

In a minute the men were attacking the large stack of golden wheat which rose against the wall, hiding the house.

Yes, indeed, the rumor was correct. Mr. George W. Whiteley, of San Antonio, was to marry Miss Suzanne de Maure in the coming spring. How did he ever win his bride? You would not ask such a question, if you knew him.

In the first place, he was an attractive young American whose sunburnt, smoothly shaven face and regular features wore an ever changing expression: tense or relaxed, modest or haughty, according to circumstances. The only distinct mark left by the man's character on his face, which his soul worked at and moulded every hour of his life, was the little furrows between his eyebrows, that wrinkled, deepened, or softened according to his humors, but never disappeared.

George Whiteley wanted strongly what he wanted. A ranchman and cotton planter on the plain between San Antonio and the Gulf—ever since his youth, he had led an active life, bossed or supervised his own men, and carried out transaction with hundreds of others. When he came for the first time to Ville-aux-Genets, straight and slender in his khaki uniform, he won at once the liking of the ladies of the house.

How had he come there? He was introduced by an officer of the Engineer Corps, who was anxious to alleviate the *ennui* of a supply camp, some fifty miles away.

"I have a letter of introduction to a French lady. Won't you come along? You'll see an old chateau, a fine park and a cup of excellent tea, and have the pleasure of hearing French well spoken. You know French already, while I am only a novice at it. Come along."

"All right."

The heart of George Whiteley had been captivated by that drive, that tea, that well laid out park, that drawing room full of antique furniture that had witnessed for three centuries the constant renewal of a household whose soul has remained the same, that girl finally, whose mind appeared to be so keen and free, and who maintained such perfect propriety in all her words and movements. Others might find the Sundays tedious at the camp; the officer returned alone to Ville-aux-Genets, where he seemed to be welcomed. On his third visit he felt the beginning of a friendship; and encouraged to open his heart, he spoke of his two sisters, of about Suzanne's age and good Catholics like himself, and of his mother so tender and courageous, though somewhat indolent, in whose veins ran the old Spanish blood so prevalent in that sun-scorched but truly magnificent land.

Soon afterward, about the time when the wheat was ripening for the harvest, the young people plighted their troth beneath the tall trees. You may imagine the warm congratulations that were offered to the engaged couple. They poured in from all sides. Three of George's comrades begged the favor of representing, at the wedding, the Texan family and their American fatherland. So they came from their different camps to pay their respects to the ladies of Ville-aux-Genets.

They were Major Frank O. Richardson of the Field Artillery, formerly Vice-President of the Danver Packing Co., of Danver, Mr. William S. Griffin, Assistant Manager of a large automobile factory in Cleveland; and lastly, Mr. Harry W. McCummins, a Washington lawyer, now captain in the Quarter-master Corps, a cultured son of the Order of the Cincinnati. I became acquainted with him. He had the look of a young citizen of ancient Rome, but he dressed in distinctly modern fashion, short coat, stiff collar, and a light summer overcoat of a glossy yellow, which he nearly always carried folded on his left arm.

When he was introduced to Miss de Maure by his friend, George Whiteley, he gave expression to a noble sentiment.

"You were, I believe, Sir—George told me—a very busy man and much addicted to society in Washington."

"Rather the latter, Miss, I never looked for work, though it came to me at times. I was a lawyer, 'un avocat, if you wish."

"Are you going back to your profession?"

"I am not quite sure. I left my business in August, 1914, and today, you see, as I had never expected to come back alive, I feel mere or less stranded."

Suzanne acknowledged with an inclination of her head her admiration for this heroic sentiment, and replied:

"It will be a privilege to meet you again in America."

The company was then in the drawing-room, where the stray sunbeams tinged the ancestral portraits, and made them appear younger. Suzanne had hardly expressed the wish when the three visitors advanced toward her and McCummins who was not the oldest but was the highest in rank, said:

"Miss we were keeping back a little scheme. But the opportunity seems so good that we are going to ask you a favor."

"What favor?"

"We want your permission to keep a pledge we have made among ourselves. On your wedding day we'll be on the point of sailing back to our own country. Well, at whatever time you land in New York, next spring, the three of us have agreed to be there to welcome you, when you touch our shores, with the smile of America."

She pressed their outstretched hands warmly.

"Granted. That's a charming idea. But, if I am not mistaken, you all live far from New York."

"Pshaw! Washington is but a walking distance from New York," said McCummins.

"To come from Ohio," said Griffin.

"I'll have a new machine of my own make, and in a few days, without even traveling by night, I can keep my appointments."

"As far myself," said Richardson.

