

## A LITTLE QUESTION OF ETHICS.

Ruxton took a cup of tea from Mrs. Valgrave and refused the drop of Jamaica rum she offered from her dainty cut glass decanter.

"No," he said, with the smile of a man who must deny himself for the sake of duty, "you're awfully kind, Mrs. Valgrave, but I must keep my head clear—I must write my last chapter to-night."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Valgrave, relighting the lamp under the hot water kettle, "you don't know how I shall rejoice in your triumph, for it will be a great triumph. Your first book is all white roses and dewdrops—but this—this!" Mrs. Valgrave clasped her fingers, which glittered with bands of brilliants and topazes, under the candles.

Ruxton stood holding his teacup and looking into the eloquent violet eyes before him.

"You are very kind," he said, drinking in the flattery of the voice and the eyes. "But I am not sure that 'The Pride of Life' is an advance on 'The Lily of the Woods.' I think that I put my best into my first book."

"Don't go yet," Mrs. Valgrave said, looking over at Lafayette square, where the cold winter shadows were falling. "There has been such a crowd here—such a crowd, but not one spirit."

The light from the great fireplace glittered on the arabesques of jet that covered Mrs. Valgrave's velvet gown, whose long train was thrown in front of the low chair into which she had thrown herself. Her slender figure, her well-formed head crowned with a coronet of red gold hair, were lighted at intervals by the steady glow of the candle and the thousand flickers of the fire. The scent of violets filled the warm air. Ruxton felt a sense of delicious contentment upon him—she sympathized with him. There was a short silence. The sound of carriage wheels broke it.

"I hope that nobody is coming here!" she exclaimed. "These minutes are sacred!"

The strokes of the horses' feet on the asphalt died away.

Ruxton had doubts about his novel, "The Pride of Life," which the publisher of the "Lily of the Woods" had bought before the tenth chapter was finished. A young man from a country village in Northern New York, he had enjoyed his success as only he who has struggled can enjoy it. "The Lily of the Woods" had been the idyll of a pure and simple life. He had written it from the impulse of an unstained heart. Its motto was:

"The dew upon the lily in the shade of tangled wood, paths, where the mosses grow  
Untouched by foot of man—that never know  
The garish moonlight—so art thou,  
O maid!"

Sipping his tea in the presence of Mrs. Valgrave, whose face and exquisite figure were now outlined in the fire and candle light against the darkening background, enlivened only by a little sword point of sharp brightness, which now and then pierced the gloom, Ruxton felt as if his past experience of life had been cold and colorless. He thought of the little house in the hop fields, whose rooms were even now wreathed with holly for him—those plain, white-washed rooms, where there was no scent of violets and gardenias, but only the homely smell of old rose leaves and last year's lavender. How dim it all seemed! He thought of his little bedroom, with the crucifix standing out against the wan wall in the evening shadows, and of the serene face which would flush when his hand touched the old-fashioned knocker, wreathed with holly, too. Far off! Far off! But here the joy of life—no maxims of narrow duty—rich scents and the stimulus of understanding words from a beautiful woman.

"You will finish the last chapter to-night?" Mrs. Valgrave said, softly.

"To-night."

There was silence again. Again a counter-picture arose before him—the picture of the winding road through the dried and snow-sprinkled wildsters—in the early morning light. Again he heard the distant sounds of singing from the groups of farming folk, hastening to the chapel, over the snowbound earth. Ever since he could walk he had gone, hand in hand, with his mother on Christmas morning towards the sacred place where the neighbors

waited for Mass, while they sang the "Adeste Fidelis." He reached towards the decanter of rum and half filled his teacup with the aromatic liquid. He wanted to forget—to feel that life was full of color.

"The Pride of Life will make you!" Mrs. Valgrave said, enthusiastically. "My dear boy, when I finished the MS. I could have imagined that anaemic young monk of 'The Lily of the Woods' is the very passionate god of 'The Pride of Life.' I inspired you—admit that."

"I think you did, Mrs. Valgrave," he said, slowly, "some things you said—"

"Many things. I will bring you the MS.—since you must finish the book to-night. It's the only copy, isn't it?"

"The only copy."

She shuddered. "If it should be lost!"

"I should be ruined! There's more than two years' work in it."

"And I—I should never be the same. There is so much of me in it. There are some passages in it I must read to you now before you take it. They are not of my heart—not of my heart which was imprisoned and bound while my husband lived."

She arose and swept across the long room, her train of glittering jet and soft velvet catching the light as she went. She returned with the portfolio containing many sheets, and sat in the low chair again.

"You must dine with me on Christmas eve," she said, as she turned the pages of the MS. "I shall have the Illyrian minister and the Countesse de Bravose. He is in love with her, but she can't marry him—the Count de Bravose will continue to live—and after dinner, the theatre."

Again the chapel flashed before his mind—he kneeling at the rail, as he had done every Christmas, and—the old Southern garden and a soldier and a maid!

