LUKE DELMEGE.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

A PARLIAMENTARY DINNER.

It was part of the programme that Luke should invite his brother priests to dine. He was one of the few curates who enjoyed the privilege of "separate who enjoyed the privilege of "separate maintenance;" and the privilege en tailed some responsibilities, and, amongst them, the initial one of giving a "house-warming." He had some "house warming." He had some ervons qualms and difficulties about te. His prim, cold, English manner had not made him a favorite with the brethren, whose quick, breezy volatile ways he disliked, and whose attempts at easy familiarity he rather resented. But, he felt he should come down from the stilts, if he were to get on at all in this strange country, where every one seemed to live in a kind of indolent

one seemed to live his kind of indeceded and easy undress.

"I hope, my dear young friend," said the gentle and kind old pastor, in that tone of urbane and deferential friendship which characterized him, "that you will not go to any extremes in this little entertainment. Your revenue here will be extremely limited; and, in any case, it is always well not to be singular." not to be singular.

well not to be singular."
"O, no, sir!" said Luke. "I shall attempt nothing beyond what is usual on these occasions. To be very candid, indeed, I should just as soon not be obliged to hold these entertain-ments. I don't care much for them; and I have a lively horror of a dining-

and all its appliances "You know you must command everything you require here," said the old man. "If you would kindly send up your servant, my housekeeper will be most happy to send you any glass, or table linen, or cutlery you

I am sure I'm most grateful, sir,"
Luke. "We shall say 5 o'clock said Luke. "V on Thursday."

The dinner passed off well. Even the stiff formality of the host could not subdue the vicality of his younger guests, which effervesced and bubbled over in jest, and anecdote, and swift, subtle repartee. Nowhere on earth is such wit and merriment as at clerical dinner in Ireland. May it be always so, in this land of faith and frolic!

John was waiter; and John was gorgeous in white front and swallow-taile This idea of a waiter was rather an innovation, which some were disposed to resent; and it palled a little on their spirits, until there was a atumble, and a crash of broken glass in the hall, and the spell was broken the hall, and the spell was broken. Luke firshed angrily. John was im-perturable. He explained afterwards: "Where's the use in talkin'? Sure, things must be broke."

was the calm philosophy of Celtic

fatalism.

Now, Luke, as he had once explained, before, had made the most determined, cast iron resolution never, under any circumstances, to be inveigled into a discussion on any subject, because, as he explained, it is impossible to con-duct a debate on strictly parliamentary lines in Ireland. This, of course, was very chilling and unfriendly; but he thought it wiser and safer. Alas! for human resolutions! What can a man do in Charybdis, but fling out his arms for

That reminds me," said a young curate, who had been classmate with Luke in Maynooth, "of a legend of our college days, of a student, who was strictly forbidden to cutof the way strictly forbidden to enter the rooms of a professor, his uncle. He tried several strategems, but in vain; for Jack was as cute as a fox. Then, he struck on the plan of dragging up the coal scuttle, and tumbling over it, just at Jack's door. And Jack should come ont to see and help the poor servant in his emergency. And then—the warm fire, and the glass of wine."

I don't see the application of your anecdote," said Luke, who was very much put about by the accident in the

"Let me see," said the other. "I don't think I intended any application. Put let me see! Oh, yes! I really would not have noticed that elever Ganymede were it not for that crash in hall. Accidents are required to velope genius."
'It is really interesting," said the

old pastor, "to behold how easily our people fit into their surroundings. You can turn an Irishman into anything. A skillul alchemist, that is, an thing. A skilful alchemist, that is, able statesman, could take up all the waste material in Ireland, and turn it into all beautiful forms of utility and loveliness. I knew that poor fellow, said the old man, in his kind way,
"when he nearly broke the heart of
the archdeacon by his insobriety and
untruthfulness. I never thought that
you could transform him so rapidly."

