

beloved name. Nancy had cried, then. The old chap would have come round. But his face was rather white and his voice not quite steady as he replied.

"Oh, sir, if you only would not ask me! I can't tell you, I am grateful to you, more than I can say. If Nancy... If you... I love her. I haven't dared to tell her so. But if, some day, I can make a position fit for her... Then why, in the name of an accommodating Heaven, throw away the position you've got? Well, you can't resign today. I won't have it, Reginald away. I shall want you constantly, and I must have you. So there's an end to that. Get on with the letter. What did I say? With all these disturbing inter-ruptions, it's impossible to remember."

It was about the middle of the morning when his door which communicated with the inner office was pushed open and Peter, looking up, saw Mr. Payne standing in the doorway, strangely silent.

"Come here, Peter," he said in a voice quite unmitigated, limping back to his chair, Peter following.

On the office table were piled and scattered the papers of the client for which he had enquired; and—Peter's heart gave a thump—in his hand was the draft letter he had yesterday refused to type.

"Sit down, my boy sit down," said the senior partner absently. Peter sat down and for a moment nothing followed.

"I'm a bit upset, Kelvin," said the chief last, "a bit worried. I rather wish Reginald had come this morning, but I dare say you can explain everything. I've been going through the Jenkins' correspondence. You've handled all that, of course. The old lady, it seems, wished to withdraw some capital. Well, there are points in the correspondence that are not clear to me. You can explain, no doubt. I've been so long away from work that my brain's foggy this morning, and I must say, on the first day, to be worried and upset like this... Maria Jenkins! Why, I've known the good old soul all my life. She trusts me like the Almighty. Can't think what she needed to withdraw for. The interest on her investments should be enough for her small needs. Sooner than any, the smallest thing should go wrong with her affairs, I'd cut my right hand off."

The old voice rang with all its wonted energy. Mr. Payne thrust across the table the untyped letter clenched in his hand.

"Look here, Kelvin, it isn't the correspondence so much that's worrying me; though as I said, there are points needing explanation. It's this draft letter, pushed in with the papers in the locked box. This letter—to a firm of money lenders with whom my firm has no dealings. You will have typed it. When did it go?"

"No, sir," said Peter. "I did not type it."

"You did not? Then who did?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Did you know of the writing?"

"Yes, sir."

The old man and the young looked each other very straightly in the face. In the heart of the one was a terrible fear. In the heart of the other a great pity. And, between them, silence.

Then the old man spoke, slowly and brokenly.

"Did you refuse to type that letter?"

And the young man's voice in reply was no less broken.

"Yes, sir."

The old man's hand went up and covered his eyes. The other hand he stretched out to Peter, who gripped it in both his own.

"Thank God!" said the old man. "Thank God—my son."

Peter Kelvin was not destined to end his working days in a lawyer's office. The palette laid down by another Peter in sadness and frustration was taken up, and this time, won success.

One year a picture on the line by a little known artist excited considerable comment. Yet the subject was a simple one. A flight of pigeons, flashing their silver-grey wings in the sunlight, against a grey old building somewhere in Lincoln's Inn. Critics said the movement of flying wings was masterly, and the light as it illuminated them, and the grey old building, and the green grass below, magical in its effect.

Among the group about the picture two visitors lingered longest—an old lady with a patient smiling face, wearing a bonnet not of that year's fashion, which, yet became her quaintly; and a young woman on whose arm she leaned, a dainty, dark-eyed creature, fascinatingly attired in dove-color hat and gown. They were the artist's wife and mother.

"The light," said the old lady to her radiant companion. "Hasn't our Peter managed it wonderfully? That's how it is in our lives, my dear always poured about us. If we could only believe, we should see."—Catholic Fireside.

IRISH CLERGY ACTIVE TO BLOCK DIVORCE BILL

Dublin, Ireland.—The Irish clergy are losing no time in following the lead of Bishop Cohan of Cork in warning their flocks against the possibility of having divorce permitted by the southern parliament. Rev. E. O'Reilly, P. P., Kilkormack,

in an eloquent warning against the danger, points out that it is not merely the family but the State itself is imperilled by the calamities that follow divorce. He hoped that Ireland would never tolerate any loosening of the sacred bond of matrimony, and he believed that the deputies would strongly oppose any such measure. Other priests have also publicly called upon their flocks to be on their guard in time and insist that no tampering with the marriage bond is attempted in their name.

