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Version 1

The Complete Works of

DOROTHY RICHARDSON

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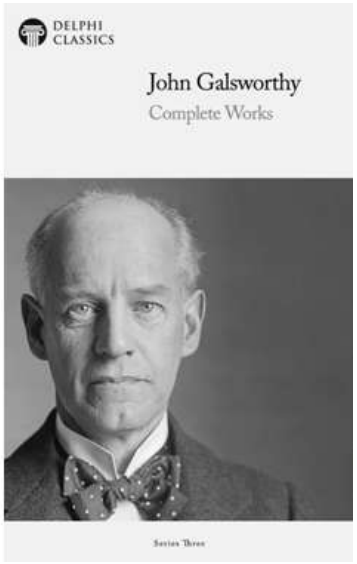
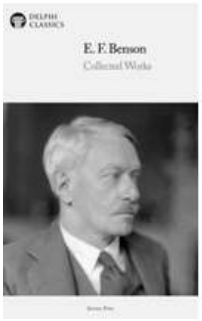
INTERWAR LITERATURE





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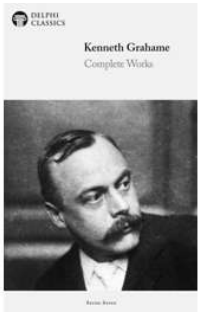


Pilgrimage

Abingdon-on-Thames, Oxfordshire — Dorothy Richardson's birthplace

Abingdon School — Richardson lived at 'Whitefield' a large mansion on Albert Park, which was built by her father in 1871 and is now owned by Abingdon School.

Richardson as a young woman

Pointed Roofs (1915)

Pointed Roofs is the first volume in a series collectively known as the novel Pilgrimage, a semi-autobiographical work (although Richardson regarded them as 'psychological' texts) covering the years 1893 to 1912. Once complete — as far as the author was able to take it, as there seems to have been an intention to make it longer had she been able to — it contained over 2,000 pages of text and featured 600 characters, from 'walk on' roles to major personalities.

This was a risky publication in 1915 for the publisher Gerald Duckworth, as the first novel of an unknown author and one that was so different, although the risk is more understandable when one notes that Duckworth was the half-brother of Virginia Woolf and had published her work, as well as novels by D. H. Lawrence. Woolf was part of the network of artists, writers and intellectuals known at the time as the Bloomsbury Set, and Richardson mixed with them, as she then lived in Bloomsbury. It proved to be a disappointing project profit-wise, but Duckworth continued to support and publish Richardson until 1931. Knopf was the publisher in America and she retained both publishers for all the earlier volumes.

Both Duckworth and Richardson must have been pleased at the initial interest generated, but also a little unnerved by the more critical reviews. The reviewer in *The Observer* raved:

> 'Startlingly original. Seldom have the seething impulses of a girl been so magically treated. A novel that no sensitive reader will forget.'

For other reviewers, such as the more acerbic and also overtly patriotic writer in the *Manchester Courier* (1 October 1915), it fell far short of the mark:

> 'It is difficult to avoid a feeling of disappointment when reading this story…although the book is undeniably original in style and conception, it hardly reaches the heights and deeps suggested by the preface…One can't help feeling a trifle irritated by the author's "wonderful Germans"...There is a hardly-concealed air of contempt for the mere Briton, throughout the volume'.

The reviewer does grudgingly point out that the story is set years before the European war that began in 1914, but this still reinforces the confidence Duckworth had in this 'oddity' of a book that they would publish it at such a time. It was modernistic, experimental and came to be regarded as a stream of consciousness work — the first novel in English to be so labelled. This was not a new epithet devised exclusively for the book; it had been formulated by Daniel Oliver in 1840 in his work *First Lines in Physiology*: 'this mingled and moving stream of consciousness'. The concept was taken up by other psychologists, notably William James in 1890, and was firmly in the mainstream by 1915; however, it was not until 1918 that the novelist May Sinclair applied it to Richardson's work in a review of the then three volumes in the series in *The Egoist* magazine (vol. 5, number 4). May referred to the 'startling newness' of the style, but also qualified her comments by pointing out (as Richardson herself did later on) that other writers had 'plunged' into writing similar prose and that the reader must also 'plunge in' to make the most of a finished work composed in such a style. It was no doubt meant as a compliment, but Richardson, perhaps frustrated at having her expansive work contained within a concept, stubbornly resisted the label of stream of consciousness, declaring it to be 'imbecility'. However, as a literary concept, stream of consciousness refers to a method that depicts the many