The little compliment made Luke

proud, and broke his cast iron resolution into smitherines. He called for more hot water and coffee, and settled down to a pleasant academical discussion.

he said, folding his napkir over his knees, "the Irish are a plastic race; but the mould in which they are cast should never be allowed to run cold. If it is so suffered, they are stereotyped forever. It is a land of cast-iron conservatism. You cannot break away in originality without be coming a monster. It is the land of the Pyramids and the Sphinxes, with all the newer races staring at it, and

giving it up as a puzzle."
"It would no longer be a puzzle, said the young priest above mentioned," if we were allowed to solve it in our own way. But, it has ever been our misfortune that a blind man is always

called upon to solve the riddle."
"I'm not quite so sure of that," said
Luke, tossing his soutane over his
knees, with the old sic argumentaris
gesture; "our ecclesiastical department is not so much meddled with; and behold where we are !"
"And where are we?" said the

other. "I should say somewhere in media-

val times," said Luke. "Compare our ideas of man's fitness or unfitness for a certain position, with those which obtain the wide world over. In every other department of life you ask, Is this man fit? In our department, you ask, 1s this man fit? In our department, you ask. How long is he on the mission? So, too, you never judge a man's actuality by the net amount of work he to done by the net amount of work he actuality by the net amount of work he has done, or is capable of doing, but by What did he get? The meaning of which enigma is, what prizes did he take in the days of his small clothes and his seminary?"

"You shouldn't complain, Father Delmege," said an old priest; "Maynooth has left its hall-mark upon you, and you cannot rub it off."

"Thank you, Father," said Luke; "but it is just as abourd to speak of a man as a great theologian, because he

man as a great theologian, because he gained a prize in theology thirty or forty years ago, as to speak of a man as a great warrior, because he was captain n a successful snowball sortie at Eton; or as a great artist in black and white, because he drew a caricature of his teacher on the blackboard of a country

"I often heard that Eton won Water

"One of the world's, or history's falsehoods," said Luke. "It was the starved commissariat of the French. and the treachery of Grouchy, that lost Waterloo, and the well filled settles of the British, and the help of Blucher, that won it. It was the vic-Blucher, that won it. It was the victory of stupidity and roast beef over genius and starvation."

"Now, nonsense, De mege; every one admits that in the career of every great man his early triumphs are recorded as indications of his future."

"I have not noticed it," said Luke, "because all the great men of my acquaintance never cast their heroic had the control of the large in the bells of a university:

acquaintance never cast their heroic shadows in the halls of a university; but this is Ireland all out. You at tempt to nail the shadows on the grass, and then believe them realities." Luke had scored. It was a Pyrrhic

victory, and a dangerous one, for it flushed him. His cast iron resolution was not flung to the winds.

But to return," he said. "We are

just passing through another transition stage, where the new moulding of our people's character is about to take place. Let us be careful that the new ideals are right, before the genius of the race is fixed forever."

"There are so many artists at the work now," said the young priest, 'that they can hardly blunder." work now,"

"I'm not so sure of that," said Luke.
"In a 'multitude of counsellors there s much wisdom,' but that supposes that the counsellors can agree upon something. I see nothing before us but to accept the spirit of the century, and conform to the Anglo-Saxon ideal."

This was known to be Luke's pet nobby; but he had never formulated it pefore. The whole table flared up in before. an angry flame of protest.
"Tae Anglo Saxon ideal? A civili-

zation where Mammon is god, and every man sits with one eye on his ledger—the other on his liver!" "The Anglo-Saxon ideal?" A nation

of dead souls, and crumbling bodies!"
"The Anglo Saxon ideal?" The young priest before mentioned was on feet; gesticulating furiously, hoarse, rasping voice drowning the angry protests of the brethren. Luke grew quite pale under the comm he had excited.

he said, "you have to face "Yes," he said, "you have to fac civilization for good or ill, or create civilization of your own. The people are losing the poetry of the past—their belief in Celtic superstitions and crea tions. Can you create a new poetry for them? and can you fight, and beat back your invaders, except with their

into the Atlantic," said the young priest, "than that they should compromise all their traditions and their honour by accepting the devil's code of morals. One race after another has been annihilated in this Isle of Destiny for four thousand years. But they passed away with bonour untarnished. So shall we!"

