

FAITH AND LOVE THROUGH TRIBULATION

Where the Brook and River Meet. (Written for The Catholic Register.)



LEASANCE Bysonby had arrived at the rosy dawn of womanhood under the fostering of a sagacious mother and a wise father. Because she was the youngest of four children she had been allowed more latitude than was usual, but that latitude had borne rich fruit. Of the other three, her elder brother had crossed the Northern Sea to join in the business of a wealthy shipowner, who was a trusted friend of Jeffrey Bysonby, her sister had married an affluent merchant, her younger brother had died some months since, and had been laid to rest with those "other Bysonbys." Jeffrey was now dead, and a vacant place in his business. With Pleasure alone in their home, her mother had shrunk from bringing into their loving calm the disturbing element of an apprentice, so the little daughter had been taken from the quiet duties of kitchen, still-room and tambour frame to help in the warehouse, where she soon became her father's right-hand man.

She had been rightly named "fair of face," with the rich tints of perfect health, waving brown hair, parted on her brow and coiled upon her shapely neck, lustrous grey eyes revealing the maiden-soul, a sweet-toned voice—she was the last of the flock, upon whom her parents lavished their love.

Pleasure had a lover—a young Meredith Knollys—the son of that shipowner who was her father's friend. They had grown up together, and it pleased the parents of both to see that child-comradeship was broadening into deeper affection. Meredith well understood his father's desires, and since Pleasure was peerless among maidens, the vanity of his growing manhood was gratified to hold in the favor of his sweet little playmate. So far as in him lay he loved her, but alas, the love of a maiden was not his greatest ambition. His father's counting-house, his affluent home, the undeniable advantage of marriage with Pleasure were but tame circumstances to his restless nature. His mother saw and feared with intuitive instinct his roving desires.

She would have hastened the marriage, but Pleasure was too tranquil, too satisfied with her indulgent home to be eager to consummate a life-long separation. And her father and mother were loath to let her go so soon and leave them childless. The maiden was young yet, Meredith would do well to remain in peaceful occupation with his father until his judgment had ripened, his capabilities become more proved. It was true that they wanted their children to unite and so keep their well-earned fortunes in one ownership, but there was time yet for the serious matter of mating.

In the meanwhile Pleasure loved her lad with an abiding love that only learnt of its singleness as years went by, bringing their vicissitudes. She regarded him with humble pride, for she counted it no little grace that so noble a man should find pleasure in her. Out of her own true nature she looked upon him with love-descending eyes, finding him a fine up-built man, and admiring his merry blue eye, his wealth of curling black hair, his manly carriage. But she took no heed of the thin underlip, now shaded by a youthful moustache, nor the heavy underjaw that bespoke a will that would lend itself to cruelty, nor the avaricious gleam that sparkled in his eye when he talked of riches.

The evening of Pleasure's nineteenth birthday had come. All day from high noon till evening twilight, feasting and dancing, song and pastime had sped the summer day. The last merry guest had just bidden farewell with many an oft repeated wish for future joy; the cool breeze was blowing inshore, the stars and the round moon were illuminating the heavens. Wearing with the richness of friendship Pleasure sought out Meredith to ask a quieting stroll. The tide was at its ebb, far out to sea, the moonlight quivered upon the dark blue ripples, making angel paths; the white sands stretched east and west like a gleaming silken ribbon. Out on the eastern horizon a pile of shadowy rocks rose up and blotted out the stars. To the near west a few lights glimmered in the houses of the town and the beacon blazed from the pier head to show the anchorage.

In silent companionship the lovers passed along the shore road, bordered on one side with a line of trees, whose boughs spread inland, and under whose shadow they were secluded even from the eyes of the twinkling stars. Pleasure was filled with contented happiness, but Meredith, as he held her warm hand within his own, realized that this day of merry festivity was the worst possible preface for the tale he must tell to-night. He chided himself that he had lacked courage to speak before and he wondered how best to begin.

At the break of dawn he had agreed to join a ship's company, partners with a captain who well knew the value of the vigor of this young trader for a scheme, which, dress it as he might in glowing colors to the restless lad, bore a close kinship to buccanering. And Meredith knew too that though his captain called himself a privateer, he was likely to find himself nothing but a pirate. His parents were not to be told until he had set sail, for though the glamor of the life of adventure which he was adopting there yet remained a spark of filial remorse that shrank from witnessing his mother's grief or encountering his father's anger. But he would tell Pleasure of his going, for he would bid her farewell and ask that she soften the news to his home. But how could he best paint the wonderful visions of adventure he fain would show?