thoughts and feelings that pass through the mind of a narrator; in that sense, one can see the validity of applying it to Richardson's work. Her other rebuttal was that she was a literary pioneer; she firmly pointed out in 1934 that not only herself, but Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf and James Joyce were all using the 'new method' at roughly the same time, but each in their own way, chronicling the internal monologue of a character. Punctuation is rarely conventional and leaps of thought process mimic the sometimes convoluted, disordered and rambling inner thoughts and emotions of the mind. It is not connected with the more familiar monologue, which is usually spoken to an audience rather than written and read; nor is it free writing, where any and all thoughts are thrown down on paper exactly as they spring up in the writer's mind. The dialogue appears to be recorded 'verbatim', in that it is not condensed and refined as is the 'rule' in imaginative writing either for fiction, stage or screen, and there are extremely long, seemingly banal exchanges, such as that between Miriam and her sisters before she leaves home. Whilst these can seem gratuitous they are in harmony with the detail in the rest of the narrative. Of course, for a stream of consciousness work to be readable by an audience, there must be editing of some sort, and should an author wish to steer the prose in a particular direction, perhaps to highlight issues such as gender relations, as much care must go into one of these novels as would be given to writing in any other genre. In that sense, *Pilgrimage* is by no means an unstructured work. The present day commentator George H. Thompson summarises *Pilgrimage* thus:

> '...*Pilgrimage* is subjective, autobiographical, realistic, rich in superfluous detail but, in its choice of moments, in time highly selective, and in its elaboration of experience severely compressed.'

Modernist was a term that Richardson could accept more readily for her work. As a modernist writer she is, as academic Micki Nyman points out, in the same group of authors as Virginia Woolf, Hilda Doolittle ('HD') and, Radclyffe Hall, as female authors that attempted to bring female consciousness and desires to the forefront of their narratives. Not everyone appreciated Richardson's focus on the female perspective — the renowned critic Queenie Leavis denounced the feminist slant as 'a pervasive weakness', modernist or not.

Many readers speculate how similar is the character and life of Miriam Henderson, the protagonist of *Pilgrimage*, to the author. It is certainly possible to build a timeline for *Pilgrimage* that largely mirrors Richardson's life in the years covered by *Pilgrimage*; for example, *Pointed Roofs* covers the period 2 March 1893, to the end of July of that year, when both author and character were in their late teens. It is obvious that not just the chronology, but key events mirror Richardson's life experiences; yet, are Richardson and Miriam alike as personalities? One can say with confidence that both Richardson and Miriam have a fine intellect, curious minds, and can absorb large amounts of text quickly and analytically; both have an unconventional (for the times) view of society, gender, and certainly when it comes to the recording of observations; both are uncompromising. Richardson demands of her reader a close concentration and a willingness to suspend conventional literary expectations, and Miriam is also exacting, hyper-critical and uncompromising in her connections with people — perhaps even somewhat depressive despite (or even because of) her determined rebuttal of a conventional life pattern as laid out for a female by the expectations of the times. Both Richardson and Miriam are 'free spirits' who value their independence but will choose to take a lover or a partner when it suits them; it could be said that the intimacy described of female-female friendships and more intimate relationships, this latter hinted at rather than explicitly described, reflects

Richardson's observations of the lives of artists, writers and activists in Bloomsbury, where she lived for years, but it is not clear whether or not Richardson ever had any same sex love affairs herself.

Miriam Henderson, the main character in the *Pilgrimage* series, known as Mim to her family, is seventeen years old when the first book opens. She is reflecting on her imminent journey abroad to take up a teaching role in a German school, in those familiar hours when everything is prepared, but one's travels have yet to begin; a strange time of 'suspension'. It is dusk, and we see her comfortable suburban home entirely through her eyes with cinematic detail, almost a 'virtual reality' immersion. A piano organ is playing in the street and this takes her mind to memories of her own school; then she thinks of a young man she admired, sunny days, and all the comforts of her life. However, that is the past, and the following day she will begin a new life away from all that is familiar, but not necessarily a better life; to a young girl, 'There was nothing to look forward to now but governessing and old age,' a quiet and uneventful existence devoid of romance and exhilaration.