"Oh, my dear dear Father!" said Luke deprecatingly, "if you are pre-pared to sit down and accept the in-evitable, all right! There is no need for further argument. Let us fold our togas around us as we fall. But if the struggle is still to continue, there is togas around us as we fail. Dut it use struggle is still to continue, there is not much use in kite-flying, in the hope that we are going to call down the lightnings of heaven on our opponents." "I suppose 'tis Destiny," said the

"I suppose 'tis Destiny," said the young fire-cater, resuming his seat. "But, better be exterminated a hundred times than turned into money grabbers and beef eaters.'

It's only the cyclical movement in all history, noticed by all great thinkers, and formulated by Vice and thinkers, and formulated by Vico and Campanella," said Luke, now victorious and exultant, and forgetful, "the corsi and ricorsi of all human progress; and there is one great luminous truth running through it all—that he who cannot govern himself must allow himself to be governed by another; and that the world will always be governed by those who are superior in nature."

It is a little thing that turns the Irish mind from anger or despair to laughter.
"Would you please pass down the
corsi and ricorsi of that coffee and hot water?" said the young wit; and lo the discussion ended in a roar of merri

Just then a sweet, clear, girlish voice just outside the window, which was raised this warm, summer evening, sang softly, and with great feeling, the first of Lady Dufferin's pathetic bal-

I'm sitting on the stile, Mary, where we sa

It was so sweet and mournful, there is that Irish village, with the golden sun streaming over the landscape, and the air warmed and perfumed with the sweet odour of the honeysuckle that clambered around the window; and it seemed so appropriate, that the priests were hushed into silence. It wrapped were hushed into silence. It wrapped in music the whole discussion, which had just terminated. It was the caoine of the Banshee over the fated race. I'm biddin' you a long farewell, my Mary kind

goin to;
They say there's bread and work for all. and
the sun shines always there,
But I'll not forget old ireland, were it fifty
times as fair.

Not a word was spoken at the dinner table till the singer concluded. It was

the infinite pathos of Ireland!

The girl came to the open window, and pleaded. She was a tall, slim and pleaded. She was a tall, slim young girl, dark as an Italian, the hood of her light, black shawl scarcely concealing the black curls that hung down on her forehead. The plate went round; and she held more silver that evening in her hands than she had ever seen in her life before.

"If Father Meade were here," said the Keatings with a smile "he, would

seen in her life before.

"If Father Meade were here," said Dr. Keatinge with a smile, "he would say it was the ghost of Erin—the graith of a departed people."

"I'll not forget you, darlin," soliloquised the young priest; "but they do forget you, darlin'; and what is more, they despise you. And there isn't on earth, or in the nether hell," he said vehemently, bringing his hand down heavily on the table, "a more contemptible being than he, who, seduced by the glitter and glare of foreign civilizations, has come to despise his motherland."

"Now, now, now, that song has excited you, Cole," said his neighbour.
"I'm not excited," he protested; "but I tell you, 'tisn't English steel, but foreign gold, we fear."
"Never mind, Cole," said another,

"Never mind. Cole." said another, "the corsi and ricorsi will swing around again in their cycles, and Ireland will

come uppermost!"
"Yes!" he hissed, "if she does not forget her destiny."
"And what might be, Cole?"
shouted one or two, laughing at his

vehemence.
"What might that be? What would have been the destiny of the Jewish race if they had not rejected Christ?"

"Delmege, compose this fellow's nerves, and sing 'The Muster.'" But no! Luke had forgotten "The Muster "-he couldn't recall the words -it was many years since he sang it,

etc. He sang :-Oh! doth not a meeting like this make amends "I wouldn't doubt him," said the fire eater. "He's the Canon's pupil, and an apt one.

The guests dispersed early; and Luke was alone—and unhappy. What was the reason that he always felt miserable after much contact with men? And es ecially, when he returned to himself after a temporary dissipation of thought, why was he always angry with himself and dissatisfied? Every touch of the external world made this sensitive nature shrink more closely into it-self, except when he had something to look up to and to worship. With all his professions of practical wisdom, he was forever craving after an ideal that

was shy and unrevealed.

