

vice of our professors as regards the problems of modern society is not that they are impractical, but that they are too practical.

The professor holds the keys of all the practical careers. He carefully clips the wings of ideal youth to fit it for the pedestrian and remunerative professions, such as law, medicine, engineering and commercial chemistry. He turns youth as well into equally practical, if less remunerative, pursuits, such as journalism, theology and teaching. Some Canadian universities, such as Toronto, with its courses in commerce and finance, are veritable mortar board incubators of millionaires. Nor are banking and manufacturing alone remembered in the curriculum. The academic mind has taken to using the agricultural college as a pedagogic divining rod for the wealth of natural resources. Mother earth is now as important as mother wit.

In fact, a university degree by no means implies financial ostracism from the monthly salary cheque or the big corporation melon-cutting. The motor cars and travel trips of university graduates give in unmistakable dollars and cents an answer to the query whether an education pays. The practical range of our Canadian universities is indeed so wide as to include even the cooking range in the schools of domestic science. A Toronto professor tells a story of a shrewd parent who, with a trembling freshman at his heels, entered his study and in his most direct over-the-counter manner inquired, "Say, Professor, how many lectures must my son take before he can earn \$3 a day?"

That is exactly the question which Canadian universities have resolutely set themselves to answer, urged on by a public which is bound to have its sons earn \$3 a day no matter at what cost of political roguery and municipal bungling. Parents

would be horrified if universities taught their sons to work for the public good at less than union rates. Yet our university presidents are diplomats enough to invest that \$3 with a halo of idealism. With the uplifted right hand they preach ideals to gaping freshmen; with the left hand slyly averted they point out to impecunious seniors the blazed trail of the elusive dollar. A gullible public notices only the right hand, while thousands of graduates smugly unconscious of civic duty or true social idealism rise up and call the left hand blessed.

THE number of its alumni in parliament or in the civil service or on the bench is no test of a university's sympathy with social forward movements. There is nothing quixotic in conferring degrees on ministers of the crown or on multi-millionaires. A university is more likely to greet affectionately *honoris causa* the cause which has arrived and is standing still in the hoary respectability of inertia than the cause which is yet in the making. A pioneer is never welcomed in convocation. There are no red and blue hoods for the man who has invented a civic garbage incinerator or a system of auditing municipal accounts. The single tax is jeered at in lecture rooms. It will be worshipped as infallible dogma once it is sanctioned by legislation.

The A. M., the academic mind, is exactly like the Father Brown of G. K. Chesterton. It is intensely shrewd underneath a guileless exterior. It created the immense self sacrifices and salaries of the English civil service. It is always willing to devote itself *pro bono publico*—for a consideration. Our graduates in law are quite willing to become corporation counsel at a salary of \$15,000. Our university M.D.'s would consent to eke out scanty

practices with the titbit of a provincial appointment. Even our university professors are practical enough to serve on remunerative government commissions, or, under the stimulus of generous royalties, write books of humour for the toiling masses. Our very university presidents are not averse to climb the ladder of the colonial peerage and serve the Empire by being Knights Baronet. In the light of this it is difficult to accuse universities of being impractical. Still, a record of office-seeking is not necessarily a record of social service.

In short, the kind of macadam the professor puts into the social system is its rigidity and conservatism. The ideal road material, for the social, evolutionist, is resilient. It has flexibility and allows adaptation to social growth. It permits of the metamorphosis of a Doctor of Law into an alderman. It lets mind, the academic mind, interpenetrate with any kind of agenda. Some professors, of course, would see an insult in the suggestion that they should pave our city streets with brains that can do better spade work in tearing up the pavements of Assyrian palaces. As educationists, however, they should do their quota of civic work by proxy. Their students at least should be inspired with a willingness to trudge the highways of macadam.

Unless the best thought of our country is devoted to national and municipal problems we are going to have poor city pavements and contractors' scandals and the microbes of inefficiency, if not of dishonesty, dancing a dance of death in all the arteries of communal life. The academic mind, if it has a serum, whether an extract of Greek or Conic sections or psycho-physics must produce it. The professor is a citizen and owes the community all the duties of citizenship.

# Only a Common Fellow

*A Story of Simple Sacrifice for the Sake of Others' Happiness*

By L. M. MONTGOMERY

ON my dearie's wedding morning I wakened early and went to her room. Long and long ago she had made me promise that I would be the one to wake her on the morning of her wedding day.

"You were the first to take me in your arms when I came into the world, Aunt Rachel," she had said, "and I want you to be the first to greet me on that wonderful day."

But that was long ago, and now my heart foreboded that there would be no need of wakening her. And there was not. She was lying there awake, very quiet, with her hand under her cheek, and her big, blue eyes fixed on the window, through which a pale, dull light was creeping in—a joyless light it was, and enough to make a body shiver. I felt more like weeping than rejoicing, and my heart took to aching when I saw her there so white and patient, more like a girl who was waiting for a winding sheet than for a bride's veil. But she smiled brave-like when I sat down on her bed and took her hand.

"You look as if you hadn't slept all night, dearie," I said.

