

PRETTY MISS NEVILLE

BY B. M. CROKER

CHAPTER XXXII

HER NAME WAS LAURA
* How silver sweet sound lovers' tones by night.
Like softest music to attending ears.
—Romeo and Juliet.

"That youth Boyse wants wheeling into line!" muttered Maurice angrily, as we stumbled and scrambled along the narrow foot-path, steering by Tuppence, whose white body was our guiding star; "it would afford me a melancholy pleasure to introduce him to a nice new cane." After half an hour's tedious progress we came out on the road, and the moon made her appearance almost simultaneously, so we were able to get forward at a brisk trot which carried us over nearly three miles of our journey. The silver-faced moon threw a broad, searching light on every object as we brought our horses once more to a walk, nearly opposite to a dreary, deserted bungalow that stood a little way back from the highroad.

"That place always gives me a feeling of intense repulsion," I remarked, with a little shiver; "no one has ever lived in it since some one shot himself there."

"You have horrors on the brain this evening, Nora. Who shot himself in that vile looking habitation?" said Maurice, looking back.

"Oh! a Captain Somebody," I answered vaguely; "they say he was killed by some girl at home, and it preyed on his mind—of course he haunted the bungalow. I don't believe in people committing suicide because they are crossed in love, do you, Maurice?"

"I do, for I knew a case of the kind," he returned, gravely.

"But not because of a girl?"

"Of course it was; what else?"

"Tell me all about it, do. Who was she? and did you know her?" I inquired, eagerly.

"I am glad to say I did not know her. I knew him; he was one of my greatest friends. I never like talking about it, but I don't mind telling you, if you care to listen, and if you are sure that you have not had enough horrors already."

"Tell me about him; I should like to hear," I replied, courageously. I was not afraid of anything with Maurice for my companion.

"This fellow's name was Maitland, and he and I were passengers out in the same trooper, and struck up an acquaintance. We were quartered in the same garrison, and became great friends; shared the same bungalow and dog cart; and had our servants, horses, and dogs in common. We made lots of shooting trips together, though he preferred sketching to shooting, and had rather a strong bias toward ladies society."

"At the end of two years he came in for a legacy, and took six months' leave to England, on urgent private affairs. When he came out at the end of that period, the legacy was nearly all spent, but he had found, in its place, an inestimable treasure—her name was Laura, and Laura was named in my ears from morning till night. She was certainly very good-looking, to judge from a cabinet photo, in a velvet frame, that adorned our bachelor sitting-room, and, half a dozen smaller ones that were scattered about in Maitland's own sanctum. He was completely changed. He was bewitched! All his thoughts were centered on her, and on saving money for their future home. All his old ruses went in the purchase of silver ornaments and feminine gimcracks. Our sober bachelor veranda now became the haunt of all the hawkers in the place. Through the hottest time of year he studied Hindoostanee with a persevering monish, he toiled from early morn till dewy eve, that he might get a staff appointment, and marry the girl of his heart. Toiled, while I lay in a long chair, read and wondered more and more at his infatuation. I can understand it now," he added, in a low voice, which I was not supposed to hear.

"Go on, Well?" I urged, impatiently.

"He studied hard and passed," proceeded Maurice; "he gave up smoking; he gave up wine; he gave up all society; he became uncertain, irritable, and almost morose. Whether this was due to Laura, or overtaxing his mind and denying himself all accustomed luxuries, I cannot say. Then there was a sudden falling off in her letters; they became spasmodic instead of regular; sometimes he had no letter for three weeks—nothing but a letter in his eyes. I cannot adequately describe his state of mind on mail evenings. For fully an hour before the post-pon was due there was Maitland pacing the compound, listening eagerly for every step, and quivering at any accidental sound within the bungalow; and when the letter did come, with what avidity he seized it! His gasp of relief was something pitiable to hear. When none came—no letter—his ghastly, drawn face was indeed still more pitiable to see."

