

SWEETHEARTS.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

It is ill for the general practitioner who sits among his patients both morning and evening, and sees them in their homes between, to steal time for one little daily breath of clean air. To win it he must slip early from his bed and walk out between shuttered shops when it is chill but very clear, and all things are sharply outlined, as in a frost. It is an hour that has a charm of its own, when, but for a postman or a milkman, one has the pavement to one's self, and even the most common thing takes an ever-recurring freshness, as though causeway and lamp and signboard had all wakened to the new day. Then even an inland city may seem beautiful, and bear virtue in its smoke tainted air.

But it was by the sea that I lived, in a town that was unlovely enough were it not for its glorious harbor. And who cares for the town when one can sit on the bench at the headland, and look out over the huge blue bay and the yellow cimeter that curves before it? I loved it when its great face was freckled with the fishing boats, and I loved it when the big ships went past, far out, a little hulk of white and no hull, with topsails curved like a bird's wing, and the sea was a blue and white and white and blue. But most of all I loved it when no trace of man marred the majesty of nature and when the sunbeams slanted down on it from the suburbs slanted down on it from the suburbs slanted down on it from the suburbs.

It was on such another day that I first saw my old man. He came to my bench just as I was leaving it. My eye must have picked him out even in a crowded street, for he was a man of large frame and fine presence, with something of distinction in the set of his lip and the poise of his head. He limped up the winding path, leaning heavily on his stick, as though that great shoulder had become too much at last for the falling limbs that bore them. As he approached my eyes caught nature's danger signal, that faint bluish tinge in nose and lip which tells of a laboring heart.

"The brae is a little trying, sir," said I, speaking as a physician, "I should say that you would do well to rest here before you get farther." He inclined his head in a stately old-world fashion and seated himself upon the bench. Seeing that he had no wish to speak, I was silent also, but I could not help watching him out of the corner of my eyes. For he was such a wonderful survival of the early half of the century, with his low-crowned, curly-brimmed hat, his black satin tie, which fastened with a buckle at the back, and above all, his large, fleshy, clean-shaven face, shot with its mesh of wrinkles. Those eyes, ere they had grown dim, had looked out from the box seat of mail coaches, and had seen the knots of navvies as they toiled on the brown embankments. Those lips had smiled over the first number of "Pickwick," and had gossiped of the promising young man who wrote them. The face itself was a seventy-year almanac, and every seam as private sorrow left its trace. That pucker on the forehead stood for the Mutiny, perhaps; that line of care for the Crimean winter, it may be; and that last little sheaf of wrinkles, as my fancy hoped, for the death of Gordon, and so, as I dreamed in my foolish way, the old gentleman with the shining streak was gone, and it was seventy years of a great nation's life that took shape before me on the headland in the morning.

But he soon brought me back to earth again. As he recovered his breath he took a letter out of his pocket, and, putting on a pair of horn-rimmed eyeglasses, he read it through very carefully. Without any design of playing the spy I could not help observing that it was in a woman's hand. When he had finished it he read it again, and then sat with the corners of his mouth drawn down and his eyes staring vacantly out over the bay, the most forlorn-looking old gentleman that ever I have seen. All that was kindly within me was set stirring by that wistful face, but I knew that he was in no humor for talk, and so, at last, with my breakfast and my patients calling me, I left him on the bench and started for home.

fashion, with his brow puckered, and the corners of his mouth drawn down like those of a fretting child. So I left him with a vague wonder as to who he might be, and why a single spring day should have wrought such a change upon him.

So interested was I that next morning I was on the lookout for him. Sure enough, at the same hour I saw him coming up the hill, but very slowly, with a bent back and a heavy head. It was shocking to me to see the change in him as he approached. "I am afraid that our air does not agree with you, sir," I ventured to remark.

But it was as though he had no heart for talk. He tried, as I thought, to make some fitting reply, but it slurred off into a mumble and silence. How bent and weak and old he seemed—ten years older at the least than when first I had seen him! It went to my heart to see this sweet old fellow wistfully looking at me. There was the eternal letter, which he unfolded with his shaking fingers. Who was this woman whose words moved him so? Some daughter, perhaps, or granddaughter, who should have been the light of his home instead of—I smiled to find how bitter I was growing, and how swiftly I was weaving a romance round an unshaven old man and his correspondence. Yet all day he lingered in my mind, and I had fiful glimpses of those two trembling, blue-veined knuckled hands, with the paper rustling between them.

