

## MARION CRAWFORD'S NEW NOVEL.

"Katharine Lauderdale" is one of a series of novels in imitation of Mr. Crawford's famous "Saracenesca" trilogy. In this case he turns from Rome to New York. The second novel of the series is announced for the autumn, it is to be called "The Ralstons."

Mr. Crawford knows New York after the manner of a photographer who has visited it for the purpose of securing a series of views. Nothing could be more real than the description of the house in Clinton Place and of Washington Square. One can easily see that house—probably the one in which Mr. Samuel Ward lived for a time—and all the rooms in which the Lauderdals lived. The picture is photographic. But Mr. Crawford cannot conceal the fact that New York tones are cold and hard to him and perhaps only worthy of the photograph. We miss the tender touch which he bestows in every line of his Italian pictures.

In beginning "Katharine Lauderdale" one must understand several things. First, that it is incomplete—"The Ralstons" is to continue the thread of the narrative as "Sant' Ilario" continued "Saracenesca"; second, that Mr. Crawford is a romancer. He believes that the unexpected always happens and that the unexpected must happen whenever he wants it to happen for the purpose of dramatic effect; he is a realist like Balzac, not like Mr. Henry James.

Katharine Lauderdale is a charming girl, with a will of her own. She is not typically American, except in her opinion that she has a right to choose her own husband. And she does choose a certain Mr. Ralston, who is about the worst possible match for such a girl as herself; he drinks to excess at the Hoffman House bar, he indulges in a little lemon-juice and a whole pint of Irroy Brut without a blush. A glass filled with four fingers of whiskey "neat"—which term, by the way, is not usually used out of London or Dublin—is nothing to him. It merely exhilarates him, he does not feel, as he ought, as if a torchlight procession had gone down his throat. He has a mother without religion, who lives an irreproachable and honorable life. Mrs. Ralston offers great possibilities, and, like all the characters in "Katharine Lauderdale," she breathes and has vitality. One becomes so much interested in Mr. Crawford's people and one finds his style so distinguished that it is easy to forgive the unexpected and seemingly unreasonable things in the way of incident that appear occasionally. When Mr. Crawford writes good English—which he sometimes does not do—there is no man who can do it more clearly and firmly. And his analyses of mental conditions and his own reflections in "Katharine Lauderdale" are excellent examples of his power over our difficult speech.

Katharine Lauderdale is the daughter of a New York Presbyterian and a Kentucky Catholic. Mr. Crawford assures us that they were married in the early days when the Church did not, in the United States, exact such strict promises as to the bringing up of the children of mixed marriages. The Lauderdale girls are disgusted with the Calvinism of their father, but not inclined towards the faith of their mother until Katharine, the unmarried one, half determined to embrace it.

"Everything," Mr. Crawford says, "connected with a belief in transcendental matters interested her exceedingly. She delighted in having discussions which turned upon the supernatural and upon such things as seemed to promise a link between the hither and the further side of death's boundary—between the mortal and trans-mortal, if the coming of such words be allowable. In this she

resembled nine-tenths of the American women of her age and surroundings. The mind of the idle portion of American society to-day reminds one of a polypus whose countless feelers are perpetually waving and writhing in the fruitless attempt to catch the very smallest fragment of something from the other side, wherewith to satisfy the mortal hunger that torments it. There is something more than painful, something like an act of a soul's tragedy, in this all-pervading desire to know the worst or best—to know anything which shall prove that there is something to know. We know where the door is, but before it is a screen round which we must pass to reach it. The screen is death, as we see it. To pass it and be within sight of the threshold is to die, as we understand death, and there lies the boundary of possible experience, for, so far as we know, there is no other door.

"The question is undoubtedly the greatest which humanity can ask, for the answer must be immortality or annihilation. It seems that a certain proportion of mankind, driven to distraction by the battle of beliefs, has actually lost the faculty of believing at all, and the place where the faculty was aches, to speak familiarly. This, at heart, was how it struck Katharine Lauderdale, and it was from this point of view that she seriously contemplated becoming a Catholic."

Katharine is a very frank and straightforward young woman. She determines to marry Mr. Ralston privately. Her people, she knows, are opposed to this; but, as she vainly remarks, if she is once married, nobody can interfere. She fears that, after entering the Church, she might not be able to induce Jack Ralston to make the necessary promises; and so she asks him to marry her at once.

"The Catholics do everything they can to prevent mixed marriages," she says, "especially in our country. You would have to make all sorts of promises which you wouldn't like, and which I shouldn't want you to make."

Katharine considers this a stroke of diplomacy. Ralston and she are married, to separate at once. Ralston continues to drink, but one day when he does not drink, appearances are against him; he suffers concussion of the brain, has a public row with a prize-fighter, and is only saved from social ostracism by the testimony of a queer physician. Mr. Marion Crawford's incidents are, to say the least, "romantic." It is difficult to believe that a girl with a conscience in normal condition would have played that trick of the marriage. On the other hand, the people in "Katharine Lauderdale" are so real that it is hard not to believe that they are of our life acting in our world. The artist, Crondie, promises developments of horrible possibilities. Whoever reads "Katharine Lauderdale" will want the "The Ralstons." It is not easy to say which is probable in this world. Almost anything may happen—which is the only balm one can apply to one's doubts after reading Mr. Crawford's very amusing and brilliant book.

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A monster meeting of Catholics has been held at Mayence to counterbalance the demand made by the Evangelical Synod of Hesse, who protests against the eventual recall of the Jesuits. The absurdity of a law which maintains without motive prescriptions against common rights was eloquently demonstrated.

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The transfer books will be closed from the 17th to the 31st May next, both days inclusive. The Annual General Meeting of the Shareholders for the election of Directors for the ensuing year will be held at the Banking House in this city on Wednesday, the 20th June next, at the hour of 12 o'clock noon.

By order of the Board.

D. R. WILKIE, Cashier.

Toronto, 20th April, 1894



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No payment will be made to newspapers inserting this advertisement without authority having been first obtained.

FRED. WHITE,

Comptroller, N. W. M. Police.

Ottawa, April 23rd, 1894.