"You can fancy that things were not particularly pleasant for me. My friend, my companion, was gone, and far as I was concerned, he no longer cared a button for any one in the world but Laura. I looked upon him as suffering from some kind of strange, acute mental derangement, and vowed to myself, scores of times over, that I would rather suffer any fate than fall in love. At last I persuaded Maitland to come out for a shooting expedition. We were to be absent six weeks—no longer—and there would be just time for an answer to an all-important letter he had recently dispatched—a letter of tender expostulation and reproach.

"So we went off into the jungles, far away from the weekly post; and, at the end of six weeks, we returned; and during those six weeks I believe Maitland had been actually counting the hours and reckoning the minutes. No wonder his shooting was outrageously bad."

"He galloped into the cantonments a whole day ahead of me, no longer able to restrain his impatience; and, as I jogged in quietly after him the next morning, I was beckoned into his bungalow by one of our married officers, with a face as long as my arm, and a paper in his hand."

"There's bad news for Maitland, this mail," he said; "the girl he was engaged to, Miss Coupland—"

"What! Is she dead?" I asked.

"No," he answered, thrusting the Times into my grasp; "married! Poor old fellow! he said; 'he's safe to be awfully cut up. We knew something of her through mutual cousins. She is a handsome, heartless, worldly girl, and has thrown Maitland over for a decrepit baronet seventy years of age, with \$20,000 a year. You'd better look after him,' said the major, following me down the steps, and, dropping his voice to a whisper, 'keep his revolver out of his way.'"

"Well?" I asked, in a tone of breathless expectancy.

"Well," returned Maurice, slowly, "was just too late!"

"For some moments neither of us spoke; and then he said: 'He lies in an obscure corner of a garrison cemetery, and she is thought to end of in society by all accounts; but, nevertheless, in my opinion, she bears upon her forehead the brand of Cain! Come we had better be jogging on.' My eyes felt misty as I once more started Cavalier at a brisk trot, which we kept up till we came within sight of Maitland, and within sound of the band, which was discoursing sweet sounds to a thronged audience round the stand; they were playing 'Die Lieben Langen Tag' waltzes as we went by, and somehow those waltzes were always connected with that evening in my memory."

"Hold on, now let them walk," said Maurice; "it seems a sin to go in this lovely night!"

"They will be wondering what has become of us, I murmured, apprehensively."

"Oh, they know you are all right, when you are with me," returned Maurice, confidently, "and somehow I seem to see so little of you now, Nora, and who has a better right to your society?" This statement was certainly open to dispute. "You are always taken up with other people," he continued, in an injured tone.

"Once upon a time, the less you saw of me the better," I answered, gayly.

"By, love, I should think so!" emphatically. "Who would ever have thought—By the way, interrupting himself hastily, 'I had something to say to you, to consult you about,' drawing forth a letter from his breast-pocket."

"The new roof of Gallow; I knew that was what Mr. Moore was driving at when he mentioned the leak. He was just breaking it to you gently."

"No, not Gallow this time," returned my cousin, who, with the reins loose on his horse's neck, was looking over his epistle by the light of the moon. "Tell me, Nora," turning to me with a smile, "how do you think I would look in a cocked hat?"

"Magnificent," I replied impressively, without a second's hesitation; "but I have hitherto imagined that the Horse Artillery—"

"Yes, yes; but there is such a thing as an Artillery officer being on the staff—in short, General Ross, the new brigadier at Cheetapore has offered to make me his A. D. C. I had an awfully kind letter from him this morning. I knew him very well up in Bengal, and it would be a capital billet."

"The idea came upon me with a shock. Maurice going away! At first sight the prospect was unbearable, but, on second thoughts, perhaps it was all for the best. Mrs. Vane had been throwing out various unpleasant little hints of late, and I had by no means forgotten Maurice's suggestion under the tamarind tree."