This image painted by the author of a blissful family and home life is soon shattered by the revelation that the family is in serious financial difficulties, which makes Miriam's departure for her new employment all the more necessary. Yet still she regrets what she has to leave behind:

> 'No more all day bézique.... No more days in the West End.... No more matinées ... no more exhibitions ... no more A.B.C. teas ... no more insane times ... no more anything.'

Miriam's discontent is not just because of loss of home life and the familiar. She feels she is being transported into a world of smug, self satisfied women with whom she has no rapport, a sentiment encouraged by her father, who 'knew how hateful all the world of women were and despised them [but] he never included her with them.' Miriam is also the most attractive female of the family and that is why her father will chaperone her on her journey to Hanover, where she will live and work.

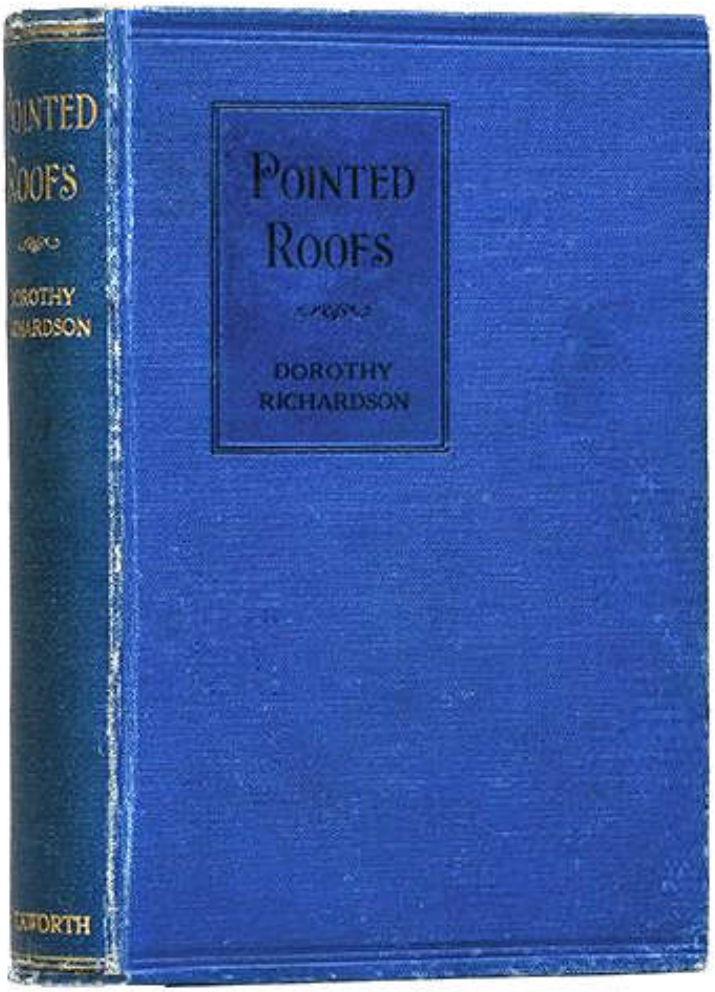
The crossing to Holland is passed over in the story, and we meet Miriam and her father resuming their journey overland to Hanover. Miriam is in turn excited and terrified. She does not know how to teach English or where to begin, and part of her wants to run back to the familiarity of England and home life. Yet, she is also drawn to the bustle and confidence of the people around her, and her sense of adventure grows: '...she felt that there was freedom somewhere at hand. Whatever happened she would hold to that.'

Miriam settles into her new life quickly and we learn about her new charges, young girls of many different nationalities; Miriam tries new and different foods, and is deeply touched by a hug from one young German pupil on her first day which affects her so deeply that she recalls it many times in the days to come as a source of comfort. The curriculum, such as it is, is typical of a boarding school of its type — music, needlework, languages and so on. She notes differences in manner and approach in the different nationalities there — for example, the two English pupils were typical in their English stiffness and self-consciousness, until they played the piano, which they did with a looseness and bravura that the German tutor had instilled into them — something an English music teacher would not have been able to do.

Miriam quickly learns to regard the Germans as 'wonderful'. Her first conversation with the principal, Fraulein Pfaff, is brief, and to Miriam, terrifying, leaving her gauche and tongue-tied, and although she is apprehensive when taking her first class, it goes well and her pupils are polite and well behaved. Some aspects of communal life are not to her liking, however, such as the hair washing and bath time, but she

must learn to adapt — she is there for the foreseeable future. So her new life unfolds — Saturday is letter writing day; visits to a German church; and her observations of the Germans and their nation lead her to a fascination for, and interest in, the place she now calls home. How will her new life unfold in the months, even years, to come?

