

The day was really breaking now. Pale and clear and beautiful stood the outline of the world. Hester Nicholson rose slowly from her knees by the window and began to dress, her hands shaking a little.

No one had stirred in the house, and it was a long while before a maid came in with a cup of coffee. Hester sent her away, drank the coffee, and went out without tasting food. She did not want to see even old Mrs. Warren, for she had decided what to do, and she must do it. After that—but her mind refused to consider the future; indeed, there was no future for her. She had wrecked her life and her husband's!

A wave of humiliation, of self-pity, submerged her being. She hurried on, she could not stay in the house to face the others. She must go away somewhere out of reach until she could carry out her purpose.

Driven by restlessness, she threaded the streets, passing by the doors of little shops just opening, where children were going for a loaf of bread and a penny's worth of milk. A baker's wagon drove furiously past; another man was selling fish. The chill morning air made Hester shiver; her teeth chattered, and she bent her head and hurried on.

She was constantly afraid of being seen. She shrank from encounter like a tired child, and it was not until she reached the crowded district of the city, and the turmoil of the market-place engulfed her, that she felt safe.

A long time passed. Worn out and heavy-eyed, she turned back; but she

could not go home, and she would not face the Warrens. It was now nearly ten o'clock, and already she felt faint and tired; but her purpose was unshaken.

She made her way toward the Capitol. The Legislature was in session, and the portico and terrace were fairly crowded. There was that hum of life which pervades a big, naked building, echoing in its marble floors and along its corridors.

Hester wore a plain frock and a veil, but something in her figure and bearing attracted attention, and more than one idle group turned to stare as she passed. She felt their eyes, and once she thought she heard her own name. An impulse of flight seized her, almost of panic, but her determination, unshaken as it was, swept her on.

She made her way down into one of the wings. She had already asked for the committee-room; and here, to gain admittance, she had to give her name. The aghast look of the usher brought the hot blood to her face, but she waited while he carried her card in, and, after a long moment of almost unbearable suspense, came out with a permit for her admittance.

She had felt that they must see her; yet, now that the time had come, she faltered, she could scarcely stand. She put out her hand blindly, caught at the back of a chair, and steadied herself.

The young usher started forward.

"Are you ill, madam? Is there anything I can do? I—"

She shook her head. Then, with a supreme effort at self-control, she stepped steadily into the room.

(To be concluded in the October number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

DEDICATION FOR A GARDEN BOOK

WITHIN old gardens, when the day is done,
I fancy lovers walk, as in the sun
Of summers since they walked, arm locked in arm;
I feel their presence stir the quiet charm
Of brooding shadows. So within my heart
A garden lies, from all the world apart;
And in soft twilights, when the day is fair,
I turn to walk in it—and find you there!

Anne Coe Mitchell

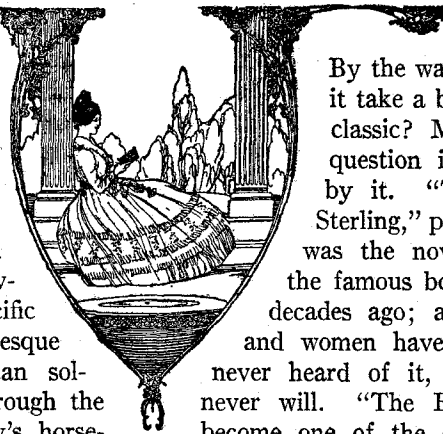
OLD FAVORITES THAT MAY RETURN

Good Novels of Fifty Years Ago
That Are Worth Reading To-day

By William S. Bridgman

READERS of books that are popular to-day very often commend their newness and then speedily grow weary of them. Modern fiction takes a great sweep, extending from Mr. Jack London's human savages in the northeastern Pacific to the late O. Henry's picturesque but ragged Central American soldiery; or it goes dashing through the purple sage with Zane Grey's horsemen, or pours a flood of moonlight over rugged castles and plunging mountain streams in Nonamia and other half-civilized states, which the geographer has omitted from the map for the benefit of the novelist. It seems thus far to have shrunk from attempting to picture the great war that is shattering the very fabric of the world; but that will, no doubt, come later.

Meanwhile, the love-stories still predominate, most of them compounded after much the same formula, in spite of the varied geographical or sociological flavorings with which the authors have sought to spice them; and it is not easy to satisfy oneself with the long series of new novels bearing on their covers the imaginary portraits of their pretty heroines. Even the older and established classics become monotonous sometimes, and the juvenile classics affect one in the same way.



By the way, how long does it take a book to become a classic? Merely to ask this question is to be amused by it. "The Hon. Peter Sterling," published in 1894, was the novel which began the famous book boom of two decades ago; and already men and women have grown up who never heard of it, and very likely never will. "The Hon. Peter" has become one of the classics that are forgotten in twenty-two years.

But how about "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"? Children have scarcely yet quite matured since that amusing little book was first a "classic," yet already it has nearly passed away. The "later" Henry James is now read only for the notes with which he has made himself still more unintelligible. Everything is moving. Nothing lasts.

THE "RECALL" IN LITERATURE

If we do not care to read the great writers of one or two centuries ago, and if we are tired of books that have been dubbed "classics" during the past twelve months, just look composedly across the spaces that lie between, and see whether there may not be found some books—indeed, very many books—which should be restored and read again, and perhaps remain upon our shelves. Possibly there