

PAT'S REFORMATION.

The Heroic Virtue of a French Canadian Guide.

BY HENRY VAN DYKE.

It was on the shore of the Lac a la Belle Riviere, in Canada, that I came into this story and found myself somewhere about the middle of the plot; but Patrique Moullarkey, descendant and namesake of some far back Irish ancestor, Patrick Mullarkey, whose name alone had come down to him through generations that his Canadian forebears had purged of all else Irish, Patrique readily made me acquainted with what had gone before.

We had hauled our canoes and camp stuff over the terrible road that leads to the lake, with much creaking and groaning of wagons, and complaining of men who declared that the mud grew deeper and the hills steeper every year, and vowed their customary vow never to come that way again. At last our tents were pitched on a green point of balsams, close beside the water. The delightful sense of peace and freedom descended upon our souls. Prosper and Ovide were cutting wood for the campfire; Francois was getting ready a brace of partridges for supper; Patrick and I were unpacking the provisions, arranging them conveniently for present use and future transportation.

"Here, Pat," said I, as my hand fell on a large square parcel—"here is some superfine tobacco that I got in Quebec for you and the other men on this trip. Not like the damp stuff you had last year—a little bad smoke and too many bad words. This is tobacco to burn—something quite particular, you understand. How does that please you?"

He had been rolling up a piece of salt pork in a cloth as I spoke, and courteously wiped his fingers on the outside of the bundle before he stretched out his hand to take the package of tobacco. Then he answered, with his unflinching politeness, but more solemnly than usual:

"A thousand thanks to m'sieu. But this year I shall not have need of the good tobacco. It shall be for the others."

The reply was so unexpected that it almost took my breath away. For Pat, the steady smoker, whose pipes were as invariable as the procession of the equinoxes, to refuse his regular rations of the soothing weed was a thing unheard of. Could he be growing proud in his old age? Had he some secret supply of cigars concealed in his kit, which made him scorn the golden Virginia leaf? I demanded an explanation.

"Not no, m'sieu," he replied; "it is not that, most assuredly. It is something entirely different—something very serious. It is a reformation that I commence. Does m'sieu permit that I should inform him of it?"

"Of course I permitted, or rather warmly encouraged, the fullest possible unfolding of the tale.

"Does m'sieu remember Mees Meclair, a demoiselle tall and not too young? It was this demoiselle who changed my mind about the smoking. But not in a moment, you understand; it was a work of four days, and she spoke much.

"The first day it was at the Island House; we were trolling for eunanche, and she was not pleased for she lost many of the fish. I was smoking at the stern of the canoe, and she said that the tobacco was a filthy weed—une herbe sale—that it grew in the devil's garden, and that it smelled bad, terribly bad, and that it made the air sick, and that even the pig would not eat it."

"I could imagine Patrique's dismay as he listened to this dissertation; for in his way he was as sensitive as a woman, and he would rather have expostulated himself to the reproach of offending any one of his patrons by unpleasant or unseemly conduct."

"What did you do then, Pat?" I asked.

"Certainly I put out the pipe—what could I do otherwise? But I thought that what the demoiselle Meclair had said was very strange, and not true—exactly; for I have often seen the tobacco grow, and it springs up out of the ground like the wheat or the beans, and it has beautiful leaves, broad and green, with sometimes a red flower at the top. Does the good God cause the filthy weeds to grow like that? Are they not all clean that He has made? The potato—it is not filthy. And the onion. It has a strong smell; but the demoiselle Meclair she ate much of the onion—when we were not at the Island House, but in the camp. And the smell of the tobacco—this is an affair of the taste. For me, I love it much; it is like a spice. When I come home at night to the camp fire, where the boys are smoking, the smell of the pipes runs far out into the woods to salute me. It says, 'Here we are, Patrique; come in near to the fire.' The smell of the tobacco is more sweet than the smell of the fish. The pig loves it not, assuredly; to me it is good, good, good. Don't you find it like that, m'sieu?"

I had to confess that in the affair of taste I sided with Patrique rather than with the pig. "Continue," I said—"continue, my boy. Miss Miller must have said more than that to reform you."

