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[BY REQUEST.]

The Widow's Lament.

The sunshine is bright on the valley and stream, And nature, all blooming, exults in the beam; But darkly the willows and cypresses shade The solitude sad where my husband is laid. I went to the home where my children were born, But widowhood view'd it as lone and forlorn; Sweet children were there, and the parents were blest, But I was the stranger's disconsolate guest. The husband seem'd ever to gaze on his wife, And sweetly she smil'd on the joy of her life; At the breast was an infant; and, shouting with glee, A blue-eyed boy danc'd on the fatherly knee. I envied them not, but I could not forget, That there my own husband and children had sat; And, struggling with sorrow, I mentally said, My babes are all scatter'd, my husband is dead! The mother was kind, and she strove to allay The sorrow that's wasting my spirit's away; And I could but look up through the lovely sky, And pray that her eyelids might ever be dry. Ah! sunshine may brighten the valley and stream, And beautiful nature exult in the beam; But darkly the willows and cypresses shade The solitude sad where my husband is laid. PALEMON.

Following the Fashions.

From the Lady's Book for March BY T. S. ARTHUR. 'What is this?' asked Henry Grove of his sister Mary, lifting, as he spoke, a print from the centre-table. 'A fashion plate,' was the quiet reply. 'A fashion plate? What in the name of wonder are you doing with a fashion plate?' 'To see what the fashions are.' 'And what then?' 'To follow them, of course.' 'Mary, is it possible you are so weak? I thought better of my sister.' 'Explain yourself, Mr. Censor,' Mary replied, with an arch look, and a manner perfectly self-possessed. 'There is nothing I despise so much as a heartless woman of fashion.' 'Such an individual is, certainly, not much to be admired, Henry. But there is a vast difference, you must recollect, between a lady who regards the prevailing mode of dress, and a heartless woman, be she attired in the latest style, or in the costume of the times of good queen Bess. A fashionably dressed woman need not, of necessity, be heartless.' 'O no, of course not; nor did I mean to say so. But it is very certain, to my mind, that any one who follows the fashions, cannot be very sound in the upper story. And where there is not much head, it seems to me there is never a superabundance of heart.' 'Quite a philosopher!' 'You needn't try to beat me off by ridicule, Mary. I am in earnest.' 'What about?' 'In condemning this blind slavery to fashion.' 'You follow the fashions.' 'No, Mary, I do not.' 'Your looks very much belie you then.' 'Mary!' 'Nonsense! Don't look so grave. What I say is true. You follow the fashions as much as I do.' 'I am sure I never examined a plate of fashions in my life.' 'If you have not, your tailor has for you, many a time.' 'I don't believe a word of it. I don't have my clothes cut in the height of the fashion. They are made plain and comfortable. There is nothing about them that is put on merely because it is fashionable.' 'I beg your pardon, sir.' 'It is a fact.' 'Why do you have your lappets made to roll three button-holes instead of two. There's

