy ending substituted before the play was allowed to be produced. A few months ago, a critic, insisting that the present ending of the play is inartistic, but life, the great playwright, is in artistic from their point of view.

Life does not end its stories of human lives in gloom and despair. We have but to look about us to prove this statement. A few years ago the life of some friend was shadowed with the pall of despair, sorrow, sickness or poverty had befallen him, but today he is smiling, his health is restored, his sorrow has become a memory and hope has taken the place of despair in his heart.

It was only in the second act or the third in the long drama of life that the curtain fell in utter gloom. Perhaps you have reached this act in your own life today; but it is not the end of the play. Fate will find the ball, the curtain will go up, or the leaf will be turned by the finger of time, and a new setting or new incidents will change the story into one of hope and happiness.

Look back over the record of your childhood. It would be safe to assert that not one in any score rests under an impenetrable shadow of gloom. The day who has met disaster and absolute failure

you would not select as typical of human life and experience.

Why, then, should the author or the playwright select such characters for his chief consideration? Why should it be considered high art to picture only the unhappy conditions of human experience and the sad scenes of human destiny?

Why should it be considered bad art to describe happiness, success and morality? There are many cloudy days in the year, but there are far more days of sunshine than of shadow. No painter thinks he degrades his art by painting sunshine and bloom. No painter feels it incumbent upon him to picture only winter and night. Why then should the author feel that he must select the dark passages in human life and end his story in cold and shadow in order to be artistic?

We read books and we attend plays for recreation of the mind. However biased we may be in the literary or dramatic line, our minds are nevertheless to some extent affected by what we read and what we see.

Something agreeable, something helpful, something hopeful, something optimistic should be given us to take away from the book or the theater. We turn to literature and the drama as we go to a health resort, for recreation and rest. It is not the resort with the germs of malaria or typhoid fever in our system that we feel we have been imposed upon. We call the attention of the health commissioners to investigate the conditions surrounding the resort.

It is a subject for congratulation that the mental health commissioners have been looking into the conditions, and the results of morbid art. However great the genius of the writer may be today, however large the capitalization of a periodical, there will be no success for either in the next ten or twenty years unless the utterances emanating from pen or pages breathe hope, courage, cheer.

In the congested and high wrought condition of the civilized world today human beings are looking to the artist, the preacher, the actor for helpfulness and strength to bear the burdens of life.

Helpfulness, hope and courage may be old-fashioned and inartistic elements for the genius in any one of these lines to employ, but if he wishes for success in his chosen field, he must employ them. The day of the artistic pessimist is gone.

Anita Stewart's Talks to Girls--No. 10 At What Age Should a Girl Marry?



A unique picture of the fascinating Anita Stewart.

By ANITA STEWART.

sensation of the moving picture world. Copyright, 1915, International News Service. At what age should a girl marry? That is a question that we girls discuss a lot in the long hours in the studio when we are waiting our cue to go on in the picture. And it's a question that girls discuss a lot everywhere, for every woman has either been married, or is going to be married, or hopes to be married.

Some of the girls think it is just terribly romantic to be married when you are very young, while others think that a woman should put off marrying a long, long time. The longer you put it off, the better off you will be, some say, cynically.

I think 25 is the ideal age for a girl to marry. She is then young enough to have all her ideals and enthusiasm still unsharpened, and yet old enough to have come to herself. It is then that a woman can use both her head and her heart in picking out a husband, and when she stands the best chance of making a wise choice.

I do not believe in early marriages. No girl of 17 or 18 is fit, either mentally, or physically, or spiritually, to take upon her little weak shoulders all the responsibility of marriage. She is nothing but a child, and she goes to pieces over situations that a grown-up woman could handle without the slightest difficulty. I am told that statistics show that three-fourths of the divorces are asked for by people who married when they were very young.

It isn't surprising. What do a boy and girl know of the kind of wife and husband they will want when they grow up? Their tastes are changing every day, and the husband that a girl would pick out at 17 wouldn't any more fire her fancy at 25 than would the food, or the clothes that she pinned for in her kiddie days.

It seems to me that there are enough blood-curdling risks in matrimony, any way, not to take any chances on what you are going to be, and want yourself, when you come to man's and woman's estate.

Another reason why girls ought not to marry before they are 25 is that if they marry when they are very young, they out themselves out of their girlhood, which is the one playtime of a woman's

life. And if she misses that, she goes through the world unstaffed, hunting it. If you will notice, you will see that the middle-aged women who are mad about pleasure, who can never get enough dancing and running around to restaurants, and who are making eyes at every man they meet, are almost invariably women who married when they were young.

On the other hand, if a woman waits to marry until she is well in the thirties, she loses the pliability of youth, and finds it harder to adapt herself to her husband's ways. Also she has gotten the habit of independence, and is accustomed to live her own life in her own way, and this makes for personal selfishness, which doesn't add to the peace and harmony of the family circle.