Thus the one supremely happy, the other with an uneasy conscience, they came at length to a spreading sea oak, whose knots and gnarls made a rustic seat. It was their usual tryst, and here Meredith halted, sitting down, drawing the maiden to his side and putting his arm about her. She yielded as one in full confidence, resting trustfully, she brought her head to his breast with-in which his heart beat almost to

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suffocation. He had a hard task before him.

Thus they sat, as lovers will, looking out upon the placid sea.

"How beautiful it is," said Pleasure, at last.

"Will it be as beautiful to-morrow?" replied he, absently.

"I hope so, sincerely. I cannot love an angry sea," she replied. "It always seems so furious, as cruel as an angry beast."

Silence came over them again, which was at last broken by Meredith with a desperate endeavor to tell the news which would be so bitter.

"Shall you come here to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, yes if you will come," said Pleasure, "but Meredith, what makes your heart beat so violently, see I can feel it thus." She lifted her head, putting her hand where it had lain.

"Ah, it may well beat, little girl, it is sorely strained. I have sorry news to tell thee."

"Dear, what is it?" she said. All her tenderness roused by the dreariness in his tone. "But, oh, Meredith, keep it till to-morrow. It has been so gloriously happy to-day I cannot bear to spoil it."

"I cannot keep it till to-morrow," he said, gloomily, "but in that case I shall never tell thee."

"Oh, my dear, I must be very selfish," she said, her great happiness having tears at the overflow, "tell me everything. I cannot let you sorrowful."

Meredith drew her head to his breast again, and kissed her passionately until she began to fear at his vehemence. Then with words following fast he told her how that on the morrow he sailed away to adventure, making excuse for the less honorable, and enlarging on the simpler phases of his career. Pleasure lay passively in his arms, her faculties numbed with the first shock of his tidings, to the rest she scarcely listened. She only grasped one thing, that he was going, out from her happy life, leaving his father and mother sorrowing and herself desolate. Going away to interminable voyages and dangers!

So quiet she remained that Meredith ceased, and looked down upon her. Her eyes were gazing out to sea, her breath came so imperceptibly he half fancied she did not breathe at all, her hands lay in her lap almost as if lifeless. He dared not look upon such tearless quiet. He lifted her and began a shame-faced effort to return. She tried to steady herself, but found her strength gone. For support she laid her hands on either of his shoulders, thus leaning upon him she scanned his face as he stood over her, the light so steadfastly that he felt as if she read him through. Swiftly an intuition such as comes to hearts that are near to breaking swept into her thoughts.

"Must you go?" she pleaded.

The determined lines about his lips wavered for a minute as he listened to the pathos of her voice, only a moment, then he said:

"I must go," but trying to speak in higher humor, "but I shall come back rich!"

"You will never come back," she said drearily. "You will never come back."

Once more Meredith gathered her to him and kissed her thrice, looking down the while upon a face whose pallor gleamed upon him from the shadows. He said nothing more. Suddenly she turned and fled away into the darkness. Meredith stood hesitating—should he follow and bring her back, or take his departure. A minute's pondering, then he turned to retrace his way and so left her wandering.

(To be Continued.)

LOGICAL.

Lucy Snow: "Deed, he ain't no colored man."

Dinah Johnson: "Shol go 'long, he's jes' ez black ez de ace ob spades."

Lucy Snow: "Dat's jes' it. Ef he was'n so black he'd be colored, but black ain't no color."

Custom may lead a man into many errors, but it justifies none.

A quart of chicken, fish, salad, soup or ice cream will generally serve eight persons when supplemented by other dishes as at luncheon or supper.

When the cover to a fruit jar sticks, invert the jar for a moment in sufficient hot water to cover the top, which will expand and be easily unscrewed.

There are so many cough medicines in the market that it is sometimes difficult to tell which to buy; but if we had a cough, a cold or any affliction of the throat or lungs, we would try Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. Those who have used it think it is far ahead of all other preparations recommended for such complaints. The little folks like it as it is as pleasant as syrup.

French Cardinals Protest

Paris, Jan. 24, 1904.

