

Serial Story, Exclusive to "The Listener"

ALL THIS, and HEAVEN TOO

Warner Brothers-First National Film Version, starring

BETTE DAVIS and CHARLES BOYER

Based on the novel

by RACHEL FIELD

Serialised by HARRY LEE

CHAPTER I.

GRAMERCY PARK—to this day a restful oasis in the wilderness of New York—was a sunlit whirl of yellow leaves and laughing, chattering girls that cold September morning in 1848. In their mid-teens, bright hair blown about their faces, full skirts billowing, they scuttled up the steep steps of Miss Haines's exclusive school eager to hear more of the scandal which Emily Schuyler, prettiest and pertest of the flock, had promised to enlarge upon when they reached the seclusion of the classroom.

Emily—centre of a breathless group—was soon displaying with pride back numbers of a Paris newspaper which detailed proceedings in a notorious murder trial. It was the first day of school and none of them had yet met Mlle. Henriette, the new French teacher, but Emily insisted that she was the woman accused of the crime.

And Emily was right.

When Miss Haines introduced the lovely instructress many of the girls felt ruefully that she could not possibly have been the principal in the case. Emily was unmoved, however, and later on embarrassed the teacher with sly questions about a certain French prison, and about a noble family named Praslin. Mlle. Henriette, who had felt the chill of their suspicion from the first, and who had gone on courageously in spite of it, suddenly turned deathly pale, and hurried from the room.

In the office of Miss Haines—who had been aware of the facts in the case before employing her—Mlle. Henriette met the young American theological student, Henry Field, who had proved her friend during all the troubled days abroad. It was he who had recommended her to Miss Haines, and now he said that he had stopped in to welcome her home. She reacted bitterly, saying that since her pupils had found the truth about her past, she would resign at once.

"You can face your conscience!" he said, looking down at her steadily and taking her hand in both of his, "Face them! Don't beg for their respect—demand it! Tell them the truth!"

"I owe it to you to try, Henry!" she said at last, and went back to her pupils. They scurried guiltily back to their seats as she entered and waited in silence.

"I'm going to tell you a true story, girls!" she began. "Perhaps I'm wrong in telling it to you—you're so young—but in a few years you will be women

of an age to love and suffer, and face difficult problems. So, perhaps, it will not hurt you to learn that life is not always the pretty picture postcard you may like it to be! If there are any of you who do not wish to hear the story, you have my permission to go."

No one stirred. All were silent—a little frightened.

FOR most of our story we will be in Paris in a large and beautiful house, the residence of the Duke and Duchess of Praslin. It is of the governess in that house I shall tell you.

On a February morning some years ago she had not yet arrived in Paris, whence she had been summoned for an interview. She was a passenger on a small Channel steamer which was battling its way across the stormy

waters from Southampton toward Le Havre. She was travelling alone, too, having long before learned to take care of herself.

A young man moved to the rail beside her. "You don't mind if I talk to you, do you?" he asked with an honest smile, "since we seem to be the only ones hardy enough to brave the deck?"

The young man continued earnestly: "I saw you first on the dock at Southampton! How sad those people were when they said good-bye to you! I was sad for them, I don't know why! That little girl, how bitterly she wept!"

"I'd been her governess for five years!"

When the lonely traveller was about to leave the swaying deck and go inside the stranger implored her to stay with such bluff honesty that she hadn't the heart to refuse.

"I'm an American," he went on, "from Massachusetts. My name is Field—Henry Field—there's a Martyn in the middle. Oh, yes, and a Reverend in front. I'm not a full-fledged minister yet. Just now I am broadening myself with some travel. I don't suppose a little broadening will hurt a minister, do you?"

She liked him in spite of herself, though when the boat docked she said good-bye without consenting to give him her name and walked away as impersonally as though they'd never met, leaving him deeply perplexed.

HAVING reached the imposing home of the Duke and Duchess de Praslin to whom she had letters of introduction—the governess followed the liveried servant along many shadowy corridors, passing on the way the chilling Abbé Gallard in the black robes of his calling. She was finally ushered into a vast chamber where, swathed in silks and laces, on a chaise-lounge which had been drawn close to the feeble fire, reposed the languid and vitriolic Madame la Duchesse.

The Duke, a handsome man, who had evidently again come out second in a wordy encounter with his exasperating



BETTE DAVIS, the star of "All This, and Heaven Too"

spouse, soon saw that that lady meant to ignore the newcomer, and spoke in her place.

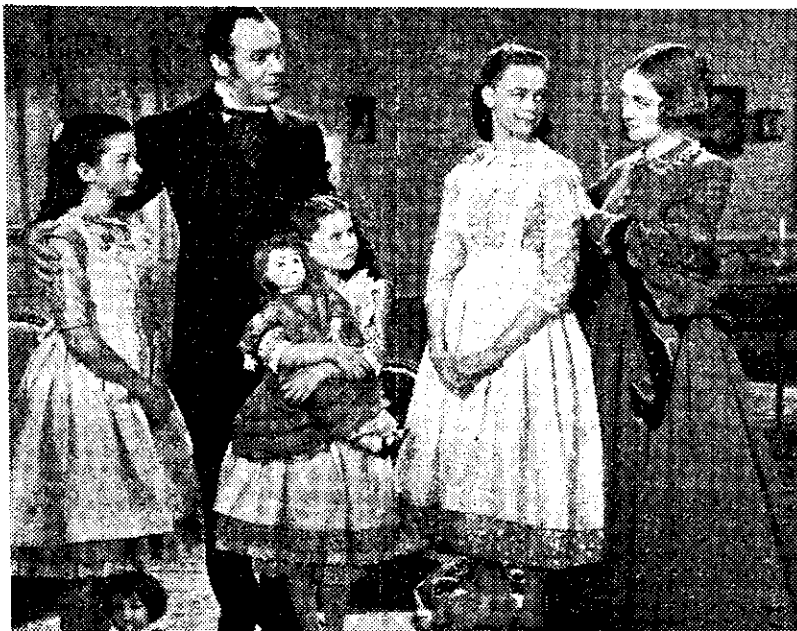
"We require a governess, Mlle. Desportes," he began, agreeably, "to take full charge of the children! I'm afraid you'll find them quite a handful. The three girls are at the awkward ages between seven and eleven. Then there's a boy who was born some years later." The Duke's eyes had grown strangely tender. "Raynald his name is—he's not quite four—a bright little fellow—but his health is —"

"Raynald is sensitive like me," sighed the Duchess, gazing at her husband accusingly, "For years before he was born I was made ill and unhappy and he will always bear the marks of my suffering!"

The Duke gave the fire an impatient kick, and at the moment, Mme. Maillard, whose place Mlle. Henriette was to fill, arrived with the children. Raynald, and blonde little Berthe came first, followed by Louise and Isabelle, adolescent, and dark like her mother. All were excited, and Raynald in overflowing emotion, plucked a blossom from his mother's favourite cyclamen. For this misdeemeanour Mme. Maillard slapped him cruelly and forbade him his supper. "It was for the new Mademoiselle," he wailed, "because she had p-pink ribbons in her hair!"

The Duchess put her bony, bejewelled hands to her head. "For heaven's sake, Maillard," she cried, "let him give it to this—this new—person! And take the children out, all of them!" When they were gone she turned to her husband with narrowed eyes. "Everyone in this house knows, Theobald . . ." she cried maniacally, "how you delight in humiliating me! And now . . . this woman!"

(To be continued)



"We need a governess for all of them"