

The newcomer nodded. "Yes it is just five now. Have you been waiting long?"

"I'd say I have," sighed the girl. "All of us have."

"Probably some urgent summons," suggested the woman. "Of course, the doctor will return as soon as he can."

"He should show more consideration for people who have appointments," Mrs. Moore snapped tartly. "Urgent cases are generally quickly finished. Anyway, with his machine he could come back here and then, if necessary, return to his urgent case."

The boy looked up, a flush of interest in his heavy eyes. "Perhaps the machine's been smashed."

"Perhaps," agreed Mrs. Moore, in a tone which inferred that it was exactly what the doctor deserved.

The boy yawned.

"Why, Joe, you are sleepy," his mother accused. "It is nice and cool over by the window. You could stretch out on the floor there and have a nap."

Joe flushed with embarrassment at the idea of a mature person, ten years old, needing a nap, and his mother became more tactful.

"That position is bad for your arm. If you lie down it will be a rest for it."

So, for the sake of his arm, Joe consented to lie down, and almost immediately his eyes closed. One patient was at peace. His mother fanned him and herself alternately with a magazine.

The phone in the doctor's office rang.

"Perhaps that is the doctor now to ask if anyone is here," suggested Mrs. Moore hopefully.

Mrs. Stearns, the caretaker of this and the adjoining apartment, came from somewhere in the back regions to answer it. But it was only another patient inquiring as to whether the doctor was now in his office. Mrs. Stearns answered, "No," and said that it was not likely he would return now till his usual night hour. Then she called the doctor's home, that she might obtain positive information for the patients in the waiting room.

Presently Mrs. Stearn came to the door.

"Mrs. Leroy says that the doctor was called early this afternoon. He is working on a special case which will require his presence probably for some time longer. He was to phone her when he had finished, and she had not heard from him yet. That means he cannot be here soon. Mrs. Leroy suggested that anyone here return tonight or tomorrow morning." Mrs. Stearn paused and glanced at the faces about her—cross, tired, hot, then continued slowly, apparently addressing the mother who looked a sleeping boy. "You see the case is—a mother and her first child."

As though at a magic touch, the faces changed. They were kindly, interested, sympathetic. Personal ills and irritations were forgotten before the stupendous miracle of a new life, and a new mother.

"We may as well go home," Joe's mother said and stooped to awaken the boy. "I know Dr. Leroy. He will stay till everything is all right. One of my boys had pneumonia last winter and he stayed right with him, noting every breath and pulse-beat till the crisis was passed, at midnight."

"That was good of him," and Mrs. Moore's face was almost peaceful. "I am glad he is staying now."

"He must be very kind," and the girl in plaid put on her hat without a glance in the mirror. A strong, well-balanced character, hers. Efficiently, cheerfully, she was shouldering her way through life. Already she had touched on many of its big hard things; kindness she held to be one of its biggest and best.

The charity patient said nothing, but she was remembering all that this doctor had done for her. She would certainly pay him something when she returned to work—she felt almost able now.

At the Greyson flat the strain of waiting was almost unbearable. Young Greyson had come home early, and realized his mistake—he should have been later than usual. He felt now that he was rapidly losing his mind, under the strain of anxiety, combined with the questions of Lil's mother.

"Do you know anything about this Doctor Leroy?" she asked sharply. "To me he seems rather old-fashioned. Why didn't you get some young doctor? I understand improvements are being made all the time and, of course, it is the young fellows who have modern methods at their finger ends."

Greyson rallied to the doctor's defense.

"Lil likes Leroy. It is a relief to find people now and then who are not in a rush, on the dead run, all the time. Modern doctors are rather inclined to treat people as machines, and are like machines themselves. 'Leroy is gentle, careful, not a bit excitable or fussy and Lil is somewhat nervous.'"

It was over at last. Out of a night of blackness, a place of hope and fear, of mingled joy and pain, Lil Greyson came triumphant to the safe harbor of the young husband's arms. And soon her own arms cradled their son.

Leroy did not realize his fatigue until he went out to the car which had stood so long before the Greyson home. It was always like that. In such battles he put forth all the skill and force and energy at his

command. When the strain relaxed he was unutterably weary. Now he must drop into the office before he could go home to rest. Only a gray-eyed, gray-faced young man waited for him there.