"Truly," replied Pat. "On the second day we were making the lunch at midday on the island below the first rapids. I smoked the pipe on a rock apart, after the collation. Mees Meclair comes to me, and says: 'Patrique, my man, do you comprehend that the tobacco is a poison? You are committing the murder of yourself. Then she

tells me many things—about the nicotine, I think she calls him; how he goes into the blood and into the bones and into the hair, and how quickly he will kill the cat.' And she says, very strong, 'The men who smoke the tobacco shall die!'"

"That must have frightened you well, Pat. I suppose you threw away your pipe at once?"

"But no, m'sieu; this time I continue to smoke; for now it is Mees Meclair who comes near the pipe voluntarily, and it is not my offense. 'If the tobacco is a poison, it is a poison of the slowest, like the tea or the coffee. For the cat it is quick—yes; but for the man it is long; and I am not a cat. But the third day, m'sieu, the third day was the worst. It was a day of sadness, a day of the bad chance. The demoiselle Meclair was not content but that we should leap the Rapide des Cedres in canoe, and the big rock at the corner baling like a kettle. But it is the ignorant who have the most of boldness. The demoiselle Meclair she was not solid in the canoe. She made a jump and a loud scream. I did my possible, but the sea was too high. We took in of the water about five buckets. We were very wet. After that we make the camp; and while I sit by the fire to dry my clothes I smoke for comfort."

"Mees Meclair she comes to me once more. 'Patrique,' she says with a sad voice, 'I am sorry that a nice man, so good, so brave, is married to a thing so bad, so sinful!' At first I am mad when I hear this, because I think she means Angelique, my wife; but immediately she goes on: 'You are married to the smoking. That is sinful, it is a wicked thing. Christians do not smoke. There is none of the tobacco in heaven. The men who use it cannot go there. Ah, Patrique, do you wish to go to hell with your pipe?'"

"I said, m'sieu," replied Patrique, lifting his hand to his forehead, "that I must go where the good God pleased to send me, and that I would have much joy to go to the same place with our cure, Pere Girard, who is a great smoker. I am sure that the pipe of comfort is no sin to that holy man when he returns, some cold night, from the visiting of the sick—it is not sin, not more than the soft chair and the warm fire. It harms no one, and it makes quietness of mind. For me, when I see m'sieu the cure sitting at the door of the presbytere, in the evening coolness, smoking the tobacco, very peaceful, and when he says to me, 'Good day, Patrique; will you have a pipeful?' I cannot think that is wicked—no!"

"Well then," I asked, "what did she say finally to turn you? What was her last argument? Come, Pat, you must make it a little shorter than she did."

"In five words, m'sieu, it was this: 'The tobacco causes the poverty.' The fourth day—you remind yourself of the long, dead water below the Rapide Gervais? It was there. All the day she spoke to me of the money that goes to the smoke. Three pastrestre months. Twenty-four the year. Three hundred—yes, with the interest, more than three hundred in ten years. Two thousand pastrestres in the life of the man! Then she asks me if I have been at Quebec? No. If I would love to go? Of course, yes. For two years of the smoking we could go, the good wife and me, to Quebec, and see the grand city, and the shops, and the many people, and the cathedral, and perhaps the theatre. And at the asylum of the orphans we could seek one of the little found children to bring home with us, to be our own; for m'sieu knows it is the sadness of our house that we have no child. But it was not Mees Meclair who said that—no, she would not understand that thought. And so I have thrown away the pipe. I smoke no more. The money of the tobacco is for Quebec and for the little found child. I have already eighteen pastrestres and twenty sous in the old box of cigars on the chimney-piece at the house. This year will bring more. The winter after the next, if we have the good chance, we go to the city, the good wife and me, and we come home with the little boy—or may be the little girl. Does m'sieu approve?"

"You are a man of virtue, Pat," said I; "and since you will not take your share of tobacco on this trip, it shall go to the other men; but you shall have the money instead, to put into your box on the mantelpiece."

I am bound to say that Patrique was not at his best that year as a fisherman. He was as ready to work, as interested, as eager as ever; but he lacked steadiness, persistence, patience. He did not appear to be able to sit still in the canoe.