As he passed from the heated atmos phere of the dining room into the cool garden that was behind the house, he heard the soft patter of feet in the kitchen, and a low whistling sound. Both were faint and muffled, as if with an effort at concealment; and then the whistling broke out into articulate language:

(Forte) "Welt the flure, Biddy McClure!" (Andante) "Show them the right step, Mary (Andante) "Show them the right step, Mary McCarthy!"
(Fortissimo) "yerra, dance to the music, ye divils!"
(Adagle) "At-the-widow-McLau-au-au-ghlin's pa-a-a-arty!"

Then the dancing ceased.
"I'm too warrum," said Mary, "and
I'm tired afther all the cookin' and
slushin.""
"An ye did it well. Mary." said

"An ye did it well, Mary," said John, the musician; "I never saw a betther dinner at the Archdayken's."

"I didn't mane any harrum," said John, humbly. "But it was a grand dinner out an' out; I heard the priests

"You'll have a nice pinny to pay for for all the glass you broke," said Mary.
"The masther looked like a jedge wid

his black cap."
"'Twasn't that made him mad," said John, "but that little red priesht from Lorrhabeg. Begor, he pitched into the masther like mad."

masther like mad."
"He met his match, thin," said
Mary. "I'd like to see wan of 'em,
excep' the parish priesht, who could
hould a candle to him."

What was it all about ?" said on of the neighbors, unable to restrain his

tell this 'purty boy,' he'll have it in all the public-houses in the parish before Sunday," said Mary, the loyal.

"Wisha, 'twasn't much," said John 'Twas all the ould story of England and Ireland. The masther said we must all be English, or be swept into the say. The little wan pitched the English to the divil, and said we're Irish or nothin.

"And who got the best of it?" said

the "purty boy." s.id John. "They were all talkin' thegither, and jumpin' up, like Jack-in-the-Box, excep' the quite ould parish priests. And thin that call a come and round think they that girl came, and you wor all in their cradles." "Begor, they're a quare lot," said the purty boy. "They're as like

childre as two pays. Get wan of 'em into a tearin' rampage about the dhrink, or a dance, or a bit of coortin'; and thin say a word about the Blessed Vargin, or the ould land, and you have him quiet as a lamb in a minit."
"The English and the landlords
would have alsy times but for 'em,"

said Mary.
"Thry that jig agin, Mary," said

"Thry that jig agin, ""Thry that jig agin, ohn. "I'll get the concertina."
"No," said Mary; "'tis too warrum "I'm thinkin,' John," said the purty boy, " of gettin' me taylor to make a shult for me, like that. What 'ud it cost ?"
" More than iver you see in your

But I'll not forget you, darlin,' in the land I'm life," said John, angrily.

life," said John, angrily.

"But we could get it secon'-hand, like yoursel," said the other.

"Stop that," said Mary, peremptorily. She objected to a duel. "Remimber where ye are. Get the concertina, John. The masther won't mind."

"Fun, fighting, and praying," thought Luke. "The Lord never intended the Ivish to work."

He strolled along the village street.

He strolled along the village street the quiet, calm beauty of the evening stealing into the soul, and stilling the irritation and annoyance of that di table. The purple mountains in the distance seemed to contract and expand, as the shadow or the sunlight fell upon them. The air was heavy with the dours of roses and woodbine, and yet cooled with the breezes that floated yet cooled with the preezes that noticed down from the hills, over whose sharp ridges were pencilled darker lines, as you see in the horizon lines of the sea. The old men sat smoking their clay pipes leisurely. The old women pondered and meditated, with that air of resigned peace so peculiar to the Irish. A crowd of children were laughing and playing in the main street, gamboling in circles, and singing that folksong, that is common to the children of half

London bridge is broken down, Grand. said the little dear: London bridge is broken down: Faire Ladye!

Build it up with lime and sand I Grand, said the little dear: Build it up with lime and sand, Faire Ludye!

