

Cornhill Heroines Accepted and Rejected

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The first three decades of novels in the *Cornhill Magazine* (1859—1887) take us (among major novelists) from Thackeray, Trollope and Mrs Gaskell to Hardy, Meredith and Gissing and (among minor ones) from Charles Lever and Margaret Oliphant to James Payne and Rider Haggard. During the period there are only slight changes in the social background against which the novels are set, but there is a discernible change, the greatest of the twenty-eight year span, in the presentation of women characters. This is true of both major and minor novelists. The women of the early *Cornhill* novels are inextricably caught in a pattern of dependence on men in order to ensure their future. However, by the end of this short period in the novels published in the periodical or rejected for publication by the editors there is a steady progression towards heroines confident of their personal abilities and in the reality of practical and intellectual independence.

The *Cornhill Magazine* was unique among 19th century British periodicals in having published at least one novel by all the leading mid and late Victorian novelists with the exception of Dickens, who only serialized in his own periodicals, and the Bronte sisters who did not serialize at all. The first number came out in 1859 when mid-century prosperity was still at its height, the last number to retain the periodical's original red binding for six monthly numbers with its illustrations of the four seasons was published in 1888 when the late Victorian period had already begun. This span of almost three decades takes us, among *Cornhill* novelists, from Thackeray and Trollope to Hardy, Meredith and Gissing, and among minor writers from Charles Lever and Margaret Oliphant to George Black, James Payne and Rider Haggard.

During the period there is little change in the social background against which novels are played out, but there is a discernible change, perhaps the greatest single one of the twenty-eight years, in the presentation of women characters. The Victorian woman was changing in her attitude to herself and to life; and the

attitude of society and men towards her was changing also. The result, in terms of the novel, is that one can trace an increasing sense of emotional independence among women, a growing feeling among them of their own worth as independent human beings and their right to assert that independence. Bound up with this are beginnings of insecurity or at least of a changing pattern in the family. These things are steadily apparent, although with the exception of one of Meredith's heroines there is no openly "progressive" woman among the *Cornhill* heroines, and not one who has been given the benefits of higher education. We can appreciate the kind of change which was taking place if we contrast more closely the character and attitude of some of the women of the novels published in, or associated with, the magazine.

The *Cornhill* novels by major novelists, accepted and rejected, that come into consideration in this respect are: Trollope's *Small House at Allington* (serialized in *Cornhill* 1862—1864); Meredith's *Beauchamp's Career* (rejected for serialization by George Smith as "not good" for the periodical in spite of the fact that Meredith had successfully serialized there *Harry Richmond*); Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* (serialized throughout 1874), *The Hand of Ethelberta* (serialized 1875—1876) and *The Return of the Native* (rejected for serialization by Leslie Stephen, then editor of *Cornhill* because he feared that relations between Wildeve, Eustacia and Tomasin might be dangerous for a family magazine); Gissing's *A Life's Morning* (serialized through 1888). Relevant novels by minor novelists are: Sabine Baring Gould's *Court Royal* (serialized 1885—1886); William Black's *White Wings* (serialized 1879—1880); Ashe King's *Love the Debt* (serialized 1881—1882); and Rider Haggard's *Jess* (serialized 1886—1887).

To take the first and last published of these — Lily Dale of *The Small House at Allington* and Cecilia Halkett and Jenny Denham of *Beauchamp's Career* are all independent minded, fully rounded characters, and only eleven years separate the date of volume publication of the two (1864 and 1875). Yet Lily Dale and her sister Bell of Trollope's novel, and Cecilia Halkett and Jenny Denham of Meredith's live in different mental worlds. Away to the other side of the Dale sisters are Thackeray's Charlotte Baynes from *Philip and His Way Through the World* (serialized in *Cornhill* 1861—1862) and the heroines of Elizabeth Gaskell's *Wives and Daughters* (serialized *Cornhill* 1864—1866). Far to the other side of Meredith's heroines stand Bathsheba Everdene, Ethelberta and Eustacia Vye of Hardy's novels and Emily Hood and Beatrice Redwing of Gissing's *A Life's Morning*. While somewhere between the two is the puzzled figure of George Eliot's Romola (serialized *Cornhill* 1862—1862).