"The Rosses, General and Mrs., are two of the nicest people I ever met. The general is a very smart soldier, a thorough little gentleman, and a great racing man. Cheetapore is a A 1 station; I shall have extra pay, and if there is a row anywhere, I stand a good chance of being in the thick of it; for the general is a man of mark; where he goes I go—so what shall I say to him, Nora?" said Maurice, looking at me, an odd kind of smile lurking behind his moustache.

"I say go," I answered, emphatically.

"Go!" he echoed, in a tone of most unqualified surprise and disappointment.

"Yes, certainly. Never refuse a good offer. Only think," I continued, with a laugh, "you will be what poor Ali Baba called 'an arrangement in scarlet and gold.' You will be awful and unapproachable. You can look exceedingly dignified on occasions; you have beautiful manners; you ride, and dance admirably—in fact, now that I think of it, you are just cut out for an A. D. C., and will be exactly the right man in the right place."

"I glanced at Maurice. He was looking straight before him, moodily twirling his moustache. The picture seemingly did not appeal to him."

"Probably you will hardly consent to know us should we go down to Cheetapore for the race?" What a swell you will be, galloping about with the general in a dark frock coat, belts and cocked hat! We can hardly expect you to notice us then; but perhaps in plain clothes—"

"What utter nonsense you are talking now!" interrupted Maurice, hastily. "You know very well that I have not the smallest intention of accepting General Ross's offer."

"Not going to be his aide-de-camp in a tone of unqualified amazement. 'And why?'"

"Why?" impatiently. "You know the reason perfectly. Because," leaning his hand on my horse's neck and looking full into my eyes, "because of you, Nora!"

"Because of me! What on earth have I to do with it?" I foolishly persisted.

"Everything," he replied, emphatically. Maurice's face was transformed. Maurice's voice vibrated with some unusual emotion. If Maurice's looks and words were to be believed, I represented everything to him in this wide world. Major Percival's—my plighted lover—words and looks were as moonlight unto sunlight in comparison with those of my cousin. I turned abruptly away, my face as hot as fire, my heart beating unusually fast, and suddenly putting Cavalier into a smart canter, crossed over the meadow at the top of his speed, with Maurice's words ringing in my ears.

"Because of you, Nora!" I pulled up in front of our own veranda, and here, reposing in various degrees of indignation, were auntie, Mrs. Vane, and Dicky. Auntie was serious, Mrs. Vane sarcastic, and Dicky was sulky!

"Really, Nora, this is no time for you to be coming home—a quarter to eight. I think you might have contrived to have kept with the others."

Thus spoke my aunt, who had been nursing her wrath to keep it warm, and had thoroughly succeeded.

"I hope you had a pleasant ride—a moonlight tele-a-tete is charming," sneered Dicky.

Mrs. Vane said nothing. I could see, from a glance she bestowed on me, that she meant to have it out with me by and by, and at present her attention was riveted on Maurice.

"Vogue la galère," I said to myself. I never had had a more enjoyable ride—never! I felt most delightfully and disgracefully happy. Why should I feel so elated? I, an engaged young lady? Simply because my cousin had ridden with me in the moonlight, and whispered soft nothings in my ear. But were they soft nothings. Mrs. Vane's bright eyes were fixed on Maurice; he was standing in the moonlight with his hat off, holding Desertborn by the bridle. Never had I seen him look so handsome or so happy. Leaving him to the brunt of the fray, and to make what apologies seemed good in his eyes, I sprang to the ground and hurried away to my room.

My toilet was nearly completed (thanks to Drago), for I was a uninterested and mechanical as any doll. My mind was undergoing a revolution. I did not know what I was doing, nor what I was wearing. The face that I beheld in the glass was dyed with blushes, and, oh, shame! wreathed with smiles. Enter to me Mrs. Vane, a fixed purpose in her air as she came.