There was only one thing that would really keep him quiet, and that was a conversation about Quebec. The glories of that wonderful city entranced his thoughts. He was already floating, in imagination, with the vast throngs of people that filled its splendid streets, looking up at the stately houses and churches with their glittering roofs of tin, and staring his fill at the magnificent shop-windows, where all the luxuries of the world were displayed. He had heard that there were more than a hundred shops—separate shops for all kinds of separate things: one for groceries, and one for knives and axes, and one for guns, and many shops where they sold only jewels—gold rings, and diamonds, and forks of pure silver. Was it not so? He pictured himself, side by side with his friend, in the sale a manager of the Hotel Richelleu, ordering their dinner from a printed bill of fare. Side by side they were watching the wonders of the play at the Theatre de l'Etoile du Nord. Side by side they were

knelling before the gorgeous altar in the cathedral. And then they were standing silent, side by side, in the asylum of the orphans, looking at brown eyes and blue, at black hair and yellow curls, at fat legs and rosy cheeks and laughing mouths, while the Mother Superior showed off the little boys and girls for them to choose. This affair of the choice was always a delightful difficulty, and here his fancy loved to hang in suspense, vibrating between rival joys.

One day, when we were paddling home to our tents among the birch-trees, one of those unexpected storms came up; and Patrique, thoughtful of my comfort as ever, insisted on giving me his coat to put around my dripping shoulders. The padding would be of wool of a coat for him, he said; as I slipped the garment over my back, something hard fell from one of the pockets into the bottom of the canoe. It was a briar wood pipe.

"Aha! Pat," I cried; "what is this? You said you had thrown all your pipes away. How does this come in your pocket?"

"But, m'sieu," he answered, "this is different. This is not the pipe pure and simple. It is a souvenir. It is the one you gave me two years ago on the Metabetchouan, when we got the big caribou. I could not reject it. I keep it always for the remembrance."

At this moment my hand fell upon a small, square object in the other pocket of the coat. I pulled it out. It was a cask of Virginia leaf. Without a word I held it up, and looked at Patrique. He began to explain eagerly:

"Yes, certainly, it is the tobacco, m'sieu; but it is not for the smoke, as you suppose. It is for the virtue, for the self victory. I call this my little piece of temptation. See; the edges are not cut. I smell it only; and when I think how it is good, then I speak to myself: 'Quebec!' It will last a long time, this little piece of temptation, perhaps until we have the boy at our house—or maybe the girl."

The conflict between the Virginia leaf and Patrique's virtue must have been severe during the last ten days of our expedition; for the evening pipe, after supper, seemed to comfort the men unspeakably.

Patrique, I noticed about this time, liked to get on the leeward side of as many pipes as possible, and as near as he could to the smokers. He said that this kept away the mosquitoes. There he would sit, with the smoke drifting full in his face, both hands in his pockets, talking about Quebec.

At last came the end of our hunting and fishing for that year. We spent the next two days in voyaging through a half dozen small lakes and streams in a farming country, on our way home. I observed that Patrique kept his souvenir pipe between his lips a good deal of the time, and puffed at it occasionally. It seemed to soothe him. In his conversation he dwelt with peculiar satisfaction on the thought of the money in the cigar box on the mantel-piece at St. Gerome. Eighteen pastrestres and twenty sous already! And with the addition to be made from the tobacco not smoked during the past month, it would amount to more than twenty-one pastrestres; and all as safe in the cigar-box as if it were in the bank at Chicoutimi! That reflection seemed to fill the empty pipe with fragrance.

When we came out of the mouth of La Belle Riviere a thick column of smoke rose from somewhere in its neighborhood. "It is on the beach," said the men; "the boys of the village accustom themselves to burn the rubbish there for a bonfire." But as our canoes danced lightly forward over the waves and came nearer to the place, it was evident that the smoke came from the village itself. It was a conflagration, but not a general one; the houses were too scattered and the day too still for a fire to spread. What could it be? Perhaps the blacksmith shop, perhaps the bakery, perhaps the old tumble down barn of the little Tremblay? It was not a large fire, that was certain. But where was it precisely?

The question, becoming more and more anxious, was answered when we arrived at the beach. A handful of boys, eager to be the bearers of news, had spied us afar off, and ran down to the shore to meet us.