On the bridge were perched twenty or thirty young men, resting after the day's toil; and listening to the soft wailing of a flute, played by one of

Luke passed swiftly through all. The old people arose, and courtesied, the men taking their pipes from their mouths. Luke said: "How d'ye do?" They did not understand. They were accustomed to something different from their kind old priests. "How are you, Maurya? How are the pains?" "Cauth, when did you hear from the little grl in Boston?" "The murph ies are gettin' dry, Pat." "To be sure, man; send over for the saddle in the morning, and keep it as long as you "That's the finest clutch of

chickens I saw this year," etc., etc., "He's a fine man, God bless him," said the women, as they resumed their seats. "But he's mighty proud."

The children ceased from play, as he approached, and ran to their mothers. The boys leaped from the bridge, and saluted. The player hid his flute. They all could tell where the curate lived; but oh! he was a thousand miles away rom their hearts. He passed out into the country under the thick twilight of the beeches The the thick twingst of the becches. The privet hedges threw out their white blossoms, heavy with the odours which the bees loved; the sweet woodbine twined in and out of the hawthorn and brier; and the white clover, stamped by the feet of the voluptuous kine, wafted its sweetness to the passer-by. Far away some girls were singing an old irish air; and, as Luke stopped to listen, and watched the blue curling upwards in a straight line from the cottages, he heard the flute again wailing out another Irish threnody. The Coulin. Then, the voices of the children rose, clear and shrill again :

London bridge is broken down, Grand, said the little dear: London bridge is broken down: Faire Ladve!

The problem of the inexorable present: and the prophecy of the inevitable future strangely blended again.

He went into the village church again, on returning. There was a deeper twilight here than without. He the 'Archdayken's,' 's said Mary, who despised flattery; "it's nothin' but 'Archdayken' here, and 'Archdayken' there. Why didn't you sthop wid him, whin you were there?"

"Take that, John," said one of the boys, who had dropped in, with that easy familiarity which is common to the country.

"I Ald "I A

"I wish I were old," he said, " and done with these life's enigmas. These old men seem to cast untroubled glances into eternity."

He stopped a moment at his cottage ore retiring for the night, and looked down upon the street, the cottages, outlined against the dark, deep bank of the thick foliage behind.

t was very peaceful.

"A wise man would make up his mind to be happy here," he said.
"But will it last? And what can I do to preserve and extend it?" The problem and puzzle again.
"Anything that man can do. I'll do."

"Anything that man can do, I'll do," he said vehemently, "to solve this dread enigma, and save this devoted

people."
The following morning two letters lay on his breakfast table. One was from Amiel Lefevril. It was one of many. And it was the old cant.

"Humanity is incarnate in all great men in a supreme degree; the true Shechinah, says Chrysostom, is man. Every child of humanity is a transfigured type of humanity. We are immortal in the immortality of the race. Seek the divine in man, and help its

development. "There is a hidden element of truth in the jargon," said Luke. we were never told it."

And Luke forgot that he had taken First of First in Maynooth, in Dog-And Luke lorgot that he had taken first of First in Maynooth, in Dogmatic Theology; and that he had held with vigour and success that "the revelation of God in man, through the lowly figure of Jesus of Nazareth, had a far-reaching object, apart from the immediate purpose of the Incarnation; and that was, to confound the pride of mortals in the perfectibility of the

"If we could only teach these poor people," he said, "that their loft; ambition: Seek ye the God in man was once, and only once, realized, all would be well. But, then, they should become little children again; and Nicodemus said that was impossible."

The other letter was from Margery asking for light and advice on a critical question, about which Father Tracey, who said he had no idea theology or mysticism, was much concerned. It would appear that one of their penitents, Sister

Mary of Magdala, who had been a great sinner, was now developing ex-traordinary sanctity; and Father Tracey craved light on one or two

"Dear Luke" [the letter ran], "don't "Dear Luke" [the letter ran], "don't throw this aside in petulance or disgust. I know, and if I didn't, Father Tracey would convince me, that you are a profound theologian. But somehow I feel, too, that these things are revealed to little children. Luke, dear, be a little child, as well as a profound thinker; and let me know all you think on this most important matter. You have no idea of the peace of mind it will give us all, expecially dear Father Tracey. "Mother is not too well.

go see her?"
"Well, well," said Luke; " is there

"Well, well," said Luke; "is there any use in talking to nuns, at all?"