"Had a hard day, Doc?" he questioned, noting the other's tired face.

The doctor hesitated while certain moments of the day seemed to stand out like the "close ups" of moving pictures: Ellen Latour's face, Lil Greyson's glad blue eyes, the suspense when two lives were in danger, the relief at last when they were safe.

"Some of it was good," he answered slowly, "some of it was Hell—almost."

The young man was gone. The doctor went down stairs to his car. How very tired he was. It was night now. Looking up, Leroy beheld a deep blue sky and stars.

"Heaven—God," he considered, "near like that, all the time, watching the struggle with life, death, almost Hell."

He squared his shoulders in sudden access of energy. After all, wealth and fame were not the biggest issues in life. To fight on the right side in a battle—was not that better? Could he have fought so hard for that tiny baby life today if he had not held it doubly precious because of God's gift, a soul? Oh, well for him that, after twenty-five years of service, he held the same beliefs and ideals, (minus his conceit) as the young man who began work a quarter century ago. For him still the joy of seeing in every sufferer he served One Who had suffered for them, hearing within his soul a Voice divinely sweet:

"Inasmuch as you have done it unto these, the least of My brethren, you have done it unto Me."

—Rose Martin, in The Magnificat.

beautiful life thrown away, he undertook to escape from his mental agony by suicide. At the moment when he lifted the rope to hang himself, the poet was struck to his knees by Divine Grace: "At the same instant I seemed to see, within myself, the image of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, smiling at me with an expression of ineffable compassion."

Returning to Paris, Rette took counsel with the poet Coppee—the Coppee whom he had insulted so violently a short time before—and sought out a confessor. Abbe Magy, vicar of Saint Sulpice, was chosen to treat this ulcerated soul and teach it the elements of religion; for Rette was ignorant of the most elementary symbols of Christianity. From that day peace ruled the soul and spirit of the repentant sinner, he joyously accomplished his general confession, and he went to the Sacred Table.

"During the following day I lived in a sort of luminous dream. All my thoughts were turned toward the Lord; all the objects about me seemed to have taken on a festal look. I was literally seeing the universe with different eyes."

The island of Saint-Honorat lies off the southeast coast of France, at a distance of about four miles from Cannes. It is a mile long and 500 yards wide at its widest part. Magnificent pines, luminous cypresses, and decorative palms shade the island. The Mediterranean sun filters through the foliage of orange-trees, lemon-trees and luxuriant vines. On this island, in the peace of the old abbey of Lerins, inhabited by the Cistercians of the congregation of Senanque, who follow the rule of St. Benedict, modified by Saint Bernard Rette finally fixed his wandering steps, after having sojourned successively with the Benedictines of Chevotogne in Belgium, at Ars-en-Dombes and at Notre Dame d'Hautecombe. His home is a little two-room structure paved with square tile. One room is his work room and his sleeping room, and the other is a wardrobe and lumber room. The walls are whitewashed; one great window floods his cell with light; just below this hermitage a group of magnificent rose bushes exhale their perfume, nasturtiums in bloom clamber over his green shutters, and in a corner of his yard, a pomegranate tree offers its red flowers in June and its fruit in September.

"I was never so happy in my life as I have been living on this enchanted isle!" Rette wrote me. Protected from men and from the wiles of the Evil One, lulled by the sonorous cadences of the sea, punctuated every hour by the sound of the bell which calls the monks to pray, Rette listens to the singing of his heart, and like the fisherman of the Gospels—"Rette," in Latin, means "net"—he brings to land the mystic fishes of Divine Grace.

When the War broke out, Rette who has always been passionately anxious to serve his kind, once as an anarchist, now as a Catholic, sought and found a new field of activity.

At Lourdes, in peace time, he had been a volunteer stretcher bearer. Now his experience as a soldier in good stead in a military hospital, with its feverish nights, its suffering victims, the misery of these noble young bodies, the moral distress of souls in rebellion.

Rette served at the bedside of the soldiers of France. He dressed wounds, comforted the dying, reassured the weak, bent over wounded hearts and brought them spiritual balm and theunction of prayer. In a touching book drawn from his own experience, "They Who Bleed," Rette has rendered with his own characteristic gripping realism, certain terrible visions of those days, which bring before our eyes the Divine passion of the Christ Himself.

