The Silver Domino, Or, Side Whispers, Social and Literary

Corelli Marie
OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"The 'Silver Domino' can handle words and phrases in a manner which either proves an extraordinary original gift or a good deal of practice. ... The parody of Miss Olive Schreiner is one of the best and severest parodies we have seen for years. ... The book is one to read and laugh over."—Daily Chronicle, Oct. 14th.

"All unexpectedly one finds one's self in the midst of a most up-to-date literary satire. ... I am bound to say the 'thwackings' [in the 'Silver Domino'] are entertaining."—Star, Oct. 10th.

"The unknown author of the 'Silver Domino' has been good enough to send me his book, which is very bright and amusing and outspoken. He has his knife into a great many people."—The World, Oct. 10th.

"An audacious little book called the 'Silver Domino' is causing a great deal of amusement in literary circles. ... There are some delightful parodies; also a capital literary creed, which takes liberties with the Saturday Review, which, by the way, is again for sale."—Western Daily Mercury, Oct. 15th.

"The 'Silver Domino' consists of trunculently candid sallies at the expense of men eminent in politics, literature, and journalism."—The Times, Oct. 15th.

"I must confess to have chuckled hugely over some of his [the 'Silver Domino's'] diatribes."—News of the World, Oct. 23rd.

"Pungent, mordant satire went out with Grenville Murray, but his mantle has fallen upon the anonymous author of the 'Silver
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Domino,' who has issued some intensely amusing social and literary side-whispers. . . . All that he has to tell us is told with wonderful terseness and in an easy flowing style which has a great charm for all who can appreciate such satire. . . . I could dwell upon the 'Silver Domino' with great benefit to my readers and satisfaction to myself, but space forbids; so I will only say that the book is the most valuable contribution to our satirical literature that has appeared for many, many years. Our advice is: 'Get it; read it; and re-read it.'—Society, Oct. 19th.

"The 'Silver Domino' is a volume of essays. . . . There are pungency and freshness about many of the writer's observations."—Sunday Sun, Oct. 23rd.

"The 'Silver Domino' is suggestive of the gentle Malay exercise of running amuck or the emancipated young person having a fling to its own obvious enjoyment."—Saturday Review, Oct. 29th.

"If it is to Mr. Lang's generosity that we owe the hatching of this book, that gentleman must assuredly stand aghast."—Vanity Fair, Oct. 29th.

"The literary puzzle of the hour is—Who wrote the 'Silver Domino'? . . . The question of authorship apart, nothing at once so bitter and so clever has appeared since the days of Lord Byron."—The Literary World, Nov. 4th.

"What is the author of the 'Silver Domino'? That is the question I am asked wherever I go. Whoever it is, he is the author of an extremely clever book. . . . Were I to make one single quotation from the 'Silver Domino' you would be angry with me, yet there is not one of you but will read it speedily."—The Queen, Oct. 29th.
THE

SILVER DOMINO;

or

Side Whispers, Social and Literary.

EIGHTH EDITION.
WITH AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THIS ISSUE.

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1898.

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To

ANDREW LANG,

WHOSE LITERARY GENEROSITY TOWARDS ME

IS PAST ALL PRAISE,

I,

WITH THE UTMOST RECOGNITION,

DEDICATE THIS BOOK.
AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

Since the first edition of this book was published, some three weeks ago, a grave event has occurred, which may be said to have closed an epoch in the history of Literature. Tennyson, Poet and Laureate, the last, perhaps, of the exponents of a pure, refined, and musical school of English poesy, has left us. I will not say he has "crossed the bar," because I consider that phrase has been overdone. He has passed away in the fulness of years and honours, amid the sorrowing regret of all those thousands to whom his melodious muse was as a part of home and country. No poet ever lived a more easy and amply rewarded life,—no
A poet ever died a more easy and enviable death. And I have nothing to recant in what I have said of him in my chapter entitled "Of Certain Great Poets." I am only sorry that he did not live to read my lines, as I know he would have readily understood the sincere spirit of admiration for his great qualities that moved me to my candid speech. My "reviewers" have not elected to quote any word of mine on the subject of the late Laureate, they generally preferring to save time and trouble by an all-round but rash declaration that there is no good said of any one in my book. I therefore challenge my readers to the perusal of "Certain Great Poets," for I will yield to no one in my admiration of Tennyson, no, not even to Lewis Morris, who calls him "Master," whereas I was privileged to call him "Friend." I have praised his genius with as much fervour and possibly more sincerity than any of the versifiers who have written rhymes to his memory while squabbling for his vacant post; and, as regards his Diogenes-like unsociability and distaste for the
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"outside vulgar," I have only said what every one admits to be true. I transcribe here the copy of a letter received from the great Poet not long before his death:

"Aldworth, Haslemere, Surrey.

"My dear ——, I thank you heartily for your kind letter and welcome gift. You do well not to care for fame. Modern fame is too often a mere crown of thorns, and brings all the vulgarity of the world upon you. I sometimes wish I had never written a line.

"Your friend,

"Tennyson."

The "vulgarity of the world" and the "outside vulgar" are phrases by which the literary folk designate the vast Public, without whose substantial appreciation, they, the inside elect, would starve. The "outside vulgar," however, with unerring good taste, have purchased Tennyson's work for the past fifty years, and in the rich
harvest of thoughts they have thus gathered, they can smile with a tender indulgence at their Kingly Minstrel’s shrinking aversion to the “crowd” who loved him. He was the greatest poet of the Victorian era; and, draped in the flag of England, as befits his sturdy and splendid patriotism, he sleeps the sleep of the just and pure-minded who have served their Art, as worthy subjects serve their Queen, loyally and unflinchingly to the end. It was “fitting,” I suppose, that he should be laid to rest in dismal “Poet’s Corner”—(beside Browning, too! the Real singer beside the Sham!)—but many would rather have seen him placed in a shrine of his own,—a warm grassy grave under the “talking” English oaks whose forest language he so well translated, than thus pent up among the crumbling ashes of inferior and almost forgotten men.

Another change has come “o’er the spirit of my dream” since, in the language of the Daily Chronicle, I flung back the curtain and made my bow to the public “in a breezy, not to say slap-bang, manner.” The Pall Mall Gazette has