

But still I worked on at my picture, and her presence cheered me in spite of myself. Her sprightly laugh and quaint sayings drove away the shadows from my brow each day she came.

The winter passed and the spring came on with its balmy gales and opening buds. My picture was all but finished, and I required Lily as a model no longer. I had made up my mind to part from her. Well I remember that last day. She came as usual at two o'clock, but her face was very pale and set, and she hardly spoke a word all the afternoon. I only needed her for a few hours to touch up some points in her figure, and in the twilight I saw her home across the churchyard. We scarcely exchanged a word—our hearts were so full. All expectancy seemed to have died out of Lily's face, and there was a hopeless expression in her eyes which touched me to the quick. More than once I was on the verge of taking her to my heart and vowing that I would never part from her, but I felt the act would be selling me to ruin, and I kept the words back. At length we came to the wicket leading from the churchyard into the lane, and here she stopped and said with a tremor in her voice: "Do not come any farther, Mr. Morley."

"Lily," I pleaded, "my dear child, let me go home with you."

"No," she said; "it's better not," and she held out her hand.

I remember the scene as well as if it happened yesterday—the overarching elms of the old churchyard, the budding quickset of the hedgerows, the rotted sycamore leaves lying at the borders of the path, the cawing of the homeward-bound rooks, and the red sunlight from the glowing west, which kindled the ivy on the grey church-tower.

I took her hand in one of mine and with the other I drew her to my bosom. Long I pressed her there, for there was not a soul passing, and her tears fell silently on my shoulder, where she sobbed in peace.

"My darling," I said, "we have learned to love one another, but love is not enough. Forgive me" (for I felt a sense of guilt at leaving her, which I can scarcely even now justify), "forgive me. I will never forget you."

For a while longer we stood there, I do not know how long. Once or twice she made a feeble effort to escape, but I could not bear to let her go. There was a fatal bliss in her embrace which I could not relinquish.

At last the clock of the church struck seven, and Lily struggled to be free. I released her from my arms, and dried her tears with my handkerchief. Then I helped her over the stile—and she was gone. I watched her as she hurried away, like a poor wounded bird, and never shall I forget the unutterably mournful expression of her face as she turned to take a last look at me before disappearing round a bend in the lane.

Lily was gone. For weeks the thought haunted me, and all the sunshine seemed to die out of the world. My picture was my only hope and consolation: my hope, for I fondly thought it would prove successful; my consolation, for it preserved to me the living image of poor Lily, who had become sacred to me now I had resigned her. I was free, I might be famous, but I had bought my fame and freedom at a terrible cost, a price I often thought too dear.

My picture was hung, and praised by all the critics, admired by all the public. Lily's beauty was the theme of many remarks, not only from the crowd but from my brother-artists, who often asked me where I got the model, and where she could be found. There was a fortune in her.

But I jealously guarded that secret in my breast. Lily was mine, and for me alone. I was offered a high price for the picture, but I would not sell that first copy. I painted another from it, and sold that. My career was opened, but in the midst of my triumph came a heavy blow. One day a letter came from Lily's mother telling me that she was very ill and wished to see me. I went to the little shop that morning, and was shown by Mrs. Maynard to her bedroom. It was a small and plainly-papered room, scantily furnished, with an iron bed in the middle of it. As soon as I entered I caught the poor child's eyes eagerly fixed upon me with a thirsting look. Her face was wasted and pinched, and her bright gold hair was hid away behind her sleeping-cap, but the old delighted look beamed all over her face at seeing me. I took her thin, frail hand in mine and pressed it tenderly.

"See," she said, "I've got all the papers here with the notices of our picture" (we had always called it "our" picture), and she laid her other hand on a mass of newspaper cuttings lying on the coverlet before her. "I read them every day."

Then she told me about her illness, how the doctors could not find the seat of it, and of her longing to see me which would not be satisfied until I had come. And I told her of my success, and the new pictures I meditated, and what I hoped to do. Mrs. Maynard stayed with us in the room, and after promising to come again, I said good-bye. But it was for the last time. Lily, my pale, sweet primrose, died soon after, and I cannot but think that she sent for me that day to take a last farewell. There was something in the lingering pressure of her hand that might have told me that.

I have never married. My art has been my wife, and she has smiled upon me as you see. "Spring-time" was my first work and the dearest. You asked me where I got my model from, and I have told you.

Plaster of Paris ornaments may be cleaned by covering them with a thick layer of starch, letting it dry thoroughly and then brushing with a stiff brush.

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES.—With April's sunshine comes the first real dawning of springtime, furs begin to disappear, and it is high time for us to think over our preparations for spring and summer, which will follow, alas! too rapidly.

There are partly worn gowns to be brushed, ripped, may be, and thoroughly freshened, and better to be up and doing before the dreamy days really do come, when one wants to enjoy every breath of air and ray of sunshine available, without thinking of such commonplace matters as dress-making.