Whatever may have been the immediate occasion of a conversion, we may be sure that analogous phenomena of conscience produce identical effects. All converts, on returning to spiritual health, have experienced the same impression of joy and plenitude which they translate by similar expressions, by reporting that they had "the sensation of passing from darkness to light."

This light is God's grace. It moves the soul, not to quietism, as has been maintained, but to action. For religious ecstasy, far from being a state of nirvana, is the most intense of activity—is life in God.

This Catholic action manifests itself in two ways: in action on others, and in action on oneself.

No one has better illustrated than Rette this double activity. Strong in his own experience, he applied himself vigorously to the consolation of other souls, to lifting them toward God. The "Letters to an Indifferent Person" and "When the Spirit Bloweth" have had a great influence on certain doubters. Like Huysmans, Rette has had the joy of bringing back to religion a considerable number of unbelievers and others who were lukewarm.

At the same time that our author, instrument of Divine Grace, exercises a salutary influence on others, he himself feels the effect of his own activity, laboring as he does for perfection by quiet meditation and commerce with God.

Far from men, buried in a happy solitude, like a monk in his monastery, Rette converses with Christ, and the joys which he draws from the sacrament are such that his soul warms and sinks in the ineffable intoxication of contemplation, which is certainly the most intensely

active state a human being can attain.

These interior effusions lead to the supreme science, the science of mysticism. And Rette is a mystic.

Only a mystic could have written correctly, could have made his reader understand and feel in all its divine beauty, the luminous life of that "Pearl of the Sacred Heart," Saint Marguerite-Marie. This volume is probably Rette's Catholic masterpiece. He became the scrupulous and passionate historian of that admirable Visitandine nun of Paray-le-Monial, who felt her soul kindled by the fire of the Sacred Heart, and who, at the bidding of her Divine Master kindled the flame all about her.

Too often—and a great number of us have suffered from it—the lives of the saints are written by priests or laymen, who, puffed with good intentions, imagine that they are edifying the world and obeying the laws of the Church by cultivating a weak and sweetish style, by diluting their message with "effusions of marshmallow water, with feeble periphrases, with pale, mucilaginous metaphors," as Rette himself picturesquely expresses it. Nothing can be more fatal to their end. Many religious biographies are absolutely unreadable because of their sweetish and sickening style.

By his book on Marguerite-Marie Alacoque, the author of "Under the Morning Star" has placed himself at the head of modern biographers, determined as he was to show our periphrases, with pale, mucilaginous and fists, and that we are not afraid of the right word and the straightforward phrase."

It is in truth a Saint's Life told in a manly fashion by a mystic who has himself known aridity and the fire divine. "As I gave my best efforts to the writing of this Life," Rette writes, "I knew the joy of burning like a reed plucked off the filth of this world by the merciful hand of the Good Master, and I felt myself glow at contact with that terrible, gentle brasier, the Sacred Heart. I suffered, and I was happy to suffer."

Rette is not only a mystic, he is a mystic realist. I realize that in joining these words I am committing a pleonasm, but I must be a realist. It is only those who are ignorant of the truest sciences, the science of Catholicism, who suspect mysticism of being a philosophical system for neurotics.

It is, as a matter of fact, the maddest of errors to imagine that the contemplation of God constitutes a monstrous annihilation of intelligence and the abolition of all spiritual activity. All the great mystics have been perfect organizers and founders of wonderfully efficient orders. The monastic rules they created remain the noblest monuments of human wisdom and human discipline which we possess. Since God is absolute reality, it follows that the vision of God is the most real, the most positive, the most adequately true, of all possible visions.

Thus Rette has arrived by progressive stages at this plenitude of love and this absolute certitude, which constitutes Catholic perfection. Realistic mysticism is the keystone of his structure of light. It seems to me that it is a very necessary thing to say.