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One of the things which early and continually disgusted Trollope about the society around him was the treatment of women as a marketable commodity whose price could be accurately gauged according to rank and wealth.

The Small House at Allington is a variation on the theme of marriage, love and money. Trollope set out to show in the character of Lily Dale a girl who was natural, open and affectionate, and who was quite free from the taint of marriage

for anything but honest love, partly because she was not high enough in social position or wealth to be attractive for anything but herself, but mostly because neither she nor her mother considered marriage as a commercial proposition. Her mother in particular "would regard her daughter almost as a castaway if she were to marry any man without absolutely loving him."¹

The Dale family, Mrs. Dale and her two daughters Lily and Bell, living in the Small House, within easy walking distance of their uncle's Great House, are everything that is sincere, unspoilt and admirable. As a contrast the family of the Earl De Courcy, a day's journey away, is shown as all that is mondaine, calculating and pretentious. The younger daughter of the de Courcy family, Lady Alexandrina, is in particular shown as a contrast to Lily Dale since they both compete to marry the handsome Civil Service Clerk Adolphus Crosbie. Yet, although the natural endowments of Lily are far greater than those of Lady Alexandrina, than whom she is a far sweeter and stronger character, the aims and ambitions, upbringing and futures of the two girls are not conceived as being largely different. Lily and Bell Dale, the daughters of a widow in straitened circumstances, have been brought up, just as the de Courcy girls are brought up, with but one idea, that of marriage, and they have been fitted for nothing else. When Lily and Crosbie become engaged she is brimful of joyful happiness as she rides down the main street of the little town of Guestwick with her lover:

... the people of Guestwick were all aware that Miss Lily Dale was escorted by her future husband. The opinion that she had been a very fortunate girl was certainly general among the Guestwickians ...

And she was very happy. I will not deny that she had some feeling of triumphant satisfaction in the knowledge that she was envied. Such a feeling on her part was natural, and is natural to all men and women who are conscious that they have done well in the adjustment of their own affairs. As she herself had said, he was her bird, the spoil of her own gun, the product of such capacity as she had in her, on which she was to live, and, if possible, to thrive during the remainder of her life.²

This is a revealing passage, especially the last four lines. Even Lily Dale, among all Trollope's many characters the one who made her way most warmly into the hearts of Trollope's readers,³ was naturally committed to husband hunting in order to provide for her future life. Indeed both Lily and Bell, although from a poor home, had been brought up with apparently no idea in their heads other than being pleasant companions to men at a dance, at table, at croquet, or on rides and walks through the nearby meadows; and their mother had sacrificed herself considerably to make this possible.

1. A. Trollope *The Small House* ch. XIX, Cornhill 7, 357. The remark applies to Bell but it was equally the mother's attitude towards Lily.

2. *Small House* ch XIII, Cornhill 7, 56—57.

3. "Lily Dale, [was] one of the characters which readers of my novels have liked best. In the love with which she has been greeted I have hardly joined with much enthusiasm ... Prig as she was, she made her way into the hearts of many readers both young and old." A. Trollope, *Autobiography*, p. 179.

This situation of dependence on fascinating men in order to get a husband and provide for the future is not confined only to the world in which Lily Dale and Lady Alexandrina live. It is equally the fate of Amelia Roper, the daughter of the boarding house keeper where Johnny Eames, the real hero of the story, lives in London. Amelia is dependent for her future on the favour of either Eames or Cradell the two men who lodge in her mother's house, and considering the matter in her mind she comes to the following conclusion:

Let it be Eames, if Eames were possible; but let the other string [Cradell] be kept for use if Eames were not possible. Poor girl! In coming to this resolve she had not done so without agony. She had a heart, and with such power as it gave her, she loved John Eames. But the world had been hard to her; knocking her about hither and thither unmercifully; threatening, as it now threatened, to take from her what few good things she enjoyed. When a girl is so circumstanced she cannot afford to attend to her heart.⁴

Another point of consideration about Lily's love for Crosbie is the form of complete dependence that it takes. She was blindly infatuated with him, hung on his words, and, during the short period of their engagement, lived in the happiness of her desire to be of service to him:

To be of use to you, — to work for you, — to do something for you that may have in it some sober, earnest, purport of usefulness; — that is what I want above all things. I want to be with you at once that I may be of service to you. Would that you and I were alone together, that I might do everything for you.⁵

Here was a girl of courage, sensibility and perception, whose present occupation was fitting herself for a husband, and who once having married the man on whom she had set her heart would rely on his judgment, and subjugate her views and intelligence to his.

