

# The Domain of Woman

"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world"

TALKS BY "TERESA"

## THE WOMEN OF TWO GREAT NOVELISTS.

Dickens' women! who does not know and love them? And how clearly do they reveal to us the type of woman that the great writer loved.

From Milly in "The Haunted Man," sweet, gentle, soft voiced, tender hearted Milly, to the most exquisite creation of his genius, beautiful, patient, self-sacrificing Little Nell, every one of the female characters he has created bears the stamp of true and beautiful womanhood.

"The Child of the Marshes," Little Dorrit, is a beautiful example of womanly devotion to duty, and womanly self-abnegation in the effort to bring one little brightness and happiness into the lives of others. There are many Little Dorrits in the world; hardworking, patient, uncomplaining women, for whom life holds nothing but the dreary round of duties nobly done, whose only earthly reward and pleasure lies in the knowledge that the life of one dear to them is made easier by their efforts, and who strive to lift and carry burdens impossible for them to bear save by the help of the strength that comes from God.

Many of them, poor Little Dorrits, meet with but scant gratitude from those who should love and protect them, in whose service their lives are ungrudgingly spent, but the sweet, Christ-like souls feel no resentment, bitterness is not in their natures; like their prototype drawn by the hand of the great delineator of character, they are modest and retiring, letting not their labors be seen, even by those for whose benefit they are undertaken.

Dickens disliked loud voiced, positive, quick tempered women; whenever any such appear in his works they are drawn as unflatteringly as possible. Perhaps the least lovable of his heroines is Estella in "Great Expectations," but he is careful to show us that it was her peculiar and unnatural training that was at fault, rather than any innate disposition towards hardness and coldness. It was impossible for Dickens to write a story without a lovable woman in it; he could not have done it if he had tried, and that was, I think, the most beautiful tribute to his mother and his mother's nature. For it was, if I may so express myself, the mother nature showing itself in the mind of the son and giving rise to those creations which should be a pattern to every woman to the end of time.

In "Great Expectations," we have Biddy, plump, comfortable, sweet-tempered little Biddy, who, like all Dickens' good women; and every other good woman for that matter; had sense enough to know a good man when she saw him, and to marry him when she got the chance, although he was such a rough diamond as honest Joe Gargery.

Florence Dombey with her poor, starved little heart fixing itself eagerly on every small scrap of affection that came in its way, and Edith, the cold, self-repressed, bitter-hearted woman, are similar types; the latter character showing that manner of woman Florence would have become, but for the softening influences that came to her from other sources than her father's affection.

In "Nicholas Nickleby," poor Kate is an example of the toil and humiliations which many well born and gently nurtured girls have to encounter in the struggle for bare existence; the character of the gentle, clinging girl being brought out more forcibly by contrast with that of the hard, miserly unsympathetic Ralph Nickleby.

Another great writer whom I consider second only to Dickens as a delineator of character, is Charles Reade.

Another lover of women, his types are in direct antithesis to those of Dickens, for while the latter shows us woman in her sphere of minister and comforter, and draws for us the angelic side of her nature with all its accompaniments of tenderness and affection, Reade gives us capricious, impulsive and thoroughly earthly women. His female characters are all either Hebes or Junos, full throated, and full figured, with the natural concomitants of exuberant life and energy, full of womanly whims and caprices, positive and able to hold their own against anybody. Reade could not have conceived a Kate Nickleby, or Little Dorrit; he might have admired them as embodying one phase of feminine excellence, but he could not have created them. And yet his women are thoroughly womanly; he probed the impulsive and emotional side of woman's nature to the bottom, and painted her on paper with all her good and bad qualities, her virtues, caprices and tempers with absolute fidelity.

Perhaps the most lovable of Reade's women is Mercy, in "Griffith Gaunt," she possesses all the excellencies of female character, with but few of its faults. "Christie Johnston," an another noble type of womanhood, con-

trasted, as Reade loved to contrast his women, with a weak and vacillating man.