I had hardly hoped to see him again. Another day's decline made, I thought, hold him to his room, if not to his bed. Great then, was my surprise when, as I approached my bench, I saw that he was already there. But as I came up to him I could scarce be sure that it was indeed the same man. There were the curly-brimmed hat and the shining stock and the horn glasses, but where were the stoop and the gray-shaven and firm lip, with a bright eye, and a head that poised itself upon his shoulders like an eagle on a rock. His back was as straight and square as a grenadier's, and he switched at the angles with his stick in his exuberant vitality. In the button-hole of his well brushed black coat there glinted a golden bodson, and the corner of a dainty red silk handkerchief lapped over from his breast pocket. He might have been the eldest son of the weary creature who had sat there the morning before.

"Good morning, sir, good morning," he cried, with a merry waggle of his cane. "Good morning!" I answered: "how beautiful the bay is looking." "Yes, sir, but you should have seen it just before the sun rose." "What, you have been here since then?" "I was here when there was scarce light to see the path." "You are a very early riser." "On occasion, sir, on occasion?" He cocked his eye at me as if to gauge whether I was worthy of his confidence. "The fact is, sir, that my wife is coming back to me to-day."

I suppose that my face showed that I did not quite see the force of the explanation. My eyes, too, may have given him assurance of sympathy, for he moved quite close to me and began speaking in a low, confidential voice, as if the matter were of such weight that even the seagulls must be kept out of our counsels. "Are you a married man, sir?" "No, I am not." "Ah then you cannot quite understand it. My wife and I have been married for nearly fifty years, and we have never been parted, never at all, until now."

"Was it for long?" I asked. "Yes, sir. This is the fourth day. She had to go to Scotland. A matter of duty, you understand, and the doctors would not let me go. Not that I would have allowed them to stop me, but she was on their side. Now, thank God! It is over, and she may be here at any moment." "Here!" "Yes, here. This headland and bench were old friends of ours thirty years ago. The people with whom we stay are not, to tell the truth, very congenial, and we have little privacy among them. That is why we prefer to meet here. I could not be sure which train would bring her, but if she had come by the very earliest she would have found me waiting."

quite a romance, I give you my word; and I won her, and, somehow, I have never got over the freshness and the wonder of it. To think that that sweet, lovely girl has walked by my side all through life, and that I have been able—"

He stopped suddenly and I glanced round at him in surprise. He was shaking all over, in every fibre of his great body. His hands were clawing at the woodwork and his feet shuffling on the gravel. I saw what it was. He was trying to rise, but was so excited that he could not. I half extended my hand, but a higher courtesy constrained me to draw it back again and turn my face to the sea. An instant afterwards he was up, and hurrying down the path.

A woman was coming towards us. She was quite close before he had seen her—thirty yards at the utmost. I know not if she had ever been as he described her, or whether it was but some idea which he carried in his brain. The person upon whom I looked was tall, it is true, but she was thick and shapeless, with a ruddy, well blown face, and a skirt grotesquely gathered up. There was a green ribbon in her hat which jarred upon my eyes, and her blouse-like bodice was full and clumsy. And this was the lovely girl, the ever youthful? My heart sank as I thought how little such a woman might appreciate him, how unworthy she might be of his love.

She came up the path in her solid way, while he staggered along to meet her. Then, as they came together, looking discreetly out of the farthest corner of my eye, I saw that he put out both his hands like a child when its little journey is done, while she, shrinking from a public caress, took one of them in hers and shook it. As she did so I saw her face, and I was easy in my mind for my old man. God grant that when this hand is shaking, and when this back is bowed, a woman's eyes may look so into mine!—McClure's Magazine.

The Blessed Sacrament. The custom of visiting the Blessed Sacrament is a most beautiful one, but unfortunately it is one too seldom practiced by Catholics. Were our Saviour to appear as a man in some church, how great would be the desire of every Christian to go to that church to see Him. Should He remain there for any considerable time, it matters not where the church was located, great pilgrimages would be organized, and thousands would leave their homes and cross oceans and continents to see Him. We all know that He is as certainly in the Tabernacle of the altar as He was in Jerusalem nearly nineteen hundred years ago; and yet so many who believe that fact seldom think of visiting Him, except when forced under pain of sin to attend the celebration of Mass.