THE STORY OF CHRIST

BY GIOVANNI PAPINI Copyright, 1923, by Harcourt, Brace & Company Inc. Published by arrangement with The McClure Newspaper Syndicate

When we read Leopardi and consider how he lost (perhaps because of the imperfect Christians surrounding him) his youthful love of Christ and, eating his heart out in reasoning despair, ended with the despairing lines, "Tiresome and bitter is life, never aught but that;" who of us will have the insight to reply, "Be quiet, unfortunate man! If you taste nothing but bitterness, it comes from the wormwood you are eating; if you find life tiresome the fault is yours; you yourself have used the infernal stone of barren reasoning to cauterize those feelings which would have made your life cheerful or at least endurable?"

No, Leopardi was not mistaken, for when you see men as they are and have no hope of saving them, or changing them, and you cannot live like them because you are too different from them, and cannot succeed in loving them because you believe them condemned to eternal unhappiness and wickedness, when you feel that the brutes will always be brutes and the cowards always cowards and the foul always more sunk in their foulness, what else can you do but counsel your heart to silence, and hope for death? There is but one question: are men unchangeable, not to be transformed, not capable of becoming better? Or, on the other hand, can man rise above himself and make himself holy? The answer is of terrible importance. All our destiny is in that question. Among superior men many have not been fully conscious of this dilemma. Many have believed and still believe that the form of life can be changed, but not the essence; and that to man everything will be given except to change the nature of his spirit; that man can become yet more master of the world, richer and more learned, but he cannot change his moral structure. His feelings, his primary instincts will always remain as they were in the wild occupants of the caves, in the constructors of the lake cities, in the first barbarians and in the peoples of the most ancient kingdoms.

Others feel an equal horror of man as he has been and as he is, but before they sink into the despair of moral nihilism they look at man as he could be. They have a firm faith in his perfectibility of soul and find happiness in the divine but terrible task of preparing the happiness of their brothers.

For men who are truly men there is no other choice: either the blackest anguish or the boldest faith; either death or salvation. The past is horrible, the present is repellent; let us give all our life, let us offer all our power of loving and understanding in order that tomorrow may be better, that the future may be happy. If up to now we have erred, and the irrefutable proof is the black past from which we have come, let us work for the birth of a new man and a new life. There are but two possibilities: either happiness will never be given to men or, and this Jesus believed firmly, if happiness could be our ordinary and eternal possession there is no other price for attaining it but to change our course, transform our souls, create new values, deny the old, answer the "No" of holiness to the false "Yes" of the world. If Christ was mistaken, nothing remains but absolute and universal negation, resolute faith in nothing. Either complete and rigorous atheism, not the maimed hypocritical atheism of the cowardly sects of today; or active faith in Christ who saves and resurrects us by His love.

YE HAVE HEARD The first prophets, the earliest legislators, the leaders of young nations, the Kings, founders of cities and institutors of justice, the wise masters, the saints, began the domination of the beast. With spoken and sculptured word they tamed, tamed, domesticated the men of the woods, held barbarians in restraint, taught those bearded children, softened the violent, the vengeful, the inhuman. With the gentleness of the word or the terror of punishment (Orpheus or Draco), by promises or by threats, in the name of the gods of high heavens or the gods under the earth, they trimmed the nails, which immediately grew long again; but muzzled over the sharp-fanged mouths; protected the defenses, the victims, pilgrims, women. The old law that is found with only a few variations in the Manava Dharmastra, in the Pentateuch, in the Ta-Hio, in the Avesta, in the traditions of Solon and of Numa, in the sententious maxims of Hesiod and the Seven Wise Men, is the first

attempt, rough, imperfect and inadequate, to mold animality into a sketch, a beginning, a simulacrum of human life.