This is an entertaining volume as an opener for the series and it attracted much interest — popularity seems a trite word to use for it — but this and the volumes to follow are not easy books to read and they become more complex, experimental and indeed in places obscure, as this self-conscious personal journey continues. Richardson knew this, and was unrepentant. In a letter to one Flora Coates in January 1944, she explains, 'I freely admit the demand for an equivalent degree of concentration from the reader', and adds that she thought a précis of previous volumes would help a reader who started perhaps half way through the series, but 'the handing out of direct knowledge is…excluded' as it would in a sense make life too easy for her audience. Richardson would certainly have approved of academic George H Thompson's description of her work as 'an exacting narrative'.



The first edition

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POINTED ROOFS ·

· PILGRIMAGE ·

BY

DOROTHY M. RICHARDSON

LONDON
DUCKWORTH & CO.
3 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN
1915

The first edition's title page

INTRODUCTIONBY J. D. BERESFORD.

I HAVE READ “Pointed Roofs” three times.

The first time it came to me with its original wardrobe, a different dress for every mood; and in some places the handwriting of the manuscript clothed the thought with the ragged urgency of haste; and in others it wore an aspect incredibly delicate and neat, as if the writer had caressed each word before setting it down. I decided then that “Pointed Roofs” was realism, was objective. The influence of the varying moods I inferred from the vagaries of the holograph, inclined me to believe that the book presented the picture of a conscious artist, outside her material, judging, balancing, selecting.

The second time the novel came to me in typescript, in the formal, respectable dress of the applicant for a clerkship. It was there to answer questions; willing to be examined but replying always in a single manner. I changed my opinion after that interview. I thought that I had a clearer sight of the method and I swung round to a flat contradiction of my earlier judgment. This, I thought, is the most subjective thing I have ever read. The writer of this has gone through life with eyes that looked inward; she has known every person and experience solely by her own sensations and reactions.

And, now, I have read “Pointed Roofs” a third time in the form of a printed book; suddenly ranged alongside all the other books, little and great, and challenging comparison with them. I am no longer prejudiced by the guise in which it comes; I have been able, within my limits, to judge it as I would judge any other novel....

That final judgment I hesitate to set down in any detail. I do not wish to annoy either critic or public by a superabundant eulogy. I have too great faith in the worth of Miss Richardson’s work to fall into that extravagant praise which might well be understood as the easy escape of the bored friend taking the line of least resistance — mainly in clichés.

But there is another side to the question due to the fact that “Pointed Roofs” cannot be ranged either with its contemporaries or with the classics in this kind. And I have volunteered to prepare the mind of the reader for something that he or she might fail otherwise properly to understand, even as I, myself, twice failed.

This statement need not provoke alarm. The possible failure to understand will not arise from any turgid obscurity of style, but only from a peculiar difference which is, perhaps, the mark of a new form in fiction. In the past, we have attempted a separation of two main categories in fiction, and in most cases the description of realist or romantic has been applicable enough. Neither can be applied in their ordinary usage to Miss Richardson. The romantic floats on the surface of his imaginings, observing life from an intellectual distance through glasses specially adapted to his own idiosyncrasies of taste. The realist wades waist deep into the flood of humanity, and goes his way peering and choosing, expressing himself in the material of his choice and not in any distortion of its form.

Miss Richardson is, I think, the first novelist who has taken the final plunge; who has neither floated nor waded, but gone head under and become a very part of the human element she has described.

The “Miriam” of this book may be defined as a keen observer, even as I defined her after reading that holograph. Or she may figure, as I saw her in typescript, as a blind creature feeling her way with sensitive fingers and reading the unseen by the emotions of her mind. The very contradiction implies that the truth will be found in neither verdict. Miriam is, indeed, one with life; and the unexpectedness, the unanalysable quality of that fact may annoy the superficial critic and prejudice him to the point of forcing “Pointed Roofs” into some hard-and-fast category.

And it is only that one peculiarity for which I wish to prepare the readers of this book. It is a new attitude towards fiction, and one that I could not hope to explain in an introduction — even if I could explain it at all; for explanation in this connexion would seem to imply a knowledge that only the mystics can faintly realise.