Lily Dale's blind devotion to, and dependence on, Crosbie makes an immediate point of contrast with the heroines of *Beauchamp's Career*. Among the several women of Meredith's novel two stand out: Cecilia Halkett, the daughter of Colonel Halkett, a wealthy mineowner, and a more sensitive and finely balanced example of Janet Ilchester in *Harry Richmond*; and Jenny Denham, whom Nevil Beauchamp finally marries, the orphan daughter of a writer, standing in the relation of a daughter to the invincible old radical leader, Dr. Shrapnel, Nevil's hero.

Beauchamp's Career is largely a novel of political ideas, and gives as deeply felt a picture of one aspect of the time as Trollope's novels do of another. It is written with a burning impulse to put into a book certain of the ideas by which men live and for which they struggle, ideas which as they enter, disturb and stretch the mind. *Harry Richmond* serialized in *Cornhill* earlier was the confused epic of a personal search for a right way of thinking. *Beauchamp's Career* is that of a personal struggle for a rational and right conduct when a way of thinking has been decided on. It is an attempt too to "set the clockwork of the brain in motion", the brain of men and of women too.

4. *Small House* ch XXXI, Cornhill 8,64

5. *Ibid.* ch. XV, Cornhill 7,75

Cecilia Halkett, throughout the book is as deeply in love with Nevil Beauchamp as ever was Lily Dale with Crosbie, but never, until at the end almost distracted by her love, does she ever see him or wish to see him with anything but a clear head and critical mind:

she wished to know the truth of him; anything, pain and heartrending, rather than the shutting of the eyes in an unworthy abandonment to mere emotion and fascination.⁶

Both Cecilia and Jenny Denham are the mental equals of the men around them. Indeed they are often their mental superiors because preserving a more disinterested and balanced point of view. Cecilia's conversations, not only with Nevil, but with the many men who visit her father's house are held on an equal level. There is no special tone of conversation or special choice of subject for conversation when men are talking to women.

Jenny Denham is a woman who to an even greater extent than Cecilia has won through to an independent point of view, and indeed the sanity of her opinions is often greater than that of the warring males around her. She has reached a stage where she feels she can rely on her own judgement and is certainly Nevil's superior in both human and political understanding. When Nevil has failed to win the election in which he stood as Radical candidate he talks to Lydiard, the poet, and Jenny:

"It's only a skirmish lost, and that counts for nothing in a battle without end: it must be incessant."

"But does incessant battling keep the intellect clear?" was her memorable answer.

He [Nevil] glanced at Lydiard, to indicate that it came of that gentleman's influence upon her mind. It was impossible for him to think that women thought. The idea of a pretty woman exercising her mind independently, and moreover moving him to examine his own, made him smile. Could a sweet-faced girl ... originate a sentence that would set him reflecting? He was unable to forget it, though he allowed her no credit for it.⁷

It is a significant twist given to the story that Nevil Beauchamp, Naval Commander turned Radical, so progressive in his views, is shown as holding the belief that women were and should be like Lily Dale, not as believing in the possibility of their intellectual equality. On the other hand Mr. Austen, a man politically shown as Conservative, was a "firm believer in new and higher destinies for women."⁸ Nevil Beauchamp, who declared that if there were women who thought as well as felt he did not know them, could only frown at the pronouncement of the Conservative Mr. Austen; that he saw the prospect of:

woman taking counsel, *in council*, with men upon public affairs ... [He] deemed that Englishwomen were on the road to win such a promotion, and would win it ultimately. He said soberly that he saw more certain indications of the reality of progress among women than any at present shown by men. And he was professedly temperate. He was but for opening avenues to the means of livelihood for them, and leaving it to

6. George Meredith, *Beauchamp's Career*, 1876, 3 vols. II, 123

7. *Ibid.*, II, 145—146

8. *Ibid.*, II, 153

their strength to conquer the position they might wish to win. His belief that they would do so was the revolutionary sign.⁹

This is of course a simple piece of political argument, and as the book is so bound up with politics it is not the only passage of its kind.