father's old coat, made; I don't know when, that rolls but two.' 'Because, I suppose, it's now the fashion.' 'Ah, exactly! Didn't I get you there, nicely?' 'No, but Mary, that's the tailor's business, not mine.' 'Of course—you must trust to him to make your clothes according to the fashion, while I choose to see if the fashions are just such as suit my stature, shape, and complexion, that I may adopt them fully, or deviate from them, in a safe and rational manner. So there is this difference between us; you follow the fashions blindly, and I with judgment and discrimination.' 'Indeed, Mary, you are too bad.' 'Do I speak any thing but the truth?' 'I should be very sorry, indeed, if your deductions were true in regard to my following the fashions so blindly, if indeed at all.' 'But don't you follow them?' 'I never think about them.' 'If you don't some how or other, you manage to be always about even with the prevailing modes. I don't see any difference between your dress and that of other young men.' 'I don't care a fig for the fashions, Mary!' replied Henry, speaking with some warmth. 'So you say.' 'And so I mean.' 'Then why do you wear fashionable clothes?' 'I don't wear fashionable clothes—that is—I have figured silk or cut velvet buttons on your coat, I believe. Let me see? Yes. Now lasting buttons are more durable, and I remember very well when you wore them. But they are out of fashion! And here is your collar turned down over your black silk stock, (where, by the by, have all the white cravats gone, that were a few years ago so fashionable?) as smooth as a puritan's! Don't you remember how much trouble you used to have sometimes to get your collar to stand up just so? Ah, brother, you are an incorrigible follower of the fashions!' 'But, Mary, it is a great deal less trouble to turn the collar over the stock.' 'I know it is, now that it is fashionable to do so.' 'It is, though, in fact.' 'Really?' 'Yes, really.' 'But when it was fashionable to have the collar standing, you were very willing to take the trouble.' 'You would not have me affect singularity, sister?' 'Me? No, indeed! I would have you continue to follow the fashions as you are now doing. I would have you dress like other people. And there is one other thing that I would like to see in you.' 'What is that?' 'I would like to see you willing to allow me the same privilege.' 'You have managed your case so ingeniously, Mary, her brother now said, 'as to have beaten me in argument, though I am very sure that I am right, and you in error in regard to the general principles. I hold it to be morally wrong to follow the fashions. They are unreasonable and arbitrary in their requirements, and it is a species of miserable folly, to be led about by them. I have conversed a good deal with old aunt Abigail on the subject, and she perfectly agrees with me. Her opinions, you will not, of course, treat with indifference?' 'No, not my aunt's. But for all that, I do not think that either she or uncle Absalom is perfectly orthodox on all matters.' 'I think that they can both prove to you beyond a doubt that it is a most egregious folly to be ever changing with the fashions.' 'And I think that I can prove to them that they are not at all uninfluenced by the fickle goddess.' 'Do so, and I will give up the point. Do so, and I will avow myself an advocate of fashion.' 'As you are now in act. But I accept your challenge, even though the odds of age and numbers are against me. I am very much mistaken, indeed, if I cannot maintain my side of the argument, at least to my own satisfaction.' 'You may do that, probably; but certainly not to ours.' 'We will see,' was the laughing reply. It was a few evenings after, that Henry Grove and his sister called in to see uncle Absalom and aunt Abigail, who were old-school religionists, and rather ultra puritanical in their habits and notions. Mary could not but feel, as she came into their presence, that it would be rowing against wind and tide to maintain her points with them—confirmed as they were in their own view of things, and with the respect due to age to give weight to their opinions. Nevertheless, she determined resolutely to maintain her own side of the question, and to use all the weapons, offensive and defensive, that came to her hand. She was a light-hearted girl, with a high flow of spirits, and a quick and discriminating mind. All these were in

her favor. The contest was not long delayed, for Henry, feeling that he had powerful auxiliaries on his side, was eager to see his own positions triumph, as he was sure that they must. The welcome words that greeted their entrance had not long been said, before he asked, turning to his aunt, 'What do you think I found on Mary's table the other day, aunt Abigail?' 'I don't know, Henry. What was it?' 'You will be surprised to hear—a fashion-plate. And that is not all. By her own confession, she was studying it in order to conform to the prevailing style of dress. Hadn't you a better opinion of her?' 'I certainly had,' was aunt Abigail's half smiling, half grave reply. 'Why, what harm is there in following the fashions, aunt?' Mary asked. 'A great deal, my dear. It is following after the vanities of this life. The apostle tells us not to be conformed to this world.' 'I know he does; but what has that to do with the fashions? He doesn't say that you shall not wear fashionable garments; at least, I never saw the passage.' 'But that is clearly what he means, Mary.' 'I doubt it. Let us hear what he farther says; perhaps that will guide us to a truer meaning?' 'He says, 'But be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.' That elucidates and gives force to what goes before.' 'So I think, clearly upsetting your position. The apostle evidently has reference to a deeper work than mere external nonconformity in regard to the cut of the coat, or the fashion of the dress. Be ye not conformed to this world in its selfish principles and maxims—be ye not as the world, lovers of self more than lovers of God—but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds. That is the way I understand him.' 'Then you understand him wrong, Mary,' uncle Absalom spoke up. 'If he had meant that he would have said it in plain terms.' 'And so he has, it seems to me. But I am not disposed to excuse my adherence to fashion upon any passage that allows of two interpretations. I argue for it upon rational grounds.' 'Fashion and rationality! The idea is absurd, Mary!' uncle Absalom said with warmth. 'They are antipodes.' 'Not by any means, uncle, and I think I can make it plain to you.' Uncle Absalom shook his head, and aunt Abigail fidgeted in her chair. 'You remember the celebrated John Wesley—the founder of that once unfashionable people, the Methodists?' Mary asked. 'O, yes.' 'What would you think if I proved to you that he was an advocate of fashion upon rational principles?' 'You can't do it.' 'I can. On one occasion, it is related of him, that he called upon a tailor to make him a coat. 'How will you have it made?' asked the tailor. 'O, make it like other people's,' was the reply. 'Will you have the sleeves in the new fashion?' 'I don't know, what is it?' 'They have been made very tight, you know, for some time,' the tailor said, 'but the newest fashion is loose sleeves.' 'Loose sleeves, ah! Well, they will be a great deal more comfortable than these. Make mine loose.' What do you think of that, uncle? Do you see no rationality there?' 'Yes, but Mary,' aunt Abigail replied, 'fashion and comfort hardly ever go together.' 'There you are mistaken, aunt. All fashionable dress-makers aim at producing garments comfortable to the wearers; and those fashions which are most comfortable, are most readily adopted by the largest numbers.' 'You certainly do not pretend to say, Mary,' Henry interposed, 'that all changes in fashion are improvements in comfort?' 'O, no, certainly not. Many, nay, most of the changes are unimportant in that respect.' 'And are the inventions and whims of fashion-makers,' added aunt Abigail with warmth. 'No doubt of it,' Mary readily admitted. 'And are you such a weak, foolish girl, as to adopt eagerly every trifling variation in fashion?' aunt Abigail continued. 'No, not eagerly, aunt.' 'But at all?' 'I adopt a great many, certainly for no other reason than because they are fashionable.' 'For shame, Mary, to make such an admission! I really thought better of you.' 'But don't you follow the fashions, aunt?' 'Why, Mary!' exclaimed both uncle Absalom and her brother, at once. 'Me follow the fashions, Mary!' broke in aunt Abigail, as soon as she could recover her breath, for the question struck her almost speechless. 'Me follow the fashions! Why, what can the girl mean?' 'I asked the question,' Mary said. 'And if you can't answer it, I can.' 'And how will you answer it, pray?' 'In the affirmative of course!' 'You are trifling, now, Mary,' uncle Absalom said, gravely.