Order after disorder, joy after anguish, the sun of grace after the darkness of the dawn, renunciation of the vanities of earth after the orgy of the sense, and above all, a heart melted by divine love, such is the "better part" chosen by the former critic of the "Pen," who wrote me recently:

"For a long time, as you know, I have lived completely apart from literary schools and coteries. When I express judgments on literature they are not concerned with pleasing or displeasing this author or that one. I have no aim but to acquaint the public with my convictions. I do it sincerely; this is all anyone can ask of me. I know that I have offended certain persons. But if I am unfairly judged, I have no trouble in consoling myself, since I cherish the hope, perhaps unfounded, that justice will be rendered me after I am dead. Even if this hope is not realized, it matters very little. The important thing is that I have served the Church and tried to spread the love of God. May this conscientious effort assure me a shortening of my stay in Purgatory—I wish nothing more than this. The rests counts for little."

MARYKNOLL FATHERS IN CHINA

Maryknoll, N. Y., Dec. 14.—With the advent of new missionaries each year and the continued development of mission stations in the provinces assigned to the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, the Maryknoll Fathers in China make each year new assignments in their personnel. The latest changes are as follows:

Father Bernard Meyer, pastor at Koehow, opens a new mission at Hoi Yin, Kwangsi; Father A. J. Paschang remains at Koehow as pastor; Father Robert J. Cairns leaves Yungkong to establish a mission center at Fachow, Kwangtung; and Father Philip A. Taggart leaves the same inland mission to become pastor at Tungchen, Kwangtung. Father Joseph A. Sweeney leaves Tungchen to take charge of a mission at Sam Cheung, Kwangtung.

THE CONVERSION OF A FRENCH POET

(From the French of Tancrède de Visan)
Translated by Roy Temple House

One day the startling news reached literary circles that Adolphe Rette had been converted to Catholicism. All who knew his book Similitudes were astonished by this sudden return to Christianity. Investigated, and learned that Rette was ill in the St. Joseph Hospital. I went to see him, and he told me himself of the change which had taken place in his life. He told me that he had been touched by grace, and that he had utterly repudiated a detestable past.

This was in 1906. Rette, like all men of action who have been deeply wounded by life, was suddenly taken with a profound disgust with this world. The peasantry had disappointed him; he had believed our country population to be honest and wholesome, but he had found them dissolute and rotten. He no longer felt any sympathy with anarchy, since he found the principal exponents of that chimerical doctrine enslaved by base appetites and a ferocious hatred for all which is noble and beautiful. Esoteric doctrines had no hold on him; he had pierced their nebulous phrases and penetrated the inanity of their visions; and in his book, "In the Land of Black Lilies," he was destined to touch with his finger the obscene and blasphemous foundation of the majority of these occult practices. And compulsory education, and equality, and universal suffrage, and democracy? All these things had lost their value to his suffering soul. The man who once cried so loud for science, positivism, the reign of justice on earth, no longer believed in any of this. Everything disgusted him, and he had come to hate himself.

He withdrew to the country, and sought in the shade of his much-loved forest a modicum of peace for his heart and his soul. Art seized him for a moment again with its creative fervor. Paganism drew him for a time with its cult of luminous life and its dedication of the obscure forces of nature. But soon this naturalistic pantheism failed to satisfy him any longer. Neither Kantian moralism nor Buddhist fatalism satisfied his soul-hunger for the Truth. Thrown about like a plank on a troubled sea, the poor sufferer sighed in vain for a haven of peace and love.

One day as he was reading the second canto of Dante's "Purgatory," Rette suddenly found his soul flooded with light, and for the first time the thought of the Catholic religion penetrated his refractory spirit. From this first touch of Grace dates the beginning of the poet's real conversion. His soul was still tortured at times by terrible doubts, by the old errors, by the shrill voice of the flesh and his old pride, but the Lord had already marked his sheep, though it wandered with the flock of sinners, and the time was near when He would lead it to the wells of salvation.

The thrilling story of this return to God, retailed by sudden relapses, is told in his volume "From the Devil to God," which with his "En Route," constitutes one of the most poignant autobiographies I have ever read. Long months passed before Rette at last threw himself into the arms of the Church. For a long time he struggled with this temptation and that. At Arbonne, in the heart of his beloved forest, he met the supreme crisis. One evening, while a prey to the most violent despair, abandoned, weary of this incessant war with the old Adam, tortured with remorse for a

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By Annie M. P. Smithson

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