All of these reasons make it seem to me that 25 is the ideal age for a girl to marry. Then she is old enough to know her own mind, but not too old to change it. She is still romantic, but not foolish, and she is ready to enter upon the business of life with a clear head and a strong hand. I intend to marry when I am 25, provided, of course, Mr. Right comes along then.

If You Want to Avoid Grip Follow Advice Given Here

By WOODS HUTCHISON, M. D.

One touch of sneezing makes the whole world kin. Even in this time of world-shaking Armageddons and tottering thrones and quivering national credits, the burning question of the day everywhere, upon the street, in the cars, at public assemblies is: "Have you got it?"

In fact, so nearly simultaneously does the question rise to our lips whenever we meet a friend, that the greeting is almost antiphonal, or responsive, like the Christmas salutations in Russia—some exclaimant giving half, and the other, the second half, or the cheerful "Gott strafe" vocal epidemic which is now raging in Central Europe.

There is even a sort of consolation about its ubiquity, because misery dearly does love company, and among the minor pleasures of life and most popular indoor sports not the least is the cheerful sympathetic swapping of symptoms.

One, however, of the conspicuous consolations which we give ourselves about it is a pure illusion, and that is that there is anything modern or recherche and up-to-date about it.

On the contrary, it is of a most respectable, not to say venerable, antiquity; many of our good things are new, but most of our ills are old, very old. World epidemics of the grip under various names have been clearly recognized ever since the fourteenth century, and would probably have been so earlier had medical and official reporters been sufficiently intelligent.

Its very name, influenza, goes back to the middle ages and constitutes the popular Italian belief that it was due to the malignant "influence" of a star, or a comet, or some other of the heavenly bodies on account of the rapidly and universally of its spread.

At least four clear-cut and world-encompassing epidemics of it have been recorded in the nineteenth century, as well as many minor and local ones, the last of which was in 1889-90, with several echoes and secondary reverberations in the decade following. The earliest of the four is said to have hit the armies of both Napoleon and Wellington in the Peninsula campaign practically out of business for several weeks and to have attacked and prostrated nearly a third of the population of the Spanish Peninsula within four or five days.

Its origin now is fairly clear and is no more heavenly than are the sensations which it produces. It does not come down from above in any sense, but up from below, from dirt, plain, stinky, sweaty, steaming human dirt, the kind that comes from overcrowding and infrequent ablutions and perpetual sneezing in the steam of other people's breath.

Like many other things good and bad it comes from the east. The earlier great epidemics always started in Russia and in the remotest and most easterly provinces at that, so that in the seventeen and eighteen hundreds it was known as the "Russian influenza."

This, however, was an injustice to the great white empire, for a little investigation quickly showed that it came into Russia with the tea caravans from western China. Western China had caught it from central, and finally it was traced back to that great sneezing human stew and hive, the Yangtze-Kiang valley.

Here or in the sweltering rice alums to the south start all our great world pestilences which we are able to trace to their beginning, the black death, smallpox and cholera, and it is also believed to be the native home of typhoid, tuberculosis and pneumonia. This is the real yellow peril, and the conviction is steadily growing among sanitarians that

to clean up China would be to enormously protect the whole civilized world.

Remember you are not doing yourself the slightest harm in the world by "holding in" a sneeze. The only effect of a grip sneeze is more sneezes in the sneezer and more sneezes among the sneezed at. A sneeze has some small degree of utility when it is caused mechanically by dust or smoke or irritating fumes in the way of dislodging the intruders and setting up a protective flow of mucus.

But a sneeze during the grip, or, for the matter of that, in any ordinary so-called "common cold," has no such value, because the irritant that causes it, the grip germ and his toxins, are already underneath the membrane and all through the blood.

In fact a sneeze, unless it be clearly due to a whiff of dust or smoke or pungent odor, is not a sign that you are catching cold, but that you have already caught it, usually twenty-four to forty-eight hours before, and that it is beginning to break out on you.

The ill-timed rejoinder will rise at once in a score of lips, "I know better—haven't I sat in a draft and sneezed and come down with a cold at once many a time?" But this is simply a familiar fallacy of logic technically known as post hoc, propter hoc—whatever follows a thing is caused by it.

For every time that they have sat in a draft and sneezed and caught cold they have at least five and probably ten times sat in a draft, been sure that they were going to "catch their death of cold," and nothing whatever has come of it. The one bad coincidence they remembered for good and sufficient reasons—the nine harmless ones they forgot.

If anyone is loaded with infection to the bursting point and just ready to explode, the irritation and momentary depression of a draft or a chill may precipitate the explosion a few hours or half a day earlier than it would otherwise have occurred.