He wrote his little sister to say, that the veriest tyro in theology knew that these poor penitent girls were either subject very frequently to delusions, especially in the way of superior sanctity; or, were unfortunately prone to simulation of virtue for the purposes of deception. He had no doubt, whatever, that the case submitted to him came under one of these two heads; and he would advise his sister not to get involved in any way in what would probably prove an imposture, which might also eventuate in posture, which might also eventuate in Father Tracey, understood, was an excellent but rather prone to take unwise views about spiritual manifestations, on which the Church always looked with

loubt and suspicion.
Clearly, Luke had become very prac tical. A good many years had gone by since he vowed his pilgrimage to the city to kiss this old man's feet.

He took up his sister's letter again : and read it in a puzzled manner. "It is downright positivism," he declared: "Margery, too, sees the divine in man—this time, in a wretched penitent. Imagine — Amiel Lefevril and Sister Eulalie arriving at the same conclusion from opposite poles

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE STORY OF A CONVERSION

In the last month of last year a sen sational surprise was caused in French literary circles by the news that Adolphe Retté, a prominent "devourer of priests" and a leader of the irrelig ious movement, had become converted to the Catholic truth. The event gave great consolation to many Catholics that trying time, to none more than J K. Huysmans, who was justifying fully the sincerity of his own conversion by a patient and most exemplary endurance of the long and painful illness which carried him off last May. Retté had had been among the foremost of those who attached with blasphemous abuse the defection of Huysmans from the anti-Christian ranks. After his conversion, by the advice of his friends Retté retired for a time to write a boo of confessions describing the journe; he had just made from atheism to be lief, or as he somewhat sensationally describes it, from the devil to God. That this work of expistion has been widely read is evidenced by the fact that it has already reached its twelfth edition. It is a book of striking in-terest. Its author is not one of those who, like the late F. Brunetiere or Paul Bourget, has returned to the Church of his infancy after a long neg lect of its creed and practice. On other hand, the Catholic faith which he now embraces with such enthusiasn the only faith he has ever known Orphaned at an early age, he was left to the chances of the world. The Pro-testantiam which he learned at college testantism which he learned at college was never a personal religion to him, and a life of debauchery soon affaced whatever fragments of Christianity had filtered into his life. He became a sol dier, then a journalist, and in the latter capacity the work which he took upon himself was the extirpation of religion and moral ideas from the youth of France. But Divine grace was seek ing him, though he knew it not; it pursued him later even when he knew it and fled from it. The struggle and the victory form the theme of his fascinat-

It may be that Catholics have learns by experience to distrust what may be called artistic or literary conversions. Most of us have known cases in which sentiment has led people into the Church, and then either fading away, Church, and then either fading away, or turning in another direction, has led them forth again. Nevertheless, there is no need for us to be too cynical if we bear in mind that a conversion, while it is the end of a psychological stage and the culmination of a process, is from another point of view the beginning of a new period in which grace and network are destined to play their and nature are destined to play their part. We may rejoice in a conversion with that hopeful joy with which the crowds cheer the launching of a ship that comes newly made from the build ing yard, with every promise of a successful passage over the perilous

The book before us centers round a poet. Yet the description it contains is not in the first place that of the conversion of a poet, but that of a sinner, The convert, as we might expect, ex-presses himself in the terms of his own art, he uses poetical language, he has pages of "fine writing," but for all that, he leaves the impression that in the Church he has found, not merely the satisfaction of his sesthetic instincts, but refuge and relief from the corruption and slavery of iniquity. He gives thanks, not because God given him the grace of artistic " selfrealization," but because his Creator has dragged him "from the way of eternal damnation." His disappointments, his disillusion,

his remorse have brought him "unto this peace." Stately ritual, appealing liturgy, the majestic chant of sonorous Latin have had nothing to do with the change in him. Not in the midst of splendid ceremonial, nor in the retired solemnity of abandoned churches has he found the faith, but in the forests with the panorama of nature, it sounds and its silences, his mind has learnt to step upwards towards the sanctury, ubi

habitat justitia, where righteousness

has her dwelling. has her dwelling.