The heroine in his masterpiece, "The Cloister and the Hearth," is a study of womanly fortitude and patience under the most terrible trials a woman can endure; and in the end, it is her finger that points out the path of duty to the man, and helps to smooth it by every service and consolation it is in her power to give.

In "Foul Play," we have the gradual giving way of a good woman's prejudice before the influence of a noble, self-forgetting man. Helen Rolleston is true as steel to the unworthy man to whom she is pledged, and only when the whole force of the evidence against him comes home to her, does she turn from him in scorn, and give her heart unreservedly to the man who has proved his truth and worthiness.

It has been said that no two people see human nature from exactly the same standpoint, and it is as well that it is so. We are saved from a dead level of monotony in literature by the diversified views of different writers, and their various ways of portraying the virtues and failings of humanity. Reade admired good and virtuous women, so did Dickens, but the two writers do not show us exactly the same side of character, or physical attributes. Dickens was fond of painting men delicate, ethereal, frail, the weaker vessel in all that pertains to the physical, but strong in womanly love and endurance.

On the contrary Reade was fond of what may not inaptly be described as the dairymaid style; he would none of your languor and delicacy; give him the girl whose inches top well beyond five feet, the well grown, full chested plump figured Juno who, to quote himself, "steps well out from the hips, with a grand swinging motion, her feet slapping the ground as she spanks along;" in short, the latter day tennis, golf and bicycle girl, who can walk her ten miles a day, and swing you a club with the best of them.

Fancy the Hon Miss Lydia Langshir, or the Jady Betty Modish of a hundred or so odd years ago, sitting themselves down to peruse a novel wherein the heroine disports herself after manner of Reade's young women! Their ladyships would have fainted (or tried to) at the bare mention of such shocking departures from what they may choose to consider "gentility," which consisted if you please, in lying abed till eleven or twelve, occupying two or three hours in dressing, during which process they received various friends, including gentlemen; and finally descending to dinner, "painted, pomatumed, powdered, patched, punctuated, and everything else—except washed," and everything else—except washed.

One of the most charming female characters Reade has portrayed is "Peg Wadgeron." He gives us the woman as she was, ardent, impulsive, fanatical (who is not?) passionate and headstrong; but with a great true woman's heart, finely strung as a violin, and responsive to the slightest touch of sympathy and good feeling. The character is all the more interesting from the fact that it is not imaginary. Only Reade could have drawn the famous actress with such fidelity, only his master touch could draw for us the pathetic picture of her life's close, amidst the sorrow and lamentations of the poor and afflicted, to whom she had been a tender and sympathizing friend.

The characters that appeal most strongly to us are always those that approach the nearest to human nature; the great writers of every age were students of humanity in all its aspects, they drew men and women as they are, as we may meet them any day. They did not draw impossible characters who could have no counterpart in every day existence, as too many of the ephemeral writers of to-day are fond of doing.

I have often heard it said that Dickens' characters were exaggerated. They may appear so to anyone unacquainted with, or unable to recognize the peculiarities of individual character. Some critics have accused him of harping too persistently upon certain eccentric habits in his individuals, such as Jagers hand washing and scented soap, in "Great Expectations," and Carvers teeth in "Dombey & Son" &c. To this it may be answered that strong touches are sometimes necessary to accentuate the peculiarities in certain temperaments, just as an artist emphasizes some parts of his sketch in order to bring them into perfect harmony with the whole.

I hope, in the course of the coming year to give my readers some reviews of modern books and methods, and some analyses of the works of Canadian and Irish Catholic writers, and to compare the methods pursued in the delineation of character, with those in vogue in the literature of a few years back.

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### LATEST MARKETS

TORONTO, Dec. 29.—On the curb in Chicago at the close to-day May wheat was quoted at 91 1/2c, at the close May wheat was quoted at 91 1/2c puts on May wheat, 93 1/2c; puts on May corn, 30 1/2c; calls 30 1/2c.