This is the only relation which drafts, chills and wet feet bear to the grip. If the "drafted" person be not loaded to the bursting point with infection the draft will do him no harm whatever, but on the contrary much good.

But the avoidance of sneezing and sneezers can be carried out in a more effective and successful way yet by intelligent cooperation, and that is by mutually agreeing to count an attack of the grip as an immediate and automatic "King's Ex" from all public duties and functions which can possibly be transferred to some one else.

Children with a cold should invariably be kept at home from school; employees with a cold should promptly be granted leave of absence with pay from factory, from office, shop or store, for two, three, five days, save where this is physically or executively impossible.

This may sound impracticable, almost absurd, but it is actually adopted and in operation as a fixed policy not only in intelligently conducted schools, but also in many up-to-date business establishments, stores and factories.

In-Shoots

The conversation of some men would be more agreeable if they were provided with shock absorbers.

When a woman has no troubles of her own, a kind neighbor can often come in and suggest a subject for worry.

When the base ball editors begin to talk of next year's prospects one can almost hear the bluebirds sing.

Nebraska Man Wants to Cancel Deed Given to Mail-Order Bride

NORTH PLATTE, Neb., Jan. 12.—(Special.)—As a result of a marriage through a mail-order agency, a Nebraska farmer, Tuesday filed a suit in the district court to have a deed for his farm set aside, which he

gave his wife, Effie May Mitchell, alias Effie May Oren, alias Effie May Nystrom. The woman with her alleged consent are in a Grand Island jail on a statutory charge.

Nystrom alleges that he became acquainted with the woman when he answered an advertisement appearing in a publication from a marriage bureau. She was then living at Blackwell, Okl.

After corresponding for some time the two were married. Nystrom alleges, after he had deeded his farm and home, valued at \$15,000, over to the woman.

Shortly after their wedding Nystrom alleges that a man came to live at their home who was introduced to him as Ted Oren, his wife's brother. Correspondence between his wife and eastern real estate agents revealed to him the true state of affairs, and the suit followed, according to Nystrom's claim.

Officers allege that the woman and Ted Oren, who is also known as C. J. Clough, had been living together as man and wife at Grand Island for several years prior to her marriage to Nystrom.

Advice to the Lovelorn By Beatrice Fairfax

Try to See Her.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I met a lady four years my junior last summer, and am on friendly terms with her family. Last month I got into bad company, but she forgave me. Now, what I really want is to see her again. I wrote her three letters, as she asked me for an explanation, and she said that I ought to do as I do, as I do not think it proper to call on her without her permission.

Your conduct probably hurt this girl very much—possibly even to the extent of destroying her regard for you. She may feel that she wants to put you to a test to see if your reformation is strong enough to stand. Be patient and perhaps she will offer to see you soon. If she does not why not ask her to let you come to her home and talk the matter over? Do you think she realizes fully just how much her regard means to you?

See Him Less Often.

Dear Miss Fairfax: My sister is going about with a young man of 20. She is only a little over 17. My parents would like to know his salary. They claim by going out with him constantly she is losing chances. Now, the question is, I hardly think it is right to ask a young man or give him any hint on what he thinks. Now, what I really want is to see her again. I wrote her three letters, as she asked me for an explanation, and she said that I ought to do as I do, as I do not think it proper to call on her without her permission.

Both your sister and the boy with whom she is going about are very young. I think your parents are simply actuated by the customs of the old world when they feel that a statement of his "intentions" is necessary. Such a demand is quite likely to spoil a happy boy and girl friendship. It would be wiser for your sister simply to see the boy less often.

Be Charitable.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am engaged to a girl of 21 who had a friend whom she knew very well before our engagement. He is a fit of despondency she writes to him unknown to me and asked him to meet her. I heard of this meeting through a friend, and read the letter written by my fiancée. Should an engaged girl have anything to do with men other than her fiancée? P. W. H.

Probably the "fit of despondency" which caused your fiancée to meet the other man was brought on by some quarrel with you or some fancied slight. I think you can afford to be charitable in your judgment, by all means talk it over with the girl, so that she will not surrender her dignity by doing such a thing again.

Another Chance.

Dear Miss Fairfax: I am 20 and have been going about with a young man about three months ago we had words on account of his not coming to see me for about a month, so I gave him up. A few days ago he came to ask me to be his friends again. I would like to grant his request, but my people are against it. LEZZIE H.

Your people probably feel that a young man who dropped you once without explanation, is likely to do so again, and they do not want you to suffer unnecessarily. I cannot conscientiously advise my girl to disobey her parents. Perhaps you can persuade them to give him another chance, since anyone deserves that much.

The Best Man.

Dear Miss Fairfax: Is a married man permitted to be a best man at a wedding? In this case it is a brother. M. C.

There is no reason why a married man should not be either best man or usher at a wedding. Even if he were not related, this would still apply.

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