To meet the natural demand there is a large assortment of most attractive novelties, in fabrics, picturesque combinations, choice colors, and new trimmings shown, in fact, judging from the hints that April has thus early let loose, all and everything will be worn, and almost any style, so that individual taste has plenty of play; but with so much to choose from it is quite possible to choose wrongly, for to dress well now-a-days, it is essential to thoroughly understand the combination of colors, for to harmonize and assort the different or contrasting colors and materials, is in itself an art. For instance, the corsage must not be of one and the skirts of another, but the two harmonizing throughout the entire costume.

Walking costumes are still of the greatest simplicity. One of the latest styles is the jacket-bodice fastened with one button only at the waist line, and open with revers over a close-fitting vest; a short tunic is draped and fastened up with a large metal buckle over a close-pleated underskirt. Pleated skirts are particularly suited for the walking dress, and a pleated panel of a different material from the rest of the skirt may be inserted among the pleats on the left side, as if the panel is plain the skirt is of striped or figured goods, or *vice versa*. The fabric of the panel is also used for vest or plastron, and for collars and cuffs, unless they are of velvet to match. An overskirt of the same material as the pleated skirt and without trimming is draped behind, and has the appearance of an extension of the basque or corsage.

Among the fashionable colors for the coming season are blue, in pale and dark shades, tobacco and nut brown, beige and drab, and all shades of grayish-blue and greens.

Stripes are very fashionable this spring, and are combined, more or less, with plain materials. Thus a striped skirt is slit open at the side, the front part is looped up over the hips, showing a plain skirt, and the back falls loose in ample pleats. The striped bodice opens with revers over a plain vest matching the skirt.

This style of dress is very pretty in fancy striped woolen material over self-colored silk. The collar and sleeve-facings are of the silk.

In some new spring toilets, stripes are imitated by numerous rows of braid put at regular intervals. For instance, the skirt is trimmed with as many as twenty-five rows of narrow braid. The bodice is a tight-fitting jacket, the back and front of which are closely striped with similar braid all except the middle part. The braid is generally selected one shade darker than the material. Sometimes

the arrangement is reversed and the braid put on the middle of the front and back only lengthwise, so as to form a sort of plastron.

Draped skirts are less seen than in winter, and instead, are either gathered or pleated in various ways.

Combinations of two materials are also very prettily arranged in cotton goods, and afford many good devices for remodelling partly worn summer dresses. For instance, the basque and foot pleatings may be of plain pink gingham, with skirt, revers, collar and cuffs of embroidered or figured gingham. A blue gingham dress may have a basque and overskirt of striped blue and white, or blue and red, while the pleats down one side or else the kilt skirt may be of plain blue gingham.

Long draperies permanently sewed to the foundation skirt are used for dresses that do not require washing, but the home dressmaker is advised to make separate skirts, or at least to use the least intricate patterns with straight breadths that may be caught up by buttons or tapes, drawing strings or ribbon bows. Two or three wide pleats down the left side are held in place by cross tapes tacked underneath, and the front breadths next these are drawn across to the right side and caught up in folds by buttons and loops. The back breadths are straight and gathered to the belt.

Regular apron overskirts will be worn with short or long fronts, as the wearer chooses, in the same shapes so long used; these are merely hemmed, or else edged with embroidery or lace.

Gathered basques are liked for light colored batistes, embroidered muslins and ginghams. If this is colored and quite transparent, as muslin or mull, the basque should be made double, that is, lined with the same, in order that the waist may be the same shade as the skirts, which are of course double. If the basque is of opaque stuff, as gingham or cambric, it is made without a lining, and is worn over a white corset cover, and the same is true of the embroidered fabrics that come in open designs, in stripes, and in all over patterns. The fullness is confined alone to the front of the basque, and is made in various ways; the simplest plan being to add two or three inches extra width to the fronts when cutting by any basque patterns, and gathering this fullness at the neck, the waist line and at the end of the basque. In other basques three pleats or folds, each an inch wide, are laid at the neck, pressed flatly down the fronts and shirred across at the waist-line. Still others have this effect given by straight scarfs of the material set on down each side of the buttons and button-holes. The backs of such basques are plain and smoothly fitted, or with some postilion pleats, or else punched up in soft drapery on the tournure. Small pea-shaped tinted pearl buttons fasten the basque down the front. A high standing collar stitched on edge finishes the neck.

These basques can be made more elaborate by adding revers of embroidery each side of the gathered vest.

Round waists gathered to a belt and yoke waists are also in vogue for thin dresses, and these are recommended to a home dressmaker, because they are easily fitted, and as they need not be lined, are also easily washed. These are especially pretty for young girls, with a ribbon bow on the shoulders and rather a wide belt.