"Send away Drago. I will fasten your dress," she said, imperiously. Seeing Drago effectively banished, and having buttoned my dress in ominous silence, she pushed me down into a low chair, and, transfixing me with her bright dark eyes, said: "And how much longer is this to go on?"

"What do you mean?" I asked, in a faint voice, as I reached for my bangles with ill-assumed carelessness.

"Mean?" she continued, angrily. "I mean this flirtation with your Cousin Maurice. I am surprised at you, Nora. I have been deceived, bitterly deceived and disappointed in you. I thought you an honest, sincere, open-hearted girl, incapable of acting a lie, or playing a part. Now I know you. You are a heartless little thing!"

"Mrs. Vane!" I cried, starting to my feet.

"And," she proceeded, undauntedly, "double-faced and deceitful into the bargain! You are acting a shameful, treacherous part to two men, your cousin and your intended. I came to give you my candid opinion of your conduct, as I am not deceitful. Now you know my sentiments; and this very night before I sleep, Maurice Beresford shall know the truth."

"I intend to tell him myself," I really do!" I stammered, with averted eyes.

"We all know the place that is said to be peaved with good intentions my young friend. You have been intending to tell him this long time. I will now relieve you of all trouble. Poor fellow, I sincerely pity him! How you have led him on; how you have dared to behave in such a way, is best known to yourself, Nora. It is plain to be seen that he is deeply in love with you—that he worships the very ground you tread on; and when he hears that all this time you are engaged to another man, what will he say? What will he think? He will despise and execrate the whole sex."

"Why should you say he is in love with me?" I answered, feeling that the old argument of cousin and play-fellow had been cut from beneath my feet by Maurice's own words not half an hour ago.

"Because he comes here daily, to see your uncle, forsooth. Why does he linger at your side? Why does he look distrust and preoccupied when you are not present? Why does he devote himself to you absolutely when you appear?—gesticulating with both hands. 'I know that my warning and my news will come too late; nevertheless, I shall tell Captain Beresford of your engagement this very evening.'"

"Do not!" I exclaimed; "please, please do not; give me one day more! On my word of honor I will tell him to-morrow!"

"Very well then. I'll give you till this time to-morrow—not another hour."

So saying Mrs. Vane, with a very impressive nod—at once of warning and reproach—took up her candle and departed.

When I was left alone (although it was dangerously near dinner time) I indulged myself in a really good cry. I could not help it; I knew that I had done wrong; that I was all Mrs. Vane had said—deceitful and treacherous—though I had never meant to be either. Lack of moral courage was the rock on which I had wrecked my happiness. I was a wicked, a very wicked girl, and miserably unhappy into the bargain; and I buried my face in the pillow of my sofa and wept right bitterly.

A length-roused myself, bathed my eyes, started at the ceiling in a vain hope of banishing their red rims, and made a tardy appearance at the dinner table. I'm sure that Maurice remarked my recent tears. I saw him gazing at me more than once during dinner with amazement and concern; he seemed exceedingly anxious to discover the reason of my grief and endeavored to elicit the truth in a politely roundabout way. He veiled inquiries with no success. Nevertheless, he did his utmost to efface the recollection of my unknown grievance by every means in his power; but I resolutely avoided him, repelling all his intentions, and, pleading a bad headache (attributed to the sun!) immediately after dinner I withdrew from the company, and retired to my own apartment.