“Pointed Roofs” is, I hope, but the first of many volumes which will express the passage of Miriam through life; and I leave all further praise of it to those who may have the insight to comprehend it.

For myself, as I have said, I have read it three times; and presently I shall certainly read it again.

J. D. BERESFORD.

TO

WINIFRED RAY

CHAPTER I

1

MIRIAM LEFT THE gaslit hall and went slowly upstairs. The March twilight lay upon the landings, but the staircase was almost dark. The top landing was quite dark and silent. There was no one about. It would be quiet in her room. She could sit by the fire and be quiet and think things over until Eve and Harriett came back with the parcels. She would have time to think about the journey and decide what she was going to say to the Fräulein.

Her new Saratoga trunk stood solid and gleaming in the firelight. To-morrow it would be taken away and she would be gone. The room would be altogether Harriett's. It would never have its old look again. She evaded the thought and moved clumsily to the nearest window. The outline of the round bed and the shapes of the may-trees on either side of the bend of the drive were just visible. There was no escape for her thoughts in this direction. The sense of all she was leaving stirred uncontrollably as she stood looking down into the well-known garden.

Out in the road beyond the invisible lime-trees came the rumble of wheels. The gate creaked and the wheels crunched up the drive, slurring and stopping under the dining-room window.

It was the Thursday afternoon piano-organ, the one that was always in tune. It was early to-day.

She drew back from the window as the bass chords began thumping gently in the darkness. It was better that it should come now than later on, at dinner-time. She could get over it alone up here.

She went down the length of the room and knelt by the fireside with one hand on the mantel-shelf so that she could get up noiselessly and be lighting the gas if anyone came in.

The organ was playing "The Wearin' o' the Green."

It had begun that tune during the last term at school, in the summer. It made her think of rounders in the hot school garden, singing-classes in the large green room, all the class shouting "Gather *ro*ses while ye may," hot afternoons in the shady north room, the sound of turning pages, the hum of the garden beyond the sun-blinds, meetings in the sixth form study.... Lilla, with her black hair and the specks of bright amber in the brown of her eyes, talking about free-will.

She stirred the fire. The windows were quite dark. The flames shot up and shadows darted.

That summer, which still seemed near to her, was going to fade and desert her, leaving nothing behind. To-morrow it would belong to a world which would go on without her, taking no heed. There would still be blissful days. But she would not be in them.

There would be no more silent sunny mornings with all the day ahead and nothing to do and no end anywhere to anything; no more sitting at the open window in the dining-room, reading Lecky and Darwin and bound "Contemporary Reviews" with roses waiting in the garden to be worn in the afternoon, and Eve and Harriett somewhere about, washing blouses or copying waltzes from the library packet ... no more Harriett looking in at the end of the morning, rushing her off to the new grand

piano to play the "Mikado" and the "Holy Family" duets. The tennis-club would go on, but she would not be there. It would begin in May. Again there would be a white twinkling figure coming quickly along the pathway between the rows of holly-hocks every Saturday afternoon.

Why had he come to tea every Sunday — never missing a single Sunday — all the winter? Why did he say, "Play 'Abide with me,'" "Play 'Abide with me'" yesterday, if he didn't care? What was the good of being so quiet and saying nothing? Why didn't he say "Don't go" or "When are you coming back?" Eve said he looked perfectly miserable.

There was nothing to look forward to now but governessing and old age. Perhaps Miss Gilkes was right.... Get rid of men and muddles and have things just ordinary and be happy. "Make up your mind to be happy. You can be *perfectly* happy without anyone to think about...." Wearing that large cameo brooch — long, white, flat-fingered hands and that quiet little laugh.... The piano-organ had reached its last tune. In the midst of the final flourish of notes the door flew open. Miriam got quickly to her feet and felt for matches.

2

Harriett came in waggling a thin brown paper parcel.

"Did you hear the Intermezzo? What a dim religious! We got your old collars."

Miriam took the parcel and subsided on to the hearthrug, looking with a new curiosity at Harriett's little, round, firelit face, smiling tightly between the rim of her hard felt hat and the bright silk bow beneath her chin.

A footstep sounded on the landing and there was a gentle tap on the open door.

"Oh, come in, Eve — bring some matches. Are the collars piquet, Harry?"