To The President of the Republic:

At the moment when Parliament re-assembles and is about to discuss a bill brought in by the Government which completely suppresses teaching by religious congregations, we believe we are performing a duty imposed alike by our office and by the dictates of conscience in making known to you the sentiments of the Church of France. The Venerable M. Wallen recently delivered himself of these weighty words in the tribune of the Senate:

"It is not peace, but the most deplorable kind of war—a religious war which exists at this moment in the country, and it is the Government that has started it."

It was not yesterday that this war was declared against us. For a long time we have suffered from it. For a long time we have addressed our prayers to God in regard to it, asking light and wisdom for those who govern us, mercy for those who persecute us, strength and courage for those persecuted, and peace and union between the sons of France. We have spoken of it to the people confided to our care in order to enlighten them and to remind them of their duty. We must also speak of it to him who wields the supreme power and who imparts to the laws their validity and their force. We must speak to him in the name of God, from whom all authority flows and in the name of a Christian people whose rights have been violated. The voice of all who suffer, Mr. President, cannot reach you; perhaps ours will be heard.

Although we are no longer surprised at the unmerited hardships to which we are subjected, yet we cannot help experiencing a feeling of profound sorrow at seeing introduced into the Chamber of Deputies, in the name of the President of the Republic, a measure which by a single blow not only does away with all the teaching religious congregations, but with Christian teaching itself. It was not enough to eliminate from the curriculum of public instruction all religion under the pretext of maintaining a strict neutrality which manifestly cannot be maintained on the part of the teacher, as experience has amply demonstrated.

To safeguard the imperiled souls of their children, Catholics, conforming to all the requirements of the law, have opened at their own expense free schools. In these schools the religious teaching of the children are respected. But this was not to be tolerated. Catholic schools were to be broken up at any and every cost. To deal with them more effectively the Government, in total disregard of the liberties still remaining to us, has aimed a blow at the existence of the religious congregations that supply teachers to a Christian people. We use advisedly the word "existence" of the religious congregations because the new legislative measure by its inhibition of teaching prepares the way for the inevitable dispersion of the teaching congregations.

Why is this done if it is not for the purpose of rooting out Catholicism from the souls of men through anti-religious training and education? Mr. President, those who represent these things to you in another light and who would have you believe that all these odious measures are only political acts directed against political enemies, deceive you and abuse your confidence.

It is impossible not to see in these acts the suppression in the interest of sectarian doctrines, of every sort of liberty except the liberty to do wrong. The official head of a government cannot fall to see in them a danger to the country, for as it has been said, education not founded on religion only diffuses poison throughout the state. Mr. President, if you consider these acts from a still higher plane it is impossible that you, who are elevated above partisan strifes, will not think of the rigorous account that will have to be rendered to God and posterity by those who are charged with the education of the people. They will have to answer for millions of children brought up without religious faith, without morals and without respect for anything. They will learn that what weighs in the scales of justice are the tears shed in Christian homes and the houses of our religious communities.

If it is your duty to bestow thought upon the future in store for the French people, France will be the scene of the suppression of Christian education, and as a result of the sort of instruction and education forced upon you will not be

lacking in sympathy for the members of our religious congregations of both sexes, who, by the arbitrary enforcement of the present law supplemented by the new measure, will be either scattered penniless into every corner of the land or be brutally driven into exile.

M. Waldeck Rousseau has declared in the Chamber of Deputies and repeated in the Senate that the aim of the law of 1901 was to grant legal authorization to religious congregations which did not possess it at that time. Soon, however, the thought of withholding authorization from certain religious congregations took shape. The Government asserted that it wished to strike at the militant orders. What really happened was that the applications for authorization by religious congregations were rejected without even being read.

The law of association, after all, dealt with religious congregations as such. But the Government has struck at the individual members of these congregations even after they had been secularized—nay, even after the religious community to which they belonged had been dissolved.

It was asserted that religious vocations would be fostered by the authorized congregations, but here we have the Government itself asking Parliament in the name of the President of the Republic, to enact a law to dissolve all authorized congregations that are engaged in teaching.

At first a pretense was made of wishing to protect the secular clergy from encroachments on the part of the regular clergy. To-day the Government is openly preparing to sever the relations existing between Church and State, not with the purpose of restoring liberty to the Church, but with a view of ruining her and enslaving her.