A LITTLE BUT TRUE STORY

"Father," once said a rugged old Westerner to me, never before too long in judging men, for you can't tell what they have been or what they might turn out to be. It was when as a young and perhaps over-zealous priest I had been stationed in a small Western town, whose mushroom growth on a seemingly illimitable expanse of prairie, had been a matter of brief interest a few years ago. After my ordination I was appointed by good old Bishop X. to expend by energies and few talents on a remote corner of his diocese. There I had for one of my parishioners an old man, Celtic in name and origin, who, like so many others of his race, had risen from poverty to comparative affluence by means of industry and sober application. After I had come to know him well and to realize his worth, I had made a sort of lay confession, and indeed he proved a veritable godsend to me, for he lightened many a weary hour by drawing on his large fund of anecdote and experience. He had crossed the sea, and had been in the west by a few members of the same congregation but my indignation had been extreme and to some extent warranted. The old man listened patiently, but the light of reminiscence shone in his eyes as I reached a caustic peroration, and when he leaned back in his rocker and relit his pipe carefully, I knew that he was going to enlarge upon the text he had chosen. "The way you feel toward that man," said he, "reminds me of the way I used to feel toward a fellow I had here awhile for a hand. It was quite a few years ago, help was scarce and when we hired a man we always took care not to ask him for any references for fear we'd learn something about him we wouldn't want to know. Help was mighty scarce one summer in particular. The Great Northern was putting in its through line, it had crowds of laborers who were paid pretty fair wages and men seemed to like the excitement of the camps. But every so often a bunch would drift away from them or get fired and then they would scatter through the country looking for just enough work to tide them over till the next debauch, or to give them sufficient funds to pick up and go elsewhere. So we had many rough customers pass our way as you want to believe. But we picked up as many as we could, with experienced hands coming so high, any sort of help looked mighty good to us just then. They seemed to be all sorts. There would be college men, doctors and lawyers and others who had hit the down grade mixed up with just common hoboos, and you couldn't tell them one from another. I tell you we had many hard characters to deal with that summer. But the hardest of them

all, the hardest looking man I ever did see, came meandering one night, his clothes all ragged and dirty, a scraggly beard on his face and an all-round hard look to him. I was just sitting around when he came, for I had begun to take things a little bit easy, and I saw him come slouching along. He was tall and well built and might have been handsome if he hadn't such a tough look, for I could see that he was still in his thirties. I asked him what he wanted, of course, before telling him to move along, and the way he growled back 'work' at me made me kind of smile. But I had taken lots of chances with men that summer and I kind of thought he couldn't do worse than some others I had had, so I took him over to the bunkhouse and let the foreman look him over, and he made some kind of dicker with him, and the first thing I knew he was one of my hands. Well, I found out that his name was Holcomb, which of course the boys around soon shortened to Hoke. I must say he gained experience fast and soon turned out to be an all round good hand. I never did see such a hand with a horse as that fellow turned out to be. He never seemed to be afraid of them, even when the boys were breaking in bronks, or trying their strength against outlaws or horses that have a name for meanness. In a few weeks he could ride with the best of them. But he never changed—he was always the same surly fellow that he had been when the first came to me. He wouldn't mix with any of the men, he wouldn't speak unless he was spoken to, and while all the fellows were a little bit reckless in the language they used, he got a name for his cursing and swearing even with them. Every day he would disappear for a couple of days and when he turned up again he would be a wreck from the cheap liquor they used to sell around the camps. I used to try to be around near him, simply to see if I could figure him out, but gave that up after a while, for I couldn't get below the surface. He was always the same surly, uncommunicative, gruff and rough, with a terrible temper, and very abusive when he had been drinking. Well, he worked for us about four or five months, and at the end of that time the boys left him severely alone. I often planned on letting him go, but workers were scarce and he attended to business pretty well, and besides I wanted to see whether he would turn out human in the long run. About this time I put an addition to the house. You know how we build our houses out here. We can't afford to spread ourselves very much when we start in on a place; it took most of us about all we had to get a foothold. But by and by as we got the money and want to make the home a little more comfortable for the woman folk, we add a room here and there. It does not make much difference in architectural, as you might say, but it gives us a lot of comfort. As I was saying, I made up my mind to build an extra big room off the parlor, and old Father M— who was our priest then, heard about it somehow (how do you folks hear about them things, anyway?), and he wrote to me to kind of fix it so as it could be used as a chapel when he was making his rounds, which he could only make about twice a year; for his parish was about half the state in those days. I did so, and then one day I got word that he would be with us the next Sunday. Well, I told the boys about it, as I always used to, and told them that any of them that wanted to come would be welcome, and of course, included Hoke in the invitation, though I did that more as a joke, and he only grunted when he heard me. So I was a little surprised the next Sunday when he showed up with some of the others. Father M— put on his vestments in the parlor and then came out to his little altar and prepared to say Mass for us. It always kind of made my eyes wet when we had Mass in those days. I used to think about the times in the old country when we had it frequent, and then the faces of my folks whom I had not seen ever since I left, would kind of come up before me, and it would seem to me that I was kneeling again with him in the old parish church and that I had only to look around to see my dear mother's face, and the faces of them I was raised with. So for a few minutes that morning, I didn't notice much of what was going on. When I did look up I was never so surprised in my life. Father M— had told me that the boy he always brought with him from his last stop to serve his Mass was sick and that he would have to get along without a server. But I looked again, and there was Mr. Holcomb, the worst talker and the hardest character I had ever known, kneeling alongside him and answering him as the Mass went along. I couldn't seem to make it out at all. It kind of shocked me to see him kneeling there when I knew he was such a bad actor. But I got to thinking as how our Lord seemed to like to have sinners around Him when He was on earth, to talk with them and all during the rest of that Mass I prayed and prayed that the near presence of Our God might make a change in our Hoke. Of course it did, as you might judge. I walked into the parlor after Mass to say a few words to Father M— as I always did, and he waved me right out again, but not before I had seen Holcomb sitting in a corner with his head in his hands crying like a child. I tell you it made me mighty glad to see him there. It turned out that he had been an altar boy down East when he was young, but like many others, he had run away from home

