

LETTERS TO PATTY

the sun flashes into your eyes between each tree.

My first cypress was the Cream Dress.

The Cream Dress you remember was sent as a present by Mrs. Carrington. It came from a shop in some unknown town, instead of being made by Mrs. Rowe, the village dressmaker, who lived down a muddy little lane, had no teeth, and used to hold pins in lips, thin and hard as a tortoise's. The Cream Dress had long loops of black satin ribbon, hard, stiff and shiny, instead of bows. The daring originality of this enchanted me. There were loops at the neck, and loops at each side just below the waist-line. But the real charm was that quite a large pad covered in cream sateen was secreted under the draperies at the back.

That bustle interfered with the prayers said at the end of my bed in the morning, and with "tables" later on in the day. Should I be allowed to wear the Cream Dress? At that time you and I were dressed in black nun's veiling, trimmed with crape, and black sailor hats with heavy bows of crape on them, pulling them perpetually over our left ears, for a grandfather dead nine months. Later on Mother grew quite daring, and dressed us in Turkey red, and even yellow, because "scarlet is Turkish mourning, and yellow