"I'll take me sixty hours by train, but I'll travel a hundred and twenty to greet Mrs. George Whiteley."

Summer faded into autumn, and winter followed. Suzanne could not have felt happier, had she been preparing to wed the prince royal of Spain. But she had written her daily letter to George, and to his mother in Texas, and to his brother thought that she wished she could banish from her soul. "You are going away from Ville-aux-Genets. These weeks which you are reckoning so anxiously, wishing that they might fly past, or that you would sleep them away, and wake up only on the morning of your wedding, are the last you will spend in your mother's loving care. The spring now beginning will be your last spring in France. No more will you see of them, moving the hay in the great meadow. Soon it will be to a lonely mother, a grief of husband and child, the farmer's wife will send her morning greeting from her tilted cart."

O Suzanne! She wishes she could retard the progress of the hours. But time heeds neither her wishes nor yours. The first pettingles have already appeared along the streams; and already, too, the school children have been spied trespassing in the garden and plucking the rose tulips and the soft primroses to make bouquets.

George and Suzanne, standing on the upper deck, looked among the crowd of relatives and curious people assembled at the end of the pier for those who had pledged to bring their welcome to the young French woman.

"Here's one of them," said Suzanne suddenly. "Look between those two ladies dressed in blue. He's waving his handkerchief. I recognize him; it's Major Richardson."

"And don't you see nearby the man who is clapping? It's the enthusiastic Griffin himself," answered the husband.

"The other one can't be very far. George, you surely have loyal friends."

"Suzanne, they're Americans. They know how to keep an appointment."

Twenty minutes later, in the hall of the French Line, where the wind in its own way greets all comers to America, four persons formed a little island in the stream of moving people. Wrapped in his automobile duster, William Griffin was bowing to Suzanne, and saying:

"I've come in the new car the Griffin Motor Company is about to launch on the market. It's a real gem. We made over 600 miles without any trouble. It's over there to take you to your hotel. Well, how is Ville-aux-Genets, Madame?"

"As for me," said Frank Richardson, who was dressed in a gray, close fitting suit. "I just came by train to meet *'la jolie Francaise'*."

Happily, both the Missouri Pacific and the Pennsylvania trains ran on schedule time. "It's worth our trouble Madame, for you never looked fresher, when you lived on the banks of the Loire."

"I do feel happier, too, Sir. But isn't our other friend around? I'm not going to miss the third smile that was promised me."

"You shall have it, alright! I know McCummins. If he's alive, he can't be very far from here."

In fact, as the four travelers were going along in the new Griffin car, they met a taxi coming down the street at top speed. To the amazement of the passengers by the two machines stepped suddenly, and from the taxi emerged a man wearing a coat and cape of light sheepskin. He approached the car, and making off his spectacles:

"Mr. Whiteley?"

"In person."

"I hope, Madame, you'll forgive me for being fifteen minutes late. But my engine went dead three miles from here."

"From here?"

"No; three miles in the air. I came from Washington by aeroplane, and I was forced to land in Central Park. My pilot must have already gone up again. I caught a taxi. I beg your pardon."

And raising the young lady's hand to his lips, he bowed. Then lifting up his head with a silent smile, he showed a set of fine pearly teeth.

And thus was she made welcome on the wheat at New York, sweet Suzanne de Maure, to whom the three smiles of America had been promised.

Three great evils of the day are stressed in pastorals of the Bishops throughout the world. They are based on the reflection of the Holy Father set forth in his recent encyclicals. The remedies are also to be found in the Holy Father's recommendations.

The first great evil is the ever widening disintegration of family life. In every country the sanctity, the inviolability, the permanence, is menaced. Spankers and writers throughout the world are condoning and defending an unholily use of marriage. Practiced once univariately condemned not only by the individual conscience but by general public opinion are being urged for the guidance of nations. Ceaseless and determined efforts are being made to destroy the stability of the marriage contract by easy divorce laws, which must of necessity work irreparable harm to the well being of nations as well as individuals.

The Holy Father on the Feast of St. James last year called upon his children to turn to St. Joseph the Patron of the Catholic Church for protection and guidance in all dangers that threaten family life in the world, pointing out that the real

source of all these perils was the denial of the supernatural end of man by the spirit of Naturalism, and the failure to make use of the means of grace which God has provided for holy living.

The second evil is the great change that has come over the world through the authority of Holy Writ being no longer accepted. The revolt against authority which began with the so-called Reformers has resulted in the questioning of all authority. Writing in the current Atlantic Monthly Guglielmo Ferrero the Roman historian in a thoughtful article traces the cause of the political crisis that is agitating the lives of all nations to the denial of the principle of authority.