"I didn't—not a great deal," she answered me. "But the night didn't seem long; no, it seemed too short. I was thinking of a great many things. What time is it, Aunt Rachel?"

"Five o'clock."

"Then, in six hours more—"

She suddenly sat up in her bed, her great, thick rope of human hair falling over her white shoulders, and flung her arms about me, and burst into tears on my old breast. I petted and soothed her and said not a word; and after a while she stopped crying, but she still sat with her head so that I couldn't see her face.

"We didn't think it would be like this once, did we, Aunt Rachel?" she said, very softly.

"It shouldn't be like this now," I said. I had to say it. I never could bide the thought of that marriage and I couldn't pretend to. It was all her stepmother's doings—right well I knew that. My dearie would never have taken Mark Foster else.

"DON'T let us talk of that," she said, soft and beseeching, the same way she used to speak when she was a baby-child and wanted to coax me into something. "Let us talk about the old days—and him."

"I don't see much use in talking of him when you're going to marry Mark Foster to-day," I said. But she put her hand over my mouth.

"It's for the last time, Aunt Rachel. After to-day I can never talk of him, or even think of him. It's four years since he went away. Do you remember how he looked, Aunt Rachel?"

"I mind well enough, I reckon," I said, kind of curt-like. And I did. Owen Blair hadn't a face a body could forget—that long face of his with its clean colour and its eyes made to look love into a woman's. When I thought of Mark Foster's sallow skin and lank jaws I felt sick-like. Not that Mark was ugly—he was just a common-looking fellow.

"He was so handsome, wasn't he, Aunt Rachel?" my dearie went on, in that patient voice of hers. "So tall and strong and handsome. I wish we hadn't parted in anger. It was so foolish of us to quarrel. But it would have been all right if he had lived to come back. I know it would have been all right. I know he didn't carry any bitterness against me to his death. I thought once, Aunt Rachel, that I would go through life true to him and then over on the other side I'd meet him just as before, all his and his only. But it isn't to be."

"Thanks to your stepma's wheedling and Mark Foster's scheming," said I.

"No, Mark didn't scheme," she said, patiently. "Don't be unjust to Mark, Aunt Rachel. He has been very good and kind."

"HE'S as stupid as a howlet and as stubborn as Solomon's mule," I said, for I would. "He's just a common fellow and yet he thinks he's good enough for my beauty."

"Don't talk about Mark," she pleaded again. "I mean to be a good, faithful wife to him. But I'm my own woman yet—for just a few more sweet hours, and I want to give them to him. The last hours of my maidenhood—they must belong to him."

So she talked of him, me sitting there and holding her, with her lovely hair hanging down over my arm, and my heart aching so for her that it hurt bitter. She didn't feel as bad as I did, because she'd made up her mind what to do and was resigned. She was going to marry Mark Foster, but her heart was down there in South Africa, in that grave nobody knew of, where the Boers buried Owen Blair—if they had buried him at all. And she went over all they had been to each other since they were mites of babies, going to school together and meaning even then to be married when they grew up; and the first words of love he's said to her and what she'd dreamed and hoped for. The

only thing she didn't bring up was the time he thrashed Mark Foster for bringing her apples. She never mentioned Mark's name; it was all Owen—Owen—and how he looked, and what might have been if he hadn't gone off to the Boer war and got shot. And there was me holding her and listening to it all, and her stepma sleeping sound and triumphant in the next room.

When she had talked it all out she lay down on her pillow again. I got up and went downstairs to light the fire. I felt terribly old and tired. My feet seemed to drag and the tears kept coming to my eyes, though I tried to keep them away, for well I knew 'twas a bad omen to be weeping on a wedding day.

BEFORE long, Isabella Clark came down; bright and pleased-looking enough, she was. I'd never liked Isabella, from the day Philippa's father brought her here; and I liked her less than ever this morning. She was one of your sly, deep women, always smiling smooth and scheming underneath it. I'll say it for her, though, that she had been good to Philippa; but it was her doings that my dearie was to marry Mark Foster that day.

"Up betimes, Rachel," she said, smiling and speaking me fair, as she always did, and hating me in her heart, as I well knew. "That is right, for we'll have plenty to do to-day. A wedding makes lots of work."

"Not this sort of a wedding," I said, sour-like. "I don't call it a wedding when two people get married and sneak off as if they were ashamed of it—as well they might be in this case."

"It was Philippa's own wish that all should be very quiet," said Isabella, as smooth as cream. "You know I'd have given her a big wedding if she'd wanted it."

"Oh, it's better quiet," I said. "The fewer to see Philippa marry a man like Mark Foster the better."

"Mark Foster is a good man, Rachel." "No good man would be content to buy a girl as he's bought Philippa," I said, determined to give it in to her.

"He's a common fellow, not fit for my dearie to wipe her feet on. It's well that her mother didn't live to see this day; but this day would never have come if she'd lived."

"I daresay Philippa's mother would have remembered that Mark Foster is very well off quite as readily as worse people," said Isabella, a little spitefully.

"I liked her better when she was spiteful than