We know that the Holy Eucharist is an evidence of the intense love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for man; and yet we show even in a simple way our appreciation of that love by entering the churches as we pass to say a short prayer? We should remember that our Lord is there, and that He will most assuredly bless those who come to see Him. Notwithstanding our faith, we are inclined to treat our Saviour with far less respect than we show to the great men of the earth or to our personal friends. Those who are familiar with the rules governing polite society would not dare treat their friends as we treat Him Who is every day on our altars; for whilst they are very punctilious in returning calls, we are very careless in visiting Him.

Faith should find expression in works. If we believe Jesus is in our churches, we should give testimony to that belief in going to see Him and praying before the altar. It requires but a few moments, and most assuredly the time spent there is well employed.

THE DOLOURS OF MARY.

Their Imminency—A Vision of the Future—Eloquent Sermon by the Rev. Arthur Whelan.

Seldom before has such a large congregation assembled in St. Patrick's Church, Soho, as that which took part in the celebration of the Feast of the Seven Dolours Sunday evening. To say that the sacred edifice was filled would give an imperfect idea of the vast gathering. Shortly before the service commenced the benches were filled, and many had to content themselves with standing accommodation. After the recitation of the Rosary an eloquent sermon was preached by the Rev. Arthur Whelan, who took for his text the words, "Behold this Child is set for the rise and fall of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce." It was fitting, he said, that the congregation of St. Patrick's should gather together in such large numbers in order to celebrate the feast of the Seven Dolours of Our Lady. It was particularly fitting that the members of the congregation of St. Patrick's Soho, should thus perform an act of worship to the Son of God through His mother for the historic Church in which they were assembled which, while new materials, was surrounded with the old spirit and old traditions which were contained within the shell of old St. Patrick's, and it was therefore fitting that the Seven Dolours of Our Lady should form a great feast amongst them, because St. Patrick's was a WITNESS AND A SERMON IN STONE, witnessing the old memories, and the old spirit, and the ancient traditions in the early revival of Catholicity in London. The spot was consecrated by the dearest memories of our faith. Moreover, it was fitting that the members of the congregation should celebrate the Feast of the Dolours, because the patron and apostle of the Irish people, who, like Mary, had passed through a sea of persecution and affliction, and had gained for herself the title of the Queen of Martyrs amongst the lands of the earth. It would therefore be appropriate that evening to gather together the thoughts that naturally rush to their minds on such an occasion—the Seven Dolours of Our Lady. What tongue could adequately express, what mind could conceive, the imminency of the affliction of Mary? To that shall I compare them or what shall I liken to them, daughter of Jerusalem, for as great as the sea is thy broken-heartedness. Mary's Dolours were as immense as the sea, they were greater than the ocean. The mighty deep was traversed by thousands of vessels containing within them THE WEALTH AND TREASURES OF THE WORLD.

But down deep below in the depths was yet a life far more fertile in its intensity, and Mary in the length and breadth and the depth and height of her affliction was greater even than the sea. Why was it that Mary suffered so much, or rather, why was it that God gave her this inheritance of affliction? IT WAS A MYSTERY, and just as the Incarnation, upon which the maternity of Mary was established, was a great mystery of love, so was it a mystery that she should be rewarded with the sufferings of her Son. There was no reason, and they could only conjecture. Let them endeavor to gain some idea of the imminency of Mary's Dolours, let them look into the world and think of all the sadness and the afflictions of men. Gather together, if possible, the tears of all the orphans, and their sorrows may be greater, but the sorrows of Mary were even greater. Gather together in one mass all that men and women had suffered, yet not even then would they have a measure or a standard by which to tell the Dolours of Mary. Let them endeavor to seek one or two of the sources of Mary's Dolours. When Simeon took her Child into his arms, and looking first at the Babe and then at the mother, he said—"Behold this Child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of men, and for a sign that shall be contradicted, and thy own soul a sword shall pierce. Those words in an intensity conveyed to many a woe, and though Simeon then sang his *Nunc Dimittis*, and Mary had sung her *Magnificat* she knew that a great trial was to come upon her. And as she stood in the Temple she saw as in a vision the future of her Divine Son; but her Dolours were not confined to the passion of our Divine Lord, or to the immediate circumstances in which she lived. She remembered all that had passed on Calvary, and she also saw in that vision that the Son who had died for man was now and through all ages to be a sign of contradiction. She saw the future and witnessed the persecution and martyrdom of the saints. She also saw that her Divine Son was to be contradicted and opposed in His love, and men were again to cry out with the Jews of old, "CRUCIFY HIM, CRUCIFY HIM."

