

"And you think me guilty," she was saying in a low voice. "Peasant as I was when you took me from the street and made me your wife, peasant as perhaps I am still, I would sooner go back to my Castile than look at you again."

With a quick, passionate movement, half disdain, half supplication, she went forward, and, bending till her knees touched the stone, she kissed her husband's hands. The Argentine, who had listened smilingly, thrust the woman back with an oath. In less than three minutes he had struck off the hands she had kissed. At this point Providence interposed. A beam of the wooden roof, falling, struck the woman across the head and crushed her to the ground.

To Lepage it seemed that he had ridden leagues beside the Argentine and his captive. They had not even noticed his presence, and he could never remember afterwards how he came to be riding there at all. Power of speech for the most part had deserted him. When he had spoken, when he had striven to interrupt the scene on the verandah, none had appeared to be aware of him or his words. Now, as he rode along in the moonlight and listened to the foul taunts uttered by the native, he spoke no more. He heard how this revenge had been planned, and why. He was let into the private passion and hate of this brute for his neighbour's wife. He heard her innocence, before denied, acknowledged. He watched the European's face quiver when he was told how his negro servant had been cut down by treachery. Yet when Lepage reached out and tried to loosen the cords about the captive, the latter did not seem to notice. All around them the clear, cold moonlight turned the endless plains into ocean-like undulations, till it began to dim before the far-off dawn.

They came suddenly upon what had been a house. It lay in ruins. Here all dismounted. The Englishman struggled fiercely for an instant. It was the last effort. Exhausted and weakened he fell to the ground. With a devilry beyond words his enemy explained to the unconscious figure that underneath the ruined house was a vault stored with the dry hard biscuits eaten by the lower classes, and fed with water by a spring. His fate lay there! Lepage rushed forward, shouting aloud in his intense agony of mind.

Surely a mist had floated down with the dawn! He could see nothing, hear nothing, though he strained sight and hearing to the utmost.

Pedro stood beside the bed. "You called, sir," he said. Lepage raised himself heavily, and then fell back fainting.

"It was here," Lepage said, drawing rein at last. The negro threw himself from his mare and gazed eagerly round.

"True," he replied in a shaking voice, "that there once stood a house about here; but you see it now, overgrown like this, and it must be the growth of years."

"Pooh," said the traveller, "growth is rapid here. Let us get to work and search."

And search they did. When success came to them late in the afternoon, both men stood trembling to hear their knocks answered feebly from below. They had discovered a kind of brick shaft, very narrow, but wide enough to admit a ray of light to the vault below. By the next dawn, Lepage and the negro had achieved their end with pickaxe and spade.

A prematurely white-haired man, wrinkled and stooping like the very old, staggered out into the early morning sunshine. He gazed, not at his deliverers, not at the green plains around, but up at the blue of heaven. Stretching his mutilated arms upwards, and calling aloud in a muffled voice to the Deity whose sunlight he now felt for the first time for years, he fell forward, dead!

"But," Lepage protested, "why not take her away from these surroundings, place her where surely her wealth——"

Pedro interrupted him. "We have tried," he said; "there came once a lady and gentleman, calling themselves my master's cousins, who would have loved her, but she shrank from them. Sometimes they write for news of her, and send gifts. She has no thought for money, but she wants for nothing."

Lepage looked at him. His simple, straightforward way of telling the story, and the pathetic pride he showed in his mistress's dependence on him, touched the traveller deeply.

The negro was evidently a man of some culture; probably he had been a very constant companion of a clever master.

"I watch her at all times," he added, "and all through the night you dreamed I was conscious of something happening, for she was so restless, and wandered in and out of the house, listening always. That night was the same one as that on which it happened so long ago. Perhaps spirits——" and he crossed himself.

He was interrupted by a plaintive call. When he rose to answer it, Lepage sought his horse. A few moments later, Pedro and his mistress bade him farewell on the verandah. She stood with her sightless eyes fixed upon Lepage, and he, advancing, took her hand in his, asking her the commonplace courtesy as to how she had passed the night.

"*No hay ni dia ni noche para mi,*" she answered gently, "*es una larga y continua noche.*" Then she turned away, and saying a soft "*adios,*" was led into the orange grove.

Afterwards, as Lepage rode slowly down the eucalyptus avenue, the negro accompanying him a little distance, he turned back once or twice to see Pedro's charge still building up her shining heaps of golden fruit. She had not looked up as the traveller passed her. Bending from the saddle, Lepage shook the negro's hand. Tears glittered in Pedro's eyes as he returned the "farewell." Then he went back to his neglected cage-making, and Lepage saw him no more. If you scoff at the story of the traveller's dream, he holds out to you his scarred hand. "Dream or not," he says always, "there is the scar for which I can account in no other way!"

Ireland! My Ireland!

Stephen Gwynn, in the Spectator.

Ireland, oh Ireland! centre of my longings,
Country of my fathers, home of my heart!
Overseas you call me: Why an exile from me?
Wherefore sea-severed, long leagues apart?

As the shining salmon, homeless in the sea depths
Hears the river call him, scents out the land,
Leaps and rejoices in the meeting of the waters,
Breasts weir and torrent, nests him in the sands;

Lives there and loves; yet with the year's returning,
Rusting in the river, pines for the sea,
Sweeps back again to the ripple of the tide way,
Roamer of the waters, vagabond and free.

Wanderer am I like the salmon of thy rivers;
London is my ocean, murmurous and deep,
Tossing and vast; yet through the roar of London
Comes to me thy summons, calls me in sleep.

Pearly are the skies in the country of my fathers,
Purple are thy mountains, home of my heart.
Mother of my yearning, love of all my longings,
Keep me in remembrance, long leagues apart.

Letters to the Editor.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

SIR,—In a recent issue of THE WEEK, the Rev. John Burton discusses the Lambeth Quadrilateral from the Presbyterian standpoint. He throws no new light upon the subject. He simply re-echoes what has been said by many leading ministers of the various Protestant bodies. But it is rather surprising to find a man of Dr. Burton's learning rejecting the doctrine of our Lord's descent into Hell on the ground that it forms no part of "our common Christianity." It is not a wise thing to begin tinkering with the Apostles' Creed. It is "the Faith once delivered to the Saints" for which we must earnestly contend (Jude 3). If you throw one article of the creed as a sop to the Cerberus of denominationalism, you will soon have to give him the whole creed piecemeal, as we plainly see from the controversies on the London School Board. If you are willing to strike out "He descended into Hell," on what grounds could you refuse to omit "He rose again from the dead"? There are already some Christians (if you can call Mrs. Humphrey Ward and