"You didn't answer."

"Oh," he said, starting, "I am engaged."

She looked at him steadily.

"With another woman?" she asked, a faint touch of shrillness in her tone.

"Yes."

"She who inspired 'The Lily of the Woods,' I presume?" There was scorn in the voice now.

"Yes."

The logs in the grate burned under the rising wind. Blue and green and red tongues shot from them; they had more part of strained hulks seasoned by the sea.

"You'll not break your engagement with that woman?"

He did not answer. The scent of the violets was more insistent. A band in one of the homes where there was a reception played Schubert's Serenade. It was soitten by the distance and the thick hangings. It seemed to strengthen the scent of the violets.

"Will you read our book to that other woman?—our work full of the rapture of the free joy of life? So you think that she—the pale, bloodless creature—can understand your heroine? Why, she will cast you off as one polluted! She, 'The Lily'!" Mrs. Valgrave laughed. "I should like to see her read some passages in which the secret of real hearts is revealed. It's splendidly pagan! Fancy her horror! No—you will not break your engagement with your 'lily'!"

"The Lily in the Woods" was the story of a woman's youth; I had it from her very lips—"

Mrs. Valgrave stood up, a fierce light in her eyes. She threw aside the portfolio and clutched the MS. in her beringed hands.

"But this, passionate, redolent of the revolt that defies all law of love—speaking a passion which the pagan heart of one would well welcome—is more than a story. It is a heart-throb; it is a defiance of those conventions which Julian of old protested against. It is the apotheosis of the elemental passions;—you can't go back to her now."

He arose.

"You read all this in my book?"

"The world will read it, too—and the dormant pagan love of joy will revive—and you will triumph with me."

Again he saw the crucifix on the white wall, and the slim figure crowned with gray hair—praying before it—perhaps now praying for him.

"And you read all that in my book?" he asked again, in a new, strange tone.

## Only a Tea Kettle of Hot Water



"And more!" she exclaimed, triumphantly. "You say what few men have the courage to speak in these Christian times of hypocrisy! I read perhaps more than you know there."

He did not move; then he laid down his tea cup—a trifling action, but which struck her as done in a new way.

"Your 'lily' will not dare to read our book!"

Ruxton started, as if stung by one of those green serpents in the fire.

"If she dares, she will turn as red as the reddest rose!" she laughed.

"But I love her," he said, slowly, "and I shall always love her."

She looked at him from under her long lashes. Then she approached the red glow of the grate, fanned by the wind.

"You love her?"

"Yes," he said, watching her, and knowing intuitively what she was going to do.

"And you will always love her, and you will go to her to-morrow, with your book finished, sure of riches and fame?"

He made no reply; he took up his hat. She threw the papers upon the fire—serpents, red, purple, green, blue and of the color of saffron seized upon them.

"Now!" she said, shrilly, holding out her hands to prevent him from saving the sheets. "Now! you are ruined. Your 'lily' will not care for you—there will be no long leaflets among the holly."

His lips curled; he made no attempt to save the sheets. They turned black while he watched them; the sizzle of the burning paper had killed the perfume of the violets.

"You can go," she said. "I have ruined you—but you drove me to it. And you love her still?"

"Yes," he said, a finer light in his eyes. "Yes; I shall always love her, for she is my mother—and you have saved me."

The butler pushed aside the door curtain.

"The Countess de Bravose and the Illyrian minister," he said.

"Tell them that I am dressing for dinner," Mrs. Valgrave answered softly.

Ruxton bowed to her.

"Good-night," he bowed again slightly, with a glance at the black, fragile paper in the grate.

"Good-night," she answered.

"Richards, find Mr. Ruxton's overcoat—it is cold, very cold—more logs, Richards."—Dr. Egan, in the Boston Republic.

POWER OF A PRIEST

"The hold of the priests on the foreign workmen of the coal regions of Pennsylvania is something wonderful," said Mr. S. F. Prentzel, of Philadelphia, who was a guest last week as the New Willard, Washington.

"Once while on a business trip to a small town in Somerset County, the proprietor of the tavern told me, as I was about to depart, to wait over until the next day if I wanted to see some fun; that rumors affecting the solvency of the local bank had got out and that there was going to be a run on it by the Huns, Poles, Lithuanians, and other alien depositors. Now there wasn't the slightest trouble with the bank and it had five times enough money to pay all claims, but the officials didn't want the nuisance of a run upon it, and that night the president went to see Father Giotti, the priest of the parish, whose authority with the masses was unquestioned.

"Sure enough, by sun-up the next morning a vast crowd of depositors gathered in front of the bank. To take no chances, the bank people had several sacks of gold and silver carted down and the coin was heaped up in lofty piles on the counters where it could be plainly seen. As a further mark of security, the doors of the institution were opened an hour

ahead of time, and as soon as they were the motley crowd began to surge forward; but just as the run started Father Giotti appeared on the scene, and, lifting his arms, began to talk to the people. The effect was magical. What the sight of an abundant supply of money could not do the voice of the priest did in less than two minutes. In absolute submission to his orders the crowd melted away, and in less time than it takes to tell it the run was over. No general of an army could have been more promptly obeyed."