It is time, Mr. President, that you should know that Catholics indulge in no illusions. They suffer cruelly from the wrongs done them as well as from the bad faith that has been manifested in dealing with them. It pains them to have to acknowledge what hitherto they persistently refused to believe, namely, that the Government of the Republic obeys a secret power, which in order to gratify its hatred of the Church, hesitates not to place three-fourths of the citizens outside of the protection of the law.

The Catholics are also grieved at seeing not only their own dearest interests sacrificed, but likewise those of France herself. They see her suffering financially because she has burdens imposed upon her in the shape of foolish expenditures of money to replace our educational and other institutions which the Government has destroyed.

With profound sorrow Catholics witness France influence sacrificed abroad, for it cannot be unknown to you, Mr. President, that the members of religious congregations, men and women, now persecuted at home, were the persons who caused the name of France to be blessed in foreign lands. Finally Catholics are shocked at seeing France's honorable traditions sacrificed by her being induced to inaugurate war upon women who at all times have been her glory—angels of charity—the possession of whom the whole world envies us.

Yes our hearts bleed at this spectacle and we anxiously demand of you, Mr. President, whether you have forgotten you owe equal protection to all Frenchmen, and whether in your character of guardian of our liberties and of our rights, as you are the guardian of the dignity of the country, you will make an effort to hold in check this new form of barbarism, for such it is, which threatens to enslave us all!

The expression we have just employed will not offend you, Mr. President, nor will it seem to you exaggerated if you bestow careful thought on the immediate consequences of this religious war. These consequences are grave and fearful. We fear for the generation of children who, throughout France, are on the point of being submitted, so far as it depends on the Government, to the baneful influence of a Godless education. Free thought has no moral basis. It has only opinions, in other words, only doubts. It has no other principle but that of self-interest.

We fear for the people, for that great mass to whom they have promised the impossible and who are already manifesting a spirit of impatience. Whatever is done the Government will not do away with the necessity of working, nor will it abolish poverty, suffering and death. If they deprive the people of the only consolations and hopes that in the hours of trial and tribulation can bind them to life, what will be left to them? They will be delivered over without any restraint to all their passions. Can we hope that brute force will be able to restrain their anger and despair within just limits? From indications already too



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apparent is it not evident that, notwithstanding the progress of material civilization, moral civilization, which is the only true civilization, has entered upon the downward path? Is it not evident that the equilibrium has been disturbed and that our society only exists on the remains of the wreckage of order?

We cannot conceal the fear we have lest God's mercy, having become exhausted, will be withdrawn from us. For the individual man who is responsible to God there is an eternity which we should never lose sight of. But for a people, as such, there remains only time. God treats a people in this world as they deserve to be treated. Is there no reason to fear that France, who has been favored among the nations, will be punished if she becomes forgetful of her past, both for her own shortcomings and for the crime of those who have arrayed her against God?

Finally we fear—we speak frankly, for the time for frank speaking has come—we fear, we say, that led away from the old beaten paths by those who have undertaken to guide her, France will prove recreant to her providential vocation, and, having no further reason for existing, will end, whose decadence and final overthrow are recorded in the pages of history.

We have no wish, Mr. President, to recall the inutility of the efforts we have made during many years to influence those in office and forecast from it the fate that awaits this letter. We do not know what you can accomplish in the present circumstances and in the face of dangers that threaten the Church of France and the fatherland. We know not that our words will be listened to. We shall at least have fulfilled our duty.

In the name of the truth which it is our duty to proclaim to all, we shall have reminded you that, to use the words of the historian Guizot: "To desist not only evil, but the principle of evil; not only disorder, but the passions and the ideas that beget disorder is the essential mission, the first duty of every government."

Finally we have demonstrated once more that the spiritual power with which we are invested remains faithful to its mission even after every other form of resistance has been weakened and vanquished.

We pray you, Mr. President, to accept the expression of our respectful consideration. H. M. CARDINAL LAGENIEUX, Archbishop of Rheims. FRANCIS CARDINAL RICHARD, Archbishop of Paris.

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Mr. Petty: "Good! and I'll put in about twenty dimes as my present."

Mrs. Petty: "It's a splendid bank; once the money's in it's impossible to get it out."

Mr. Petty: "Well—er—come to think of it, dear, I'm so short of money I'll just give Willie a tin horn or something."