TORONTO MARKETS.

Wheat.—The offerings of wheat are far, the demand is not very active and the market is steady. No. 2 red sold at 82c north and west to day. Manitoba wheat is steady at \$1.03 for No. 1 hard Montreal freights and 50c for No. 2. In moderate demand and at 100c. Cars of straight rye are quoted at \$1.03 to \$1.04 west.

Milfeed.—Is quiet at \$10 to \$10 7/8 for shorts, and \$7 1/2 to \$7 7/8 for bran west.

Barley.—Is dull. There is some inquiry for old for malting. No. 2, new is quoted at 32c west and 33c to 34c east. No. 3 extra is quoted at 27c to 28c and feed at 25c to 26c west.

Buckwheat.—Is quiet at 32c east and 30c west.

Rye.—Is in fair demand and steady, and sold to-day east and 41c west.

Corn.—Is quiet at 26c to 27c for new Canada yellow west.

Oats.—Are firmer. Whites are quoted at 25c for No. 2, big, and 24c for No. 3.

Peas.—Firm and sold at 46c east and 45c west.

### FARMERS' MARKET.

The receipts of grain on the street market to-day are small prices were steady.

Wheat—No. 2 red, 1,500 bushels selling at 80c to 83c for white; 85c to 86c for red, and 78c to 79c for goose.

Barley—Steady; 1,000 bushels selling at 30 to 30 1/2c.

Oats—Steady; 200 bushels selling at 26c.

Rye—Firm; 300 bushels selling at 45c to 47c.

Hay and Straw.—The receipts were fair, there was a good demand and the market was steady. 50 loads of hay selling at \$8 to \$9.50, and five loads of straw at \$8.

Dressed Hogs.—The receipts were not large, there was a good demand and the market was rather easier at \$6.10 to \$6.25.

Wheat white.....\$0.80 to \$0.85  
do red.....0.86 to 0.88  
do goose.....0.78 to 0.79  
Barley.....0.30 to 0.30 1/2  
Rye.....0.45 to 0.47  
Peas.....0.26 to 0.27  
Buckwheat.....0.34 to 0.35  
Hay.....8.00 to 9.00  
Ureseed hogs.....6.10 to 6.25  
Eggs.....0.16 to 0.18  
Butter, lb rolls.....0.16 to 0.17  
do tubs, dairy.....0.16 to 0.15  
Chickens.....0.30 to 0.40  
Turkeys.....0.09 to 0.10  
Spring ducks.....0.40 to 0.40  
Geese.....0.50 to 0.65  
Export sheep, per cwt.....3.00 to 3.50  
Butchers' sheep, each.....2.75 to 3.75  
Spring lambs, per cwt.....4.00 to 4.50  
Choice bacon hogs, per cwt.....4.70 to 4.75  
Light fat hogs, per cwt.....4.20 to 4.25  
Thick fat hogs, per cwt.....4.10 to 4.40  
Stores per cwt.....3.00 to 3.25  
Stags, per cwt.....2.00 to 2.10

### APPLICATION TO PARLIAMENT.

Notice is hereby given that an application will be made at the ensuing Session of the Legislature of the Province of Ontario for an Act amending the Act incorporating the Sisters of St. Joseph for the Diocese of Toronto in Upper Canada, being 18 Victoria, Chapter 225, and its amendment being 25 Victoria, Chapter 98, by altering and defining the powers of the said Corporation with respect to the real estate which they are empowered to acquire and hold.

Dated at Toronto this 24th day of November, A.D. 1897.

ROY & KELLY,  
Solicitors for the Applicants.

### NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Archdiocese of Toronto will apply to the Legislature of the Province of Ontario, at the present session thereof, for an amendment to their Act of Incorporation, 20 Vic. Cap. 187, changing the name of the said Corporation with respect to "The Loretto Ladies' Colleges and Schools."

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