'Indeed I am not, uncle. I can prove to her satisfaction and yours, too, that aunt Abigail is almost as much a follower of the fashions as I am.' 'For shame, child!' 'I can though, uncle; so prepare yourself to be convinced. Did you never see aunt wear a different shaped cap from the one she now has on?' 'O yes, I suppose so. I don't take much notice of such things. But I believe she has changed the pattern of her cap a good many times.' 'And what if I have, pray?' aunt Abigail asked, fidgeting uneasily. 'O, nothing, only that in doing so, you were following some new fashion,' replied Mary. 'It is no such thing!' aunt Abigail said. 'I can prove it.' 'You can't.' 'Yes I can, and I will. Don't you remember when the high crowns were worn?' 'Of course I do.' 'And you wore them, of course.' 'Well, suppose I did?' 'And then came the close, low-crowned cap. I remember the very time you adopted that fashion, and thought it so much more becoming than the great tower of lace on the back part of the head.' 'And so it was.' 'But why didn't you think so before?' Mary asked, looking archly into the face of her aunt. 'Why—because—because—' 'O, I can tell you, so you needn't search all over the world for a reason. It was because the high crowns were fashionable. Come out plain and aboveboard, and say so.' 'Indeed, and I won't say any such thing.' 'Then what was the reason?' 'Every body wore them, and their unsightly appearance had not been made apparent by contrast.' 'Exactly! They were fashionable. But when a new fashion laughed them out of countenance, you cast them aside, as I do an old fashion for a new one. Then came the quilled borders all around. Do you remember that change? And how in a little while after, the plain piece of lace over your forehead disappeared? Why was that, aunt Abigail? Was there no regard for fashion there? And now, at this very time, your cap is one that exhibits the latest and newest style for young ladies' caps. I could go on and prove to your satisfaction, or at least to my own, that you have followed the fashion almost as steadily as I have. But I have sufficiently made out my case. Don't you think so, Henry?' 'Thus appealed to, her brother, who had been surprised at the turn the conversation had taken, not expecting to see Mary carry the war home so directly as she had done, hardly knew how to reply. He, however, gave a reluctant 'Yes.' 'But there is some sense in your aunt's adoption of fashion,' uncle Absalom said. 'Though not much, it would seem, in yours, if you estimate fashion by use,' retorted Mary. 'What does the girl mean?' aunt Abigail asked in surprise. 'Of what use, uncle, are those two buttons on the back of your coat?' 'I am sure I don't know.' 'Then why do you wear them if you don't know their use, unless it be that you wish to be in the fashion? Then there are two more at the bottom of the skirt, half hid, half seen, as if they were ashamed to be found so much out of their place. Then, can you enlighten me as to the use of these two pieces of cloth here, called, I believe, flaps?' 'To give strength to that part of the coat I presume.' 'And yet it is only a year or two since it was the fashion to have no flaps at all. I do not remember ever to have seen a coat torn there, do you? It is no use, uncle—you might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion. And old people feel this as well as the young. They have their fashions, and we have ours, and they are as much the votaries of their peculiar modes as we are of ours. The only difference is, that, as our state of mind changes more rapidly, there is a corresponding and more rapid change in our fashions. You change as well as we do—but slower.' 'How could you talk to uncle Absalom, and aunt Abigail as you did?' Henry Grove said to his sister, as they walked slowly home together. 'Didn't I make out my point? Didn't I prove that they too were votaries of the fickle goddess?' 'I think you did, in a measure.' 'And in a good big measure too. So give up your point, as you promised, and confess yourself an advocate of fashion.' 'I don't see clearly how I can do that, notwithstanding all that has passed to-night; for I do not rationally perceive the use of all these changes in dress.' 'I am not certain that I can enlighten you fully on the subject; but think that I may, perhaps in a degree, if you will allow my views