The scene opens in a third rate calé
at Fontainebleau. Retté had just finished a socialistic harangue before an audience of working men. These had filed out, full of the Utopian ideas he has been developing. A small g remain behind with the orator gather round a table with their beer. bottles before them. In that damp, gather round a table with their beerbottles before them. In that damp,
cramped, half-lighted room, reeking
with tobacco smoke, the workmen
begin to occupy themselves with the
deep problem of the age—with science
and religion. They wish to consult
their oracle as to the beginning of all
things. There is no good Good things. There is no good God, the world has had no Creater, and as science knows everything, the gardener who was one of the party wishes to know "how the universe made a

It was a simple question, that of the

gardener, but the answer did not come readily. The workman waited with ears pricked, and wide eyes to hear what science had to say for itself. Rette looked into the faces of these poor fel-lows, and watched their blank disap-pointment and dissatisfaction when, after a silence, he answered that science had nothing to declare on that subject. They evidently felt defrauded, and one of them made himself their spokesman, and told him so. He hesitated, and began to unpack the usual ated, and began to unpack the usual baggage—the theories which he felt to be quite beside the point, of evolution, materialism, determinism. Not only during that restless night, but for many nights the question he had been so powerless to answer, presented itself to him, not as a mere speculative problem, but as a doubt introducing itself into the very foundations of his philos-ophy. He had been posing as a guide and teacher, he had reared imposing edifices, whose harmonies and grandeur awakened his own enthusiasm, and that of the public for which he wrote. The world of his philosophy was self-sufficient, driving itself forward toward its own perfection. It was time for human. ity to look for the speedy coming of the age of gold. This was the stately edifice of hope he had been building, with its towers in the clouds. But what of its foundations? and plainer on reflection that it was built upon a shifting sandbed. And those poor fellows to whom he had been an evangelist and a prophet, that crowd of grown up children, hard worked, so thirsty for certainties, so undiscipled and easily duped—how dare he unfold to them that empty, idle dream, that A pocalypse of mingled science and unreason? Already he had abandoned the Anarchism which had been his first ideal, as something both hideous and visionary. He was beginning now to suspect foundations. His experience of the men who were presiding over the destinies of France, had caused him many a sad disillusionment. Some genuine patriots there were among them, but on the whole he had found them a gang of self-interested politicians. party-mongers, pseudo-scientific plag-iarists, windy orators, all driving the country in their own way to a state in which every stable element would be dissolved. For a time Clemenceau had been a prophet in his eyes. He became acquainted with hi when the politician journalist was re-trieving, slowly indeed, the prestige he had lost during the Panama discussions. Rette's description of him is particularly interesting now that he has attained to his present command. ing, if somewhat precarious, suprem-

This man exercises a strange fascination. It is all the more difficult to understand it, because hard, sarcastic, often insulting, he treats with ity those who admire him and court his friendship. Perhap cultivated minds com Perhaps his power over es from his strong intelligence, his genuine taste and real understanding in matters of art, and again from a comparison which one is his mind and the stupidity of the radical gang. Again, like all commanding temperaments, he dominates you by the authority of his manner. He is a Jacowell educated one, a type by no means common.