This law reduced itself to a few elementary rules; not to steal, not to kill, not to perjure, not to fornicate, not to tyrannize over the weak, not to mistreat strangers and slaves any more than was necessary. These are the social virtues, strictly necessary for a common life, useful to all. The legislator contented himself with naming the most ordinary sins, asked for a minimum of inhibition. His ideal rarely surpassed a sort of approximate justice. But the law took for granted the predominance of evil, the sovereignty of instinct, earlier than the law and still existing. Every precept implies its infraction, every rule the practice of the opposite. For this reason the old law, the law of the first peoples, is only an insufficient channeling of the brute force eternal and triumphant. It is a collection of compromises and half-measures between custom and justice, between nature and reason, between the rebellious beast and the divine model.

Men of ancient times, carnal, physical, hearty, lusty, muscular, sanguine, sturdy, solid, hairy men with ruddy faces, eaters of raw meat, ravishers, cattle-stealers, mutilators of their enemies, fit to be called, like Hector the Trojan, "killers of men," strong, zealous warriors who, having dragged by the feet their slaughtered antagonists, refreshed themselves with fat haunches of oxen and of mutton, emptying enormous cups of wine; these men ill-tamed, ill-subdued to the law such as we see them in the Mahabharata, and in the Iliad, in the poem of Izdubar, and in the book of the wars of Jehovah, such men without the fear of punishment and of God would have been still more unrestrained and ferocious. In times when a head was asked for an eye, an arm for a finger, and a hundred lives for a life, a law of retaliation which asked only an eye for an eye and a life for a life was a notable victory of generosity, appalling though it seems after the teaching of Jesus.

But the law was more often disobeyed than observed; the strong endured it against their will, the powerful who ought to have protected it, evaded it; the bad violated it openly; the weak cheated it. And even if it had been entirely obeyed by every man every day it would not have been enough to conquer the evil perpetually boiling up, held down only for a moment, rendered harder to enact but not impossible, condemned but not abolished. It was a reduction of innate fierceness, not its total extirpation. Men, shackled but reluctant, had learned to pretend obedience, did a little good where every one could see them in order to be more free to do wrong secretly, exaggerated the observance of external precepts that they might the better betray the foundation and spirit of the law.

They had come to this point when Jesus spoke on the Mount. He understood that the old law was doomed, drowned in the stagnant swamps of formalism; the endless work of the education of the human race was to begin over again, the ashes must be brushed away, the flame of original enthusiasm must be blown into it, it must be carried through to its original destination which is always metanoia, the changing of the soul. And for this it was necessary to terminate the old law, the dried and burnt-out old law.

With Jesus therefore begins the new law; the old is abrogated and declared insufficient. He begins at every example with the words—"Ye have heard it said" and at once He substitutes for the old command, which He purifies by paradox or actually overthrows, the new command. "But I say unto you, do not swear." With these "but's" a new phase of the human education begins. It is not the fault of Jesus if we are still groping along in the twilight of very early dawn.

TO BE CONTINUED

THE EVENING EMBLEM

The day with its strenuous duties Had slowly come to a close; And as the shadows deepened, This scene before me arose. In a home near the busy highway Dwells a man devout and true; Who honors the faith of his fathers' As so very few now do.

Christ; Where His sacred heart is broken As He paid sins' sacrifice. Each night as the twilight shadows, Creep silently into this room Beneath the cross is burning A light midst the darkening gloom. That lamp with its crimson splendor, Sheds a radiance bright and clear. And you feel the hallowed presence Of the Saviour hanging there.

Then you bless the old French custom Of this lamp from the Sacred shrine, Our friend keeps trimmed and burning Emblem of "The Sorrowful Mystery" Divine.

May God in His tender keeping Protect our friend so good and true. And give him a home in Heaven When his earthly work is through. —J. T. H.



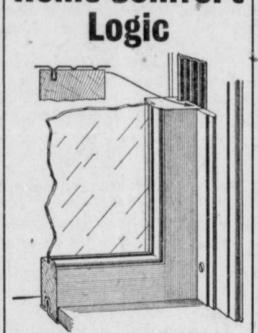
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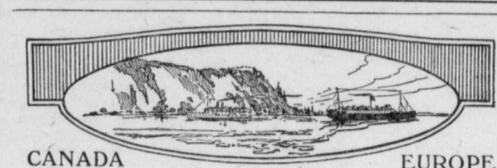
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