"No, they hadn't got piquet, but they're the plain shape you like. You may thank us they didn't send you things with little rujabiba frills."

Eve came slenderly down the room and Miriam saw with relief that her outdoor things were off. As the gas flared up she drew comfort from her scarlet serge dress, and the soft crimson cheek and white brow of the profile raised towards the flaring jet.

"What are things like downstairs?" she said, staring into the fire.

"I don't know," said Eve. She sighed thoughtfully and sank into a carpet chair under the gas bracket. Miriam glanced at her troubled eyes.

"Pater's only just come in. I think things are pretty rotten," declared Harriett from the hearthrug.

"Isn't it ghastly — for all of us?" Miriam felt treacherously outspoken. It was a relief to be going away. She knew that this sense of relief made her able to speak. "It's never knowing that's so awful. Perhaps he'll get some more money presently and things'll go on again. Fancy mother having it always, ever since we were babies."

"Don't, Mim."

"All right. I won't tell you the words he said, how he put it about the difficulty of getting the money for my things."

"*Don't*, Mim."

Miriam's mind went back to the phrase and her mother's agonised face. She felt utterly desolate in the warm room.

"I wish *I'd* got brains," chirped Harriett, poking the fire with the toe of her boot.

"So you have — more than me."

"Oh — reely."

"You know, I *know* girls, that things are as absolutely ghastly this time as they can possibly be and that something must be done.... But you know it's perfectly fearful to face that old school when it comes to the point."

"Oh, my dear, it'll be lovely," said Eve; "all new and jolly, and think how you will enjoy those lectures, you'll simply love them."

"It's all very well to say that. You know you'd feel ill with fright."

"It'll be all right — for *you* — once you're there."

Miriam stared into the fire and began to murmur shamefacedly.

"No more all day bézique.... No more days in the West End.... No more matinées ... no more exhibitions ... no more A.B.C. teas ... no more insane times ... no more anything."

"What about holidays? You'll enjoy them all the more."

"I shall be staid and governessy."

"You mustn't. You must be frivolous."

Two deeply-burrowing dimples fastened the clean skin tightly over the bulge of Miriam's smile.

"And marry a German professor," she intoned blithely.

"Don't — don't for *goodney* say that before mother, Miriam."

"D'you mean she minds me going?"

"My *dear*!"

Why did Eve use her cross voice? — stupid ... "for goodness' sake," not "for goodney." Silly of Eve to talk slang....

"All right. I won't."

"Won't marry a German professor, or won't tell mother, do you mean?... Oo — Crumbs! My old cake in the oven!" Harriett hopped to the door.

"Funny Harriett taking to cookery. It doesn't seem a bit like her."

"She'll have to do something — so shall I, I s'pose."

"It seems awful."

"We shall simply have to."

"It's awful," said Miriam, shivering.

"Poor old girl. I expect you feel horrid because you're tired with all the packing and excitement."

"Oh well, anyhow, it's simply ghastly."

"You'll feel better to-morrow."

"D'you think I shall?"

"Yes — you're so strong," said Eve, flushing and examining her nails.

"How d'you mean?"

"Oh — all sorts of ways."

"What way?"

"Oh — well — you arranging all this — I mean answering the advertisement and settling it all."

"Oh well, you know you backed me up."

"Oh yes, but other things...."

"What?"

"Oh, I was thinking about you having no religion."

"Oh."

"You must have such splendid principles to keep you straight," said Eve, and cleared her throat, "I mean, you must have such a lot in you."

"Me?"

"Yes, of course."

"I don't know where it comes in. What have I done?"

"Oh, well, it isn't so much what you've done — you have such a good time.... Everybody admires you and all that ... you know what I mean — you're so clever.... You're always in the right."

"That's just what everybody hates!"

"Well, my dear, I wish I had your mind."

"You needn't," said Miriam.

"You're all right — you'll come out all right. You're one of those strong-minded people who have to go through a period of doubt."

"But, my *dear*," said Miriam grateful and proud, "I feel such a humbug. You know when I wrote that letter to the Fräulein I said I was a member of the Church. I know what it will be, I shall have to take the English girls to church."

"Oh, well, you won't mind that."

"It will make me simply ill — I could *never* describe to you," said Miriam, with her face aglow, "what it is to me to hear some silly man drone away with an undistributed middle term."

"They're not all like that."