RISKY SURGERY.

Inoculation against smallpox preceded the modern method of vaccination and was attended with a good deal of danger. Thomas Dimsdale was the foremost advocate of inoculation. He inoculated Empress Catherine of Russia. This was in 1788. There was considerable danger to life in undergoing this artificially induced disease. The Czarina, therefore, arranged that during the whole course of the illness of her son and herself there should be relays of swift horses kept constantly ready attached to carriages all along the post road the nearest way out of Russia.

Catherine told Dimsdale that if bad symptoms displayed themselves he was not to remain to look after them, but to fly for his life without delay or compunction. She well knew that he would not be safe if she or the heir of Russia died in his hands.

She gave him an order of the most urgent kind from herself to the successive postmasters not to delay him for a minute on any pretext. Dimsdale received a fee of about \$50,000 from the Empress and other gifts besides.

BE MERCIFUL TO YOUR BEAST.

Hardly any class of animals suffer so much from ignorance, carelessness and cruelty on the part of drivers as the horse. Many of the people who hire horses know nothing of driving or caring for them; many others, since they do not own the horse, care nothing about any injury to him provided they do not have to pay for it, and still another class takes pleasure in driving him at the top of his speed as long as he can go, regardless of his distress. Then there are the drunken drivers, reckless of everything, the drivers who want to race with everybody who comes along, and the people who are out for "a good time," and whose idea is to "let'er go." There are the people who over-drive, who do not water, who water when the horse is overheated, who do not blanket, and others who commit all remaining kinds of offenses against horseflesh—the one idea being that since the horse is not their own it don't make much difference.

The only remedy is to educate public opinion up to the point where people will treat horses well for the horses' sakes, and see to it that others do so also.

He who lives by noble ideals never sneers at exalted standards in others.

NOTICE

IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel of Montreal will apply to the Legislature of Quebec, at its next session, to have the Education Act so amended as to erect the Parish of St. Michael the Archangel of Montreal, into a school municipality, with all the rights and privileges of Catholic School Boards in the Province of Quebec.

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Contributions for the year 1905 (50 cents) may be addressed to

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(All contributions acknowledged.)

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## LIFE AMONG THE CHILDREN OF L

(By Miss May Quinlan, in Tablet.)

(Continued.)

Carrots' relations were good reputation in the quartering children of this district. These are evil times when there was little to eat in the market and many a mouth was obvious that something was done. So Carrots was to supply the family larder having first nominated a tunc tenens to hold the lot with the bright eyes and the ed hair would saunter off abstractedly at butcher's to hover near a vegetable stall, net result of such foraging was satisfactory, in as Carrots had the consolation of seeing his family grow sleek and comfortable-looking; this she took some credit to. She had never been taught to But having been endowed with the deftness of touch and quickness of eye that go to pickpocket, Carrots stole could and her conscience bleated. Conscience! what did child with the Rubens hair of conscience, or of moral Did not the human element pass her mental vision? What her life steeped in it? An herself, was she not girl around the brutishly human? The no commandments where came from. She lived in the plague-stricken areas of the adjoining tenement was out as a place of rank inquiry she sat on the steps she day by day, the lost souls there in there. Yes, with the hat arms and the sunshine in the little Carrots sat listening watching. And perhaps she not as yet that the sword Avenger was already unsheathed that the tenement even now accursed: sealed with the doom of Sodam.

A CHILD'S DEATH

I was pondering these things a woman came along a thoroughfare and touched her hair was dishevelled and eyes red with weeping. "E" was all she said, "Won't yer So I turned and went with her I threaded our way between red looking people, who hurried in their rags, across the busy road, with its stream of traffic for the docks; past public where idlers loitered with dles eyes, or canvassed the n favorite; then down a side where, facing one of the courts of that evil quarter, s tenement we sought. So v up the dirty flight of stairs the stifling sick room.

crowded. Factory hands w with rough, bare arms; dock unshaven faces; a newly arrived in khaki and numerous grimy and ragged, from the tenements. All of them come "to see the child die," each one's gaze was riveted feverish little form that lay in delirium on the tenement was four years old, with gre eyes, and softly rounded cheeks were thin now, hazel eyes staring wide, unconscious, while ever and a baby lips moved in incoheren

SOCIALISM AND CATHOLIC F

"Neither God nor Master," the shipbooth—the Socialis gramme, in a nutshell. We France that the Socialists a implacable enemies of religio have no illusions whatever o score. They declare it them sides, under the pretext of only their reason, of showing selves to be men of science, mitting of no God. For the son explains all, and every p na of nature is brought ab natural causes, although they indicate them. The creation is not an embarrassing pro tem; in fact, they do not any religious teaching. Th and had are two distinct th admit, but they claim that