She saw the ten persecutions and the martyrs who suffered, she saw men going out into distant lands to preach the gospel of her Son's love, and she saw England in the sixteenth century when it WAS ROBBED OF THE FAITH, when men departed from Him and gave up the inheritance of their forefathers. She saw this land that for a thousand years had been steeped in a sea of supernatural light suddenly change into darkness, she saw the saints and the martyrs of England shed their blood in holy revenge upon the people and the country they loved so well. She saw the future of the Cath-

olic Church, and then onward to the sixteenth century when England was lost from her side, but she was cheered by the thought that in another land there were loyal and generous hearts. And not even then did Mary's vision cease. She saw London then as it was at the present time, LONDON MYSTERY UPON MYSTERIES, with so much infidelity, so much charity, and so much wickedness. Was there ever a city that contained within itself so many contradictions as London? She saw hundreds and thousands of men who never, from one year's end to the other, bent the knee to the Saviour who was crucified for them, and she remembered the millions of men who would forget to their last hour the image of the crucified One on that green hill far away. She saw men preaching against His name, and without love and without faith. She saw a darkness gather over the land, the darkness of infidelity and immorality. Would there ever be a day when the world would return in greater loyalty and generous service to Jesus Christ? Yes, it would. It was time that they wept tears over what was called a wicked world, but if they examined the history of one age after another they would find that the age had been what men had made it. They were told by many that Christianity was dying, and that religion had lost its power; but even in London there was nothing in the circumstances of modern society to alter one's conviction that Christianity, God's love and religion, would live again. Society changed, and science changed day by day, but as long as human hearts remained as they were, as long as there was a God in heaven, so long would they and their descendants draw an inexhaustible source of encouragement from the same stream that fed our forefathers. When he remembered that the number of those who desired to help their fellow-men was increasing day by day, when he noted the gradual subsidence of animosity between nation and nation—when all this, like a heavenly vision, rose before him his soul glowed with a hope of better things. When he remembered that thousands of homes were spread over the land to shelter the homeless and the orphan, when he remembered the numberless homes for the protection of purity and innocence, as though the flaming sword of an angel barred the way to the tempter—when all this like a vision, rose before him his soul was filled with hope.

London, England, and the world may be dark, but let them place their faith in the power and the strength of Jesus Christ, for He had said, "I will be with you at all times," and just as the poor man by the wayside who was blind felt the power, though he touched not the hem of His garment, and cried out, "Jesus of Nazareth pass by," so may this London live in the sunlight of God's glory. "Watchman, what sayest thou of the night?" and, looking upon the valley, the watchman answered, "The night is still here, darkness and troubles and tears must be the inheritance of man." But again I cried, WATCHMAN WHAT SAYEST THOU OF THE NIGHT? and the watchman answered from the hills, "The night is departing and the morning cometh."—London Catholic News, Sept. 22.

Human life is held too cheaply when the individual who needs a tonic for his system, seeks to cover his wants by purchasing every new mixture that is recommended to him. Remember that Ayer's Sarsaparilla has a well earned reputation of fifty years' standing. Street Car Accident.—Mr. Thomas Sabin, says: "My eleven year old boy had his foot badly injured by being run over by a car on the Street Railway. We at once commenced bathing the foot with DR. THOMAS' ELECTRIC OIL, when the discoloration and swelling was removed, and in three days he could use his foot. We always keep a bottle in the house ready for any emergency." Minard's Liniment Cures La Grippe.

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Mr. J. Alcide Chausse Montreal, P. Q.

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