Such passages of political argumentation are less interesting than the fact that, in Cecilia Halkett and Jenny Denham, Meredith created characters who by their whole bearing, their manner of talking and way of living showed that they believed in their own abilities and mental independence, and that this belief was largely accepted by those around them.

Independence of another kind is found among the heroines of Hardy's novels and is underlined in the character of Bathsheba Everdene, the woman sheep-farmer of his first popular success *Far From the Madding Crowd*. The most obvious difference between Bathsheba Everdene and the *Cornhill* heroines before her is that she is a materially self-sufficient woman who has been used to working for her living ever since childhood. But it was the combination of material independence with a desire for psychological self-sufficiency in Bathsheba Everdene that was really new. Mary Barton was a working girl, Lucy Snowe in *Villette* worked with such success that M. Paul left her own girls' school in Brussels, but each of these women, although capable of earning her own living, wanted far more to get married. Marriage and not personal independence was their real aim. This was not the case with Bathsheba, or with Ethelberta in the *Hand of Ethelberta*: in them another kind of self-dependence is shown. The fact is that neither of these two early heroines of Hardy's wished to surrender herself to the guidance of a man. Bathsheba makes this evident very early in her acquaintanceship with her faithful lover Gabriel Oak who, soon after he has met her, comes to ask her to marry him. Oak has to talk to Bathsheba over a holly hedge:

"I can make you happy," said he to the back of her head, across the bush. "You shall have a piano in a year or two — farmers' wives are getting to have pianos now — and I'll practise up the flute right well to play with you in the evenings."...

And at home by the fire, whenever you look up, there I shall be — and whenever I look up there will be you."

"Wait, wait, and don't be improper!"

Her countenance fell, and she was silent a while. He contemplated the red berries between them over and over again, to such an extent, that holly seemed in his after-life to be a cypher signifying a proposal of marriage. Bathsheba decisively turned to him.

"No; 'tis no use," she said, "I don't want to marry you."

"Try."

"I have tried hard all the time I've been thinking; for a marriage would be very nice in one sense. People would talk about me, and think I had won my battle, and I should feel triumphant, and all that. But a husband —"

"Well!"

"Why, he'd always be there, as you say; whenever I looked up, there he'd be."

"Of course he would — I, that is."

9. *Ibid.*, II, 154

“Well, what I mean is that I shouldn’t mind being a bride at the wedding, if I could be on without having a husband. But since a woman can’t show off in that way by herself, I shan’t marry — at least yet.”¹⁰

Thus Bathsheba is shown right from the beginning as an “independent and spirited woman,” and her taste for independence increases when she inherits her uncle’s farm, finds the bailiff dishonest, and decides to run the farm herself with no bailiff:

“Don’t any unfair ones among you (if there are any such, but I hope not) suppose that because I’m woman I don’t understand the difference between bad goings-on and good” ... “I shall be up before you awake; I shall be afield before you are up; and I shall have breakfasted before you are afield. In short I shall astonish you all.”¹¹

Her success as a farmer increases her taste for independence, and it is only the mutual and irresistible physical attraction between her and Sgt. Troy that for a short period breaks into her self-sufficiency. But when Troy leaves her we have clearly expressed what has been all the time apparent in her behaviour:

Until she had met Troy, Bathsheba had been proud of her position as a woman; it had been a glory to her to know that her lips had been touched by no man’s on earth — that her waist had never been encircled by lover’s arm. She hated herself now. In those earlier days she had always nourished a secret contempt for girls who were the slaves of the first good-looking young fellow who should choose to salute them. She had never taken kindly to the idea of marriage in the abstract as did the majority of women she saw about her ... That she had never, by look, word or sign, encouraged a man to approach her — that she had felt herself sufficient to herself, and had in the independence of her girlish heart fancied there was a certain degradation in renouncing the simplicity of a maiden existence to become the humbler half of an indifferent matrimonial whole — were facts now bitterly remembered.¹²