"Patrique! Patrique!" they shouted in English, to make their importance as great as possible in my eyes. "Come, come kveek; yo' ouse ees hall burn!"

"What!" cried Patrique. "Monjee!" and he drove the canoe ashore, leaped out, and ran up the bank toward the village as if he were mad. The other men followed him, leaving me with the boys to unload the canoes and pull them up on the sand, where the waves would not chafe them.

This took some time, and the boys helped me willingly. "Est ees need to 'urry, m'sieu," they assured me; "dat 'ouse to Patrique Moullarkey ees hall burn' sence t'ree hour. Noting left 'bot de dash."

As soon as possible, however, I piled up the stuff, covered it with one of the tents, and leaving it in charge of the steadiest of the boys, took the road to the village and the site of the Maison Mullarkey.

It had vanished completely; the walls of squared logs were gone; a low, curved roof had fallen; the doorway with the morning glory vines climbing up beside it, had sunk out of sight; nothing remained but the dome of the clay oven at the back of the house, and a heap of smoldering embers.

Patrick sat beside his wife on a flat stone that had formerly supported the corner of the porch. His shoulder was close to Angelique's—so close that it looked almost as if he must have

had his arm around her a moment before I came up. His passion and grief had calmed themselves down now, and he was quite tranquil. In his left hand he held the cask of Virginia leaf, in his right his knife, and between his knees the briar wood, which he was filling with great deliberation.

"What a misfortune!" I cried. "The pretty house is gone! I am so sorry, Patrique. And the box of money on the mantelpiece, that is gone, too, I fear—all your savings. What a terrible misfortune! How did it happen?"

"I cannot tell," he answered, rather slowly. "It is the good God. And He has left me my Angelique. Also, m'sieu, you see—here he went over to the pile of ashes, and pulled out a fragment of charred wood with a live coal at the end—"you see"—puff, puff—"he has given me"—puff, puff—"a light for my pipe again"—puff, puff, puff!"

The fragrant, friendly smoke was pouring out now in full volume. It unwreathed his head like drifts of cloud around the rugged top of a mountain at sunrise. I could see that his face was spreading into a smile of ineffable contentment.

"My faith!" said I, "how can you be so cheerful? Your house is in ashes; your money is burned up; the voyage to Quebec, the visit to the asylum, the little orphans—how can you give it all up so easily?"

"Well," he replied, taking the pipe from his mouth, with fingers curling around the bowl, as if they loved to feel that it was warm once more—"well, then, it would be more hard, I suppose, to give it up not easily. And then, for the house, we shall build a new one this fall; the neighbors will all help. And for the voyage to Quebec—without that we may be happy. And as regards the little orphan, I will tell you frankly—here he went back to his seat upon the flat stone, and settled himself with an air of great comfort beside his partner—"I tell you, in confidence, Angelique demands that I prepare a particular furniture at the new house. Yes, it is a cradle; but it is not for the little orphan."

It was late in the following summer when I came back again to St. Gerome. There was the new house, a little farther back from the road than the old one; and there was Patrique sitting on the door step, smoking his pipe in the cool of the day. Yes; there, on a many colored counterpane spread beside him, an infant joy of the house of Mullarkey was sucking its thumb, while its father was humming the words of an old slumbering song.

"Holla! Patrique," I cried; "good-luck to you! Is it a girl or a boy?"

"Salut! m'sieu," he answered, jumping up and waving his pipe. "It is a girl and a boy!"

Sure enough, as I entered the door I beheld Angelique rocking the other half of the reward of virtue in the new cradle.—Adapted from The Century.

"Christian Science."

Prof. James Main Dixon, of Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., writes strongly against that mental humbug, "Christian Science," falsely so called, in last week's Independent. He graphically describes "An Evening with the Christian Scientists," whose "feelings as much as their alleged 'demonstrations' of healing offend his scientific mind and practical common sense. Most of the cases are easily explicable on an originally incorrect diagnosis, and as for the cure of the habitual inebriate, that, as he truly says, "is exactly such a case as spiritual methods can attack, and successfully." He asks:

How could a woman, in the state of mind that produces such verse as this, be relied upon either for a correct diagnosis or a correct diagnosis?

"It is the strain and narrow way that leads to that eternal day. That turns my darkness into light. That banishes wrong and brings right."