their proper weight in your mind.' 'I will try to do so; but shall not promise to be convinced.' 'No matter. Convinced or not convinced, you will still be carried along by the current. As to the primary cause of the change in fashion, it strikes me that it is one of the visible effects of that process of change ever going on in the human mind. The fashion of dress that prevails may not be the true exponent of the internal and invisible states, because they must necessarily be modified in various ways by the interests and false tastes of such individuals as promulgate them. Still, this does not affect the primary cause.' 'Granting your position to be true, Mary, which I am not fully prepared to admit or deny—why should we blindly follow these fashions?' 'We need not blindly. For my part, I am sure that I do not blindly follow them.' 'You do, when you adopt a fashion without thinking it becoming.' 'That I never do.' 'But, surely, you do not pretend to say that all fashions are becoming?' 'All that prevail to any extent, appear so, during the time of their prevalence, unless they involve an improper exposure of the person, or are injurious to health.' 'That is singular.' 'But is it not true?' 'Perhaps it is: But how do you account for it?' 'On the principle that there are both external and internal causes at work, modifying the mind's perceptions of the appropriate and the beautiful.' 'Mostly external I should think, such as a desire to be in the fashion, etc.' 'That feeling has its influence no doubt, and operates very strongly.' 'But is it a right feeling?' 'It is right or wrong, according to the end in view. If fashion be followed from no higher view than a selfish love of being admired, then the feeling is wrong.' 'Can we follow fashion with any other end?' 'Answer the question yourself. You follow the fashions.' 'I think but little about them, Mary.' 'And yet you dress very much like other people who do.' 'That may be so. The reason is, I do not wish to be singular.' 'Why?' 'For this reason. A man who affects any singularity of dress or manners, loses his true influence in society. People begin to think that there must be within, a mind not truly balanced, and therefore do not suffer his opinions, no matter how sound, to have their true weight.' 'A very strong and just argument, why we should adopt prevailing usages and fashions, if not immoral or injurious to health. They are the badges by which we are known as one of the social mass around us—diplomas which give to our opinions their legitimate value. I could present this subject in many other points of view. But it would be of little avail, if you are determined not to be convinced.' 'I am not so determined, Mary. What you have already said, greatly modifies my view of the subject. I shall, at least, not ridicule your adherence to fashion, if I do not give much thought to it myself.' 'I will present one more view. A right attention to dress looks to the development of that which is appropriate and beautiful to the eye. This is a universal benefit. For no one can look upon a truly beautiful object in nature or art, without having his mind correspondingly elevated and impressed with beautiful images, and these do not pass away like spectrum, but remain ever after more or less distinct, bearing with them an elevating influence upon the whole character. Changes in fashion, so far as they present new and beautiful forms, new arrangements, and new and appropriate combinations of colors, are the dictates of a true taste, and so far do they tend to benefit society.' 'But fashion is not always so directed by true taste.' 'A just remark. And likewise a reason why all who have a right appreciation of the truly beautiful, should give some attention to the prevailing fashions in dress, and endeavor to correct errors, and develop the true and the beautiful here as in other branches of art.'

The Careless Couple.

JENNY is poor, and I am poor, Yet we will wed—so say no more; And should the bairns you mention come, As few that marry but have some, No doubt but Heaven will stand our friend, And bread as well as children send. So fares the hen, in farmer's yard, To live alone she finds it hard; I've known her weary every claw In search of corn amongst the straw; But when in quest of nicer food, She clucks amongst her chirping brood; With joy I've seen that self-same hen That scratch'd for one, could scratch for ten: These are the thoughts which make me willing To take my girl without a shilling; And for the self-same cause, d'ye see, JESSY's resolv'd to marry me!