"Oh, well, then it will be ignoratio elenchi or argumentum ad hominem — —"

"Oh, yes, but they're not the *service*."

"The service I can't make head or tail of — think of the Athanasian."

"Yes." Eve stirred uneasily and began to execute a gentle scale with her tiny tightly-knit blue and white hand upon her knee.

"It'll be ghastly," continued Miriam, "not having anyone to pour out to — I've told you such a lot these last few days."

"Yes, hasn't it been funny? I seem to know you all at once so much better."

"Well — don't you think I'm perfectly hateful?"

"No. I admire you more than ever. I think you're simply splendid."

"Then you simply don't know me."

"Yes I do. And you'll be able to write to me."

Eve, easily weeping, hugged her and whispered, "You mustn't. I can't see you break down — don't — don't — don't. We can't be blue your last night.... Think of nice things.... There *will* be nice things again ... there will, will, will, *will*."

Miriam pursed her lips to a tight bunch and sat twisting her long thickish fingers. Eve stood up in her tears. Her smile and the curves of her mouth were unchanged by her weeping, and the crimson had spread and deepened a little in the long oval of her face. Miriam watched the changing crimson. Her eyes went to and fro between it and the neatly pinned masses of brown hair.

"I'm going to get some hot water," said Eve, "and we'll make ourselves glorious."

Miriam watched her as she went down the long room — the great oval of dark hair, the narrow neck, the narrow back, tight, plump little hands hanging in profile, white, with a purple pad near the wrist.

3

When Miriam woke the next morning she lay still with closed eyes. She had dreamed that she had been standing in a room in the German school and the staff had crowded round her, looking at her. They had dreadful eyes — eyes like the eyes of hostesses she remembered, eyes she had seen in trains and 'buses, eyes from the old school. They came and stood and looked at her, and saw her as she was, without courage, without funds or good clothes or beauty, without charm or interest, without even the

skill to play a part. They looked at her with loathing. “Board and lodging — privilege to attend Masters’ lectures and laundry (body-linen only).” That was all she had thought of and clutched at — all along, since first she read the Fräulein’s letter. Her keep and the chance of learning ... and Germany — Germany, das deutsche Vaterland — Germany, all woods and mountains and tenderness — Hermann and Dorothea in the dusk of a happy village.

And it would really be those women, expecting things of her. They would be so affable at first. She had been through it a million times — all her life — all eternity. They would smile those hateful women’s smiles — smirks — self-satisfied smiles as if everybody were agreed about everything. She loathed women. They always smiled. All the teachers had at school, all the girls, but Lilla. Eve did ... maddeningly sometimes ... Mother ... it was the only funny horrid thing about her. Harriett didn’t.... Harriett laughed. She was strong and hard somehow....

Pater knew how hateful all the world of women were and despised them.

He never included her with them; or only sometimes when she pretended, or he didn’t understand....

Someone was saying “Hi!” a gurgling muffled shout, a long way off.

She opened her eyes. It was bright morning. She saw the twist of Harriett’s body lying across the edge of the bed. With a gasp she flung herself over her own side. Harry, old Harry, jolly old Harry had remembered the Grand Ceremonial. In a moment her own head hung, her long hair flinging back on to the floor, her eyes gazing across under the bed at the reversed snub of Harriett’s face. It was flushed in the midst of the wiry hair which stuck out all round it but did not reach the floor. “Hi!” they gurgled solemnly, “Hi.... Hi!” shaking their heads from side to side. Then their four frilled hands came down and they flumped out of the high bed.

They performed an uproarious toilet. It seemed so safe up there in the bright bare room. Miriam’s luggage had been removed. It was away somewhere in the house; far away and unreal and unfelt as her parents somewhere downstairs, and the servants away in the basement getting breakfast and Sarah and Eve always incredible, getting quietly up in the next room. Nothing was real but getting up with old Harriett in this old room.

She revelled in Harriett’s delicate buffoonery (“voluntary incongruity” she quoted to herself as she watched her) — the titles of some of the books on Harriett’s shelf, “Ungava; a Tale of the North,” “Grimm’s Fairy Tales,” “John Halifax,” “Swiss Family Robinson” made her laugh. The curtained recesses of the long room stretched away into space.

She went about dimpling and responding, singing and masquerading as her large hands did their work.