But to return, in the strife of relitical fractions, in the ferment of his social ideas, Retté had experienced a disappointment, both with men and systems which had prepared the way for the mental struggle which was to follow the incident of the Fontainebleau café. His moral training had been totally neglected, he had had no sense of discipline instilled into him by early education; his passions ran wild. A woman, too, ruled him with a lawless, sensual sway, of which he frequently tried to rid himself—not from any scruple of conscience, but because her lying, her ill-temper, and her intemper ance added to the miseries of a hardearned and laborious existence. Yet, though he dispised her, and perpetu-ally quarrelled with her, her fascingally quarrelled with her, her fascina-tion would reassert itself, and leave him powerless to dismiss her. This mistress (though fortunately she does not appear prominently in his confes-sions) bound him, throughout his struggle for his soul, to every element that was base in his ideals and that was lawless and outrageous in his conduct. His only consolations were his art and the forest which he loved. When it was possible he lived away from the city at Fontainebleau. He loved the open air. Removed from the company of self-seeking publicists and from the wretchedness of his home, his delight was to wander in the woods, companying his versue and recitive them. composing his verses, and reciting them to himself, acquainting himself with all the moods of nature, whose companion-ship seemed to provide an anodyne for the cares and disappointments of life.

"Without this love of solitude with which God has been pleased to endow me from my childhood," he writes, "I do not know what would become of me. For, it is worthy of note, that at all times in my life, I have only felt happy in solitude in the fields, under the trees, or near the waters' edge. To dream, to meditate silently upon some landscape, such have been my deepest and my most salutary pleasures. I have felt this on days when after heaping sin upon sin I have firetired that the pack of could scarcely be let loos. It was to seek the district. woods that he went, one in 1905, into the forest a frightful dissipation. He him the Divine Comedy the time. He had alway as a beautiful fairy tale, by the genius of Dante, read the second canto torio, where the poet advent of the angel's box of Purgatory—drifting w wards the place of purific Upon the stem stood the Cele Beatitude seen ed written in And more than a hundred spi In exitu Israel de Egypto! They chanted all together wi And whatso in that psalm is The word , came to him

of grace. As he read the passed over him. He bead to foot. Remorse able joy overflowed into faith of Dante was chall lay down the weight of begin with sweat and I desire, to climb the term cation.

The impression of grays, quickly faded. The noon one of his literary on him and proposed a

chateau. During the c

conversation, this frien Retté his dissatisfact scientific irreligion that to lose his adhesion. C presented itself to his n sible solution of his doub ance. Rette was astour if this man was a living own troubled self. Her opportunity. But the in him, and he answere his friend by a litany of phemy, a panegyric of ism, and an outrageous one of his own poems, Blessed Virgin was revi His friend was shaken of words, and before he supplied him with a list ere calculated to cou ing Christian tendenci time, however, it is ex struggle which was be s soul, entered upon Dante had giver stage.

not only of Christian pe of Catholic Faith. He perce ved that t salvation lay in the d Catholic Church. Soo thought taking form in He went early one mor loved forest to think o hitherto vague gropin good took coherent sha

From the day when themselves the questio put into the world, a hu and as many philosop tempted to answer it. have been various, ac surroundings, the circ fashions, and above all the human mind. Be born, have developed, ished. Reason and so erted themselves to g tion of the universe. Is succeeded in establis since a theory that wa as a truth is replaced besis to-day, and this to-morrow by anoth That is the experier That is the experier But it must be acknown the midst of this per Catholic Church alone able. Its dogmas hav its foundation. They substance in the Gosp the Apostles and the done nothing more the strengthen them, fram a liturgy and a dis given themselves over disputes, and hereti ceased to rend themsel God in his own fashion centuries this has been Church maintains it

whirl like dead leaves Then meditating on country, Rette opened state of misery to whice century philosophy, a application during the reduced it. Ideals, r guards of civic and been thrown into the n what had taken their and disruption were r the sentimentalists se

What did Balzac

as ever it was.

all? Nothing short of Church, which has rer is alone capable of lig whose brightness wou through this fog the drifted vessels." He ing a truth which never tired of proch hever tired of proci-beginning, that outsid-vation could be found. We find our poet 1906 leaving his fores capital, which, in sp pensations, he heart! wis accompanied thith with dark eyes"—h with dark eyes "—h There he was confron set-back to his progr The extremists whom pen were in po work at their busines Church from the Sta had recovered his as was question of provi-reward for faithful se by appointing him to a

department of the St eart, but the evil there were many oth and who yet did not good living out of it hypocrite more or le would make no grea soon felt, however, hypocrisy was dema

se masters.

One evening he