The Hand of Ethelberta shows us the career of a similarly determined and self-sufficient woman, though in her case the story never glows into warmth and life for the question of love is never sincerely considered. Ethelberta is the eldest daughter of the numerous family of a butler, and having both brains and beauty considers herself the main prop of the family. Forced to abandon her idea of giving public dramatic readings to mend the family fortunes, she turns with unpleasant and open commerciality to the task of finding herself a rich husband. She is somewhat of the calibre of Becky Sharp, but between her aims and Becky’s there is at least one great difference. Becky’s endeavours to advance herself in society and hide her origins were made purely for her own advancement. Ethelberta’s effort on the other hand is made expressly so that she may advance her family, and this she does not propose to do by finding them rich husbands, but once she is fixed herself, by providing for the education of her younger sisters, and making a capital investment in her brothers’ building enterprise. She is in fact a young woman moving in a different world from Becky Sharp, and conscious of the fact. She

10. Thomas Hardy, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, ch. IV, *Cornhill*, 29, 21

11. *Ibid.*, ch. X, *Cornhill* 29, 266

12. *Ibid.*, ch. XLI, *Cornhill* 30, 268—269

shows her powers of both attraction and persistence by attaining marriage with the rich Lord Mountclere, and her business ability by taking over the management of his estates as competently as Bathsheba had taken over the control of her uncle's farm. She administers these with such success that she even wins the respect of the noble lord's relations, is able to make a loan to her brothers (which they equally independent minded, insist on returning with interest), continue her own education in the large library of the house, and take care of the education of her younger sisters. It is a weak and unlikely story,¹³ but Ethelberta's part in it is interesting. We see her throughout, less as an attractive woman, despite descriptions of her beauty, than as a practical and efficient woman of business, with an unalterable purpose, great self-reliance and organizing ability.

The greatest loss which the *Cornhill* suffered was undoubtedly *The Return of the Native*, and it was rejected by Leslie Stephen in part for the very reasons which make up its greatness.¹⁴ The novel is furnished with a good heroine of the conventional type in Thomasin Yeobright, in whom are combined not only a sincere and self-sacrificing love, but also the simple natural pride of one who wishes to be a good wife and mother. But Eustacia Vye is clearly a different kind of woman, and she it is who is the real heroine and driving force of the book. It is the shifting inter-relationships between her, Wildeve and Clym Yeobright within their Egdon setting which make the drama of the novel. In Eustacia we find something quite different from Cecilia Halkett's desire for intellectual freedom, or from Bathsheba's desire for physical and material independence. Eustacia marks for the first time in English fiction the passionate woman who is unbound by any consideration of family, religion or social position:

To be loved to madness — such was her great desire. Love was to her the one cordial which could drive away the eating loneliness of her days. And she seemed to long for the abstraction called passionate love more than for any particular lover.¹⁵

Her situation, isolated in the strange wildness of Egdon Heath, is like that only of Cathy in *Wuthering Heights*. But with Cathy wildness is elemental, pure and passionless, with Eustacia it is throbbing with sensuousness. She is the opposite of the conventional idea of a Victorian heroine such as Trollope's; she is different from Becky Sharp in caring nothing for social position; from George Eliot's hero-

13. Weak and unlikely though it was the novel was not entirely condemned in its own day. *The Westminster Review* for example wrote: "There is no need to tell a story which has for so many months delighted the readers of the *Cornhill Magazine*." *Westminster Review*, July 1876, p. 381. It was, perhaps, the resolute character of Ethelberta that influenced the reviewer of the novel.

14. The reasons for Stephen's rejection were given briefly by Hardy himself to F. W. Maitland, and were printed by Maitland in his *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*. According to Hardy Stephen wrote that "though he liked the opening, he feared that relations between Eustacia, Wildeve and Thomasin might develop into something 'dangerous' for a family magazine and he refused to have anything to do with it unless he could see the whole." F. W. Maitland, *The Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen*, 1906, pp. 276—277.

15. Thomas Hardy, *Return of the Native*, 3 vols., 1878, I, 153

nes in caring nothing for morality; and from all of them in caring nothing for the social institution of marriage with its network of family ties and social obligations. She is apart from traditional Victorian social or moral standards. There is nothing actively wicked in her make-up, except as indolence and selfishness are wicked, and her real tragedy lies in the fact that by her beauty and her passion she entangles one so different from her as Clym Yeobright, whose philosophy of life calls for a scale of values which are not hers, and whose final blindness calls for the virtues of love and devotion which she has never possessed.