She intoned the titles on her own shelf — as a response to the quiet swearing and jesting accompanying Harriett’s occupations. “The Voyage of the Beeeeeeagle,” she sang “Scott’s Poetical *Works*.” Villette — Longfellow — Holy Bible *with* Apocrypha — Egmont ——

“Binks!” squealed Harriett daintily. “Yink grink binks.”

“Books!” she responded in a low tone, and flushed as if she had given Harriett an affectionate hug. “My rotten books....” She would come back, and read all her books more carefully. She had packed some. She could not remember which and why.

“Binks,” she said, and it was quite easy for them to crowd together at the little dressing-table. Harriett was standing in her little faded red moirette petticoat and a blue flannelette dressing-jacket brushing her wiry hair. Miriam reflected that she need no longer hate her for the set of her clothes round her hips. She caught sight of her

own faded jersey and stiff, shapeless black petticoat in the mirror. Harriett's "Hinde's" lay on the dressing-table, her own still lifted the skin of her forehead in suffused puckerings against the shank of each pin.

Unperceived, she eyed the tiny stiff plait of hair which stuck out almost horizontally from the nape of Harriett's neck, and watched her combing out the tightly-curled fringe standing stubbily out along her forehead and extending like a thickset hedge midway across the crown of her head, where it stopped abruptly against the sleekly-brushed longer strands which strained over her poll and disappeared into the plait.

"Your old wool'll be just right in Germany," remarked Harriett.

"Mm."

"You ought to do it in basket plaits like Sarah."

"I wish I could. I can't think how she does it."

"Ike spect it's easy enough."

"Mm."

"But you're all right, anyhow."

"Anyhow, it's no good bothering when you're plain."

"You're *not* plain."

Miriam looked sharply round.

"Go on, Gooby."

"You're not. You don't know. Granny said you'll be a bonny woman, and Sarah thinks you've got the best shape face and the best complexion of any of us, and cook was simply crying her eyes out last night and said you were the light of the house with your happy, pretty face, and mother said you're much too attractive to go about alone, and that's partly why Pater's going with you to Hanover, silly.... You're not plain," she gasped.

Miriam's amazement silenced her. She stood back from the mirror. She could not look into it until Harriett had gone. The phrases she had just heard rang in her head without meaning. But she knew she would remember all of them. She went on doing her hair with downcast eyes. She had seen Harriett vividly, and had longed to crush her in her arms and kiss her little round cheeks and the snub of her nose. Then she wanted her to be gone.

Presently Harriett took up a brooch and skated down the room, "Ta-ra-ra-la-eee-tee!" she carolled, "don't be long," and disappeared.

"I'm pretty," murmured Miriam, planting herself in front of the dressing-table. "I'm pretty — they like me — they *like* me. Why didn't I know?" She did not look into the mirror. "They all like me, *me*."

The sound of the breakfast-bell came clanging up through the house. She hurried to her side of the curtained recess. Hanging there were her old red stockinette jersey and her blue skirt ... never again ... just once more ... she could change afterwards. Her brown, heavy best dress with puffed and gauged sleeves and thick gauged and gathered boned bodice was in her hand. She hung it once more on its peg and quickly put on her old things. The jersey was shiny with wear. "You darling old things," she muttered as her arms slipped down the sleeves.

The door of the next room opened quietly and she heard Sarah and Eve go decorously downstairs. She waited until their footsteps had died away and then went very slowly down the first flight, fastening her belt. She stopped at the landing window, tucking the frayed end of the petersham under the frame of the buckle ... they were all downstairs, liking her. She could not face them. She was too excited and too shy.... She had never once thought of their "feeling" her going away ... saying

good-bye to each one ... all minding and sorry — even the servants. She glanced fearfully out into the garden, seeing nothing. Someone called up from the breakfast-room doorway, “Mim — my!” How surprised Mr. Bart had been when he discovered that they themselves never knew whose voice it was of all four of them unless you saw the person, “but yours is really richer” ... it was cheek to say that.

“Mim — my!”

Suddenly she longed to be gone — to have it all over and be gone.

She heard the kak-kak of Harriett’s wooden heeled slippers across the tiled hall. She glanced down the well of the staircase. Harriett was mightily swinging the bell, scattering a little spray of notes at each end of her swing.

With a frightened face Miriam crept back up the stairs. Violently slamming the bedroom door, “I’m a-comin’ — I’m a-comin’,” she shouted and ran downstairs.

End of Sample