What is happening in the political world is evident in the moral world. The non-Christian tradition is being accepted as the rule of faith. The written word and living voice, the authorized interpreter of God's message was reverently and obediently accepted and safeguarded by the Church. With the advent of private interpretation all authority vanished and the word of God was lowered to the level of any human document to be passed down and whitened away to suit the convenience of the individual reader. Hence we have such sad spectacles of those who call themselves ministers of the Gospel, calling vital portions of Divine Revelation fables.

His Holiness took occasion of the anniversary of the death of St. Jerome to issue an encyclical letter impressing upon Catholics the important place which the divinely inspired written word of God should have in their lives, and the necessity of bringing to the reading of Holy Scripture the spirit of obedience to Authority that St. Jerome and the early Fathers ever maintained.

The last danger is the spirit of bitterness and hostility that although latent still remains between nations and between classes of society. True peace is menaced by suspicion and fear of future conflict. There can be no tranquility while men are girding themselves for other conflicts. Hence the Holy Father in his Encyclical on Christian Reconciliation deplored the continuance of the spirit of enmity so contrary to the spirit of charity preached by Christ, and urged all Catholics lay and cleric to root out the seeds of bitterness from their hearts and to cultivate the spirit of fraternal charity by word and deed.

We have passed through the most terrible War that the world has ever seen. This War was caused in great measure by the perpetuation of such lurking dangers as the Holy Father points out as existent today beneath the surface of society, if we are to be saved the horror of future conflicts, if civilization is to have its opportunity to restore peace to mankind, it must be by the abolition of such evils as we have enumerated.

Catchwords will not save us. Civilization, Americanization, the brotherhood of man are impotent unless Christianity first is served. These three great evils of the day are directly opposed to the Christianity that Christ Our Lord came on earth to establish. To avert disaster and to maintain tranquil peace, these three evil spirits which possess the world must be exorcised. The Holy Father has pointed the way.—The Pilot.

RACE SUICIDE

Joseph Scott of Los Angeles has said many good things in his time, but nothing more forcible than his latest pronouncement on race suicide. He is the father of eleven children. The following sentiments are worthy of reproduction: "I have not much patience with the economic controversialists; yet I was deeply impressed on a recent visit to the city of Fall River, where I was agreeably astonished and gratified at the marvelous number of sturdy children on every street, in every park, in every playground—rosy-cheeked, broad-shouldered lads, and happy, jayful girls; four and five youngsters in a family, all helping each other and happy in the joy of living. Upon inquiry I discovered a plausible reason for this marvelous population. It was told that the population of Fall River is 85% Catholic. When a picture shows some Catholics, in stern and sober severity, where grim women sit in cushioned limousines alongside their blase husbands, or where young couples lean in smart touring cars with Japanese peddles or Boston terraces as substitutes for their own progeny, I wonder if they could appreciate the happiness of the homes of Fall River, where the hard working father and the tireless mother with simple tastes and mutual affection and concern for each other's welfare can see growing up around them these sturdy, splendid children. It behoves every girl who is blessed with Catholic faith, and particularly those who aspire to walk in the ranks of the educated of this nation, to set their faces like flint against a certain type of intellectual woman who would unsex our girls by making them despise the most glorious attribute of married life, the sacred joy of motherhood. The proper idea of marriage has been so falsified by these sinister prophecies of so-called higher education that it is to be feared not a few of our Catholic girls, while not explicitly adopting the wrong notion, have yet been so far influenced by it that they superciliously shun marriage as a sort of undignified necessity of less superior

women. This attitude is both unjust and socially baneful. Its counterpart consequence is a class of diffident or blase young men who are either afraid to risk the obligations of married life or have the utmost contempt for this great sacrament."

There is nothing true or good or beautiful which, if contemplated or done in the right spirit, is not also religious.

If whose faults are most apparent is not always the worst. The clearer the crystal the plainer the flaw.—FATHER PASCH, S. J.

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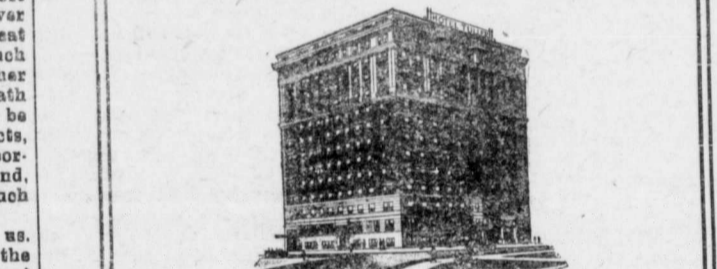
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