Eustacia Vye's emotional unrestraint and her freedom from normal social ties underlined by the wildness of Egdon Heath are in a different line of development from Cecilia Halkett and Bathsheba Everdene. More in the direct line are Emily Hood and Beatrice Redwing of *A Life's Morning*, and they too are far removed from the Dale sisters. The background of Emily Hood's life is unique among the novels contributed to *Cornhill*, for hers is bound up with the life of an industrial town. Not only that but she is the only one who has a real understanding of poverty, and of its effect in producing jagged nerves and warped natures.

Emily Hood was a governess, and the governesses of Victorian fiction are extremely numerous. But she was not a gentlewoman fallen to being a governess as the only way to live. She had been trained especially for the work, and her training was such that it could command, and later did command for Emily, a salaried position in one of the new large day schools. The air of calm self-reliance which Emily Hood shows throughout the novel, and which attracts people to her, was at least in part the result of the struggle through which she had gone to maintain herself, and the knowledge that she could do so.

Gissing however touched a further development in this question of independence, and foresaw a result of children's independence which few at that time foresaw, the breaking up of family interdependence. This happens to the Hood family. Emily, returning from her job as governess for a holiday with her parents in a northern industrial city, realizes that they are in some kind of distress the origin of which is kept from her. She at last discovers, almost by accident, that they are in more than usual need of money, as rents have been raised, and they can no longer manage to live on her father's wage:

Emily was shaken with agitation.

"Mother!" She exclaimed, "why have you both insisted on keeping silence before me about your difficulties? There was no kindness in it; you have done me the cruelest wrong. Had I not money in plenty beyond what I needed? What if the future be uncertain? Has not the present its claims, and can your needs be separated from mine? Because you have succeeded in keeping me apart from the troubles of your life, you — you and father — have thought you had done a praiseworthy thing. It is not bad enough that one human being should be indifferent to the wants of another, just because they call each other strangers? Was it right to bring such a hateful spirit of independence into a home, between parents and child? ... Independent! Because I earned money and could support myself, you have told me I must be independent, and leave you the same. That is the lesson that life has taught us. It is well to have understanding for lessons of a deeper kind."¹⁶

16. George Gissing, *A Life's Morning*, ch. XI, *Cornhill* 11, New Series, p. 645.

Ever present under the surface of this scene between Emily and her mother is the controlled emotion of Emily who knows that her father has stolen £10 from the mill, and that this may force her into a marriage with the mill owner. At the same time it is marked by her realization that she cannot rely on her father and mother to help her even with advice for she has grown up to a greater understanding of life than either of them. We have in Emily Hood a daughter schooled in a hard school of experience, who has grown wiser than her parents and who is in a position to give them both advice and material help.

This interest in independent women characters is not confined to the major novelists. A character very like Ethelberta is shown in Sabine Baring-Gould's novel *Court Royal*. Here the heroine, Joanna, left with a Jewish money-lender Emmanuel Lazarus to earn her keep, becomes so clever at managing the business that she in fact becomes her master's business partner.

Independence is the key-note of the character of Mary Avon in William Black's novel *White Wings*. Sometimes it is seen in her insistence on going yachting even though she has sprained her ankle, sometimes in her efficiency in seeing after her own luggage, sometimes in her ability to learn how to run the yacht, and sometimes, as in the following passage, in her business like attitude to the painting she has done during their trip among the Western Islands of Scotland. The following conversation takes place between her and Dr. Angus Sutherland when he finds her on deck one morning painting, and shows that for her art is seen not as the pleasant diversion of one brought up to be "a lady", but as a marketable product.

"It is only a sketch," said she, in a rapid and highly business-like fashion, "but I think I shall be able to sell it. You know most people merely value pictures for their association with things they are interested in themselves. A Yorkshire farmer would rather have a picture of his favourite cob than any Raphael or Titian ... Well, if some yachting gentleman, who has been in this loch, should see this sketch, he will probably buy it, however bad it is, just because it interests him."