And he continues:—

A profitable and living Christian theology depends for its existence on a correct and enlightened exercise of the mind and progressive medical science depends on care and skill in diagnosis. Both of these characteristics are evidently completely absent from "Christian Science," and I leave the room feeling that my friend's objection to this new faith is valid. It is not Christianity, and it is not science.

It is hard to have patience with this delusion to which so many valuable lives have been sacrificed. Yet its followers multiply apace in this material age—the extreme of superstition touching the extreme of incredulity.—Boston Pilot.

There are a quarter of a million Masses said every morning in the Catholic churches of the world. What an entrancing spectacle of Unity is represented by this fact in these days of crumbling creeds and multiplied dissensions! To bring millions of human hearts, with all their disruptive forces, together and to set them all attune to the one devotional note, is the master-work of the Holy Spirit!—The Missionary.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CIVIL LIFE.

How Far do the Duties of One Apply to the Requirements of the Other.

His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons is among the contributors to the Ladies' Home Journal for January. The Cardinal's theme is indicated by a brief introductory note by the editor, in which he says:

"It is clearly apparent from the letters received from young men that a large number of them are in doubt as to Christian living. They desire to live earnest Christian lives, but are inexperienced. To the mature Christian their questions may seem trivial. But these young men are neither mature nor experienced. Their minds are filled with doubts. Some time ago, being impressed with the gravity of these conditions, I compiled four questions, taken from as many letters written by young men, and submitted them to a few leading Christian teachers and divines."

The questions sent out by the editor are: First. Whether a young man employed on a Sunday morning newspaper can be a conscientious Christian.

Second. Whether a young man can be an actor and yet a Christian.

Third. Whether a young man with dear ones depending on him for support is justified in working on Sunday when such work is necessary to retain his position.

Fourth. The next young man asks pointedly: "How far can I enter into amusements which the doctrines of some of our churches oppose and yet lead a Christian life? I play dance music, for example, as a profession."

His Eminence does not answer the questions categorically, but his reply is clear and comprehensive. He writes:

"The obligations and duties of the Christian life are not all external. They are mainly material and must proceed from the heart. There is no virtue in one's daily actions unless it be first established in the soul and is only an external expression of the soul's convictions or prolongation of heartfelt sentiments. Yet the external practice of Christian virtues and the performance of Christian duties pertain to the integrity if not to the essential character of the Christian life. The interior sentiments soon perish without external expression, as life and bodily powers become extinct with out due and proper exercise or employment."

"However, as the external duties are not absolutely and under all circumstances essential, they vary both in number and frequency, according to environments and opportunities. A business man cannot do all that a clergyman is expected to do, a man in trade not what a man in leisure can accomplish, nor a man of the world all that is possible and easy to one who keeps himself from society. But all, no matter where, no matter what their engagements and secular pursuits, how little or how much time they can call their own, can and are obliged to perform daily acts of prayer and religion and accomplish many duties of virtue and charity. There is no condition of life which is incompatible with the dictates and principles and precepts of the Christian life. Every one cannot spend long hours in prayer nor attend all the church services. But with a little determination and an earnest will even the most occupied and the busiest can accomplish something and offer much in this direction."

"The influence of Christian virtue or Christian perfection, since to every man is said, 'Be you therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect,' must be carried into the marts of trade and into the counting room, into the workshop and on the stage. Music, art, professions are no bars to its workings. Everywhere can we repress our tendencies, curb our passions and master our desires and inclinations. Some, indeed, have greater temptations than others; many have severe and grave obstacles to overcome, while others have but a few, and those comparatively light. But God will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able; but will make also with temptation issue, that you may be able to bear it."

"It is required that a man be strong, courageous, determined, earnest and active. We can always succeed if our will be right. We are the arbiters of our own destinies, and our own wills condemn us or raise us to the skies. God will help him who helps himself, and every man can be honest, upright, pure and conscientious if he so wills and determines, in spite of any

and all temptations and circumstances. There are many, very many, such in every rank and walk of human life. That there are not more is due to the lack of individual effort and energy."

and all temptations and circumstances. There are many, very many, such in every rank and walk of human life. That there are not more is due to the lack of individual effort and energy."

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