"But you don't really mean to sell it?" said he.

"That depends," said she demurely, "on whether I get any offer for it."

"Why," he exclaimed, "the series of pictures you are now making should be an invaluable treasure to you all your life long: a permanent record of a voyage that you seem to enjoy very much. ... And you propose to sell them all?"¹⁷

Mable Masters in *Love the Debt* is equally independent, and earns her living as a school teacher, while in Rider Haggard's novel *Jess* both the girls work actively on their uncle's Ostrich Farm.

It is a point worthy of notice that this embodiment of new ideas of womanhood, and increased independence in women is found, as far as *Cornhill* novels are concerned, only among the male writers. It is the domestic idyll that is at the core of the novels written by women for the magazine, from Mrs. Gaskell and Mrs. Oliphant in the older generation to Anne Thackeray, Mrs. Lynn Linton and Marga-

17. William Black, *White Wings: A Yachting Romance*, ch. XI, Cornhill 40, p. 495.

ret Veley in the younger.¹⁸ Sometimes an emotional life too exclusively centred on the home, and on love as the whole of a woman's existence led the women novelists into an atmosphere of sadness and even morbidity which is not found among the men. An atmosphere of sad melancholy hangs around the entire childhood and girlhood of Dolly Vanborough, the heroine of Anne Thackeray's *Old Kensington*. Leam Dundas in Mrs. Lynn Linton's novel, and Sissy Thorne, in *For Percival* both renounce the men they love, and these two novels each end with a description of the death bed of the heroine. This sorrow, this morbidity, this pining away and dying is not found in any novel contributed to *Cornhill* by a male writer.

In general however it is true to say that, by the late eighties, we have moved away from a position in which the woman is unquestionably, and exclusively the fixed, central, anchorage of the man and the family. In reality the time of woman's real mobility and independence was only just beginning, and its results were hardly as yet foreseen even by social reformers. Yet the novelists, not necessarily writing in a partisan spirit, foreshadowed many of the changed relationships to come, and the wealth of different problems of emotion and adjustment that were to arise. This point did not go uncommented on by the critics of their novels. To take one instance, in 1883 the *Westminster Review* in a long review of Hardy's novels published up to then wrote:

Mr. Hardy's way of regarding women is peculiar and difficult to define, not because it is not a perfectly defensible way, but because it is in a great degree new. It is, as we have already noted, far removed from a method, adopted by many distinguished novelists, in which women are considered as moral forces, centripetal tendencies providentially adapted to balance the centrifugal tendencies of men.¹⁹

The Westminster Review, from its beginning so closely bound up with the question of women's emancipation, noted here the kernel of the whole new relationship. Women were no longer simply moral forces, and no longer was their emotional or actual role purely centripetal.

JUNAKINJE CORNHILL PRIHVACENE I ODBACENE

U prva tri desetljeća nižu se u *Cornhill Magazine* (1859—1887) romani vodećih pisaca toga vremena kao što su Thackeray, Trollope, gospoda Gaskell, Hardy, Meredith i Gissing, kao i djela pisaca poput Charles Levera, Margareth Oliphant, James Paynea i Rider Haggarda. Tokom tog razdoblja primjećuju se samo manje promjene u društvenoj pozadini u kojoj se

18. Of course, some women novelists did depict the "New Woman", Mrs. Lynn Linton in particular wrote of extremely independent women. A full study of the Victorian Heroine from this point of view is given in P. Thomson, *The Victorian Heroine: A Changing Ideal 1837—1873*, 1956.

19. *Westminster Review*, April 1883, p. 358.

radnja romana odvija. Međutim u toku tih dvadesetosam godina postoji uočljiva promjena u prikazu ženskih likova. To vrijedi i za vodeće pisce kao i za ostale. Žene ranijih *Cornhill* romana duboko su ovisne o muškarcima i kroz njih osiguravaju svoju budućnost. Pri kraju navedenog razdoblja primjećuje se u objavljenim romanima, kao i u onima koje su urednici odbili objaviti, stalan napredak u ženskim likovima koji se sve više pouzdaju u svoje osobne sposobnosti i u stvarnost svoje praktične i intelektualne neovisnosti.