and got in with a bad lot. But after old Father M— had talked with him he changed right away, everybody got to like him, and if you want to know just what became of him, he is one of the biggest and best Catholic ranchers just across the state line. But I made up my mind that morning, Father—here the old man tapped his pipe on his heel and we arose to go in to supper—"I made up my mind that morning, and I have tried to keep it since, that I would always be just a little bit slow in judging other men, for you don't know all there is about them; you can't tell what they have been nor what they might turn out to be."

GENERAL INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS PIUS X.

SPIRITUAL READING

As the vegetable kingdom is distinguished from the mineral kingdom by its manner of growth and development from the tiny seed or rootlet to the full-grown tree or plant, so man is distinguished from the brute creation by the precious gift of reason, which enables him to advance along the way of knowledge, to profit by the achievements and even the mistakes of others, and to rear new intellectual edifices more splendid and more imposing than those that preceded the diligent exercise of his God-given faculty. A tree that should grow only as the rocks grow, that is, by accretion from without, would belong to the mineral kingdom; and a man that should have no reasoning faculty would be but a brute. In other words, both tree and man, in our supposition, would be misnomers, much as we speak familiarly of a hat-tree and a man-of-the-earth, when we mean an article of furniture and a native plant.

But, far as the reasoning faculty raises man above all other animals, the gift of faith produces in him even a greater transformation; for it makes him capable of acts which were before impossible and gives him a title to heavenly glory which his unaided efforts could never give him. As the natural man ought to act always according to the dictates of right reason, so the supernaturally favored man, that is, the man possessed of faith, ought to act always from motives and on principles which have their foundation in faith; for he is a believer not only while he is actually praying, or preparing to receive the holy Sacraments, or assisting at the great Sacrifice, but whenever he is conscious of his personality and his dignity.

What is the man of faith to believe? How is he to act? The general principles of faith and morals come to us through Holy Mother Church, God's duly accredited representative, for whose inerrancy He vouches; but it is in applying these general principles to our every day life that we are exposed to the danger of making serious mistakes. As an accountant may know the table of money perfectly yet fall into some inaccuracy in adding up a column of figures, so we may make a faulty application of a general principle and thus warp our whole spiritual life; for, if we are to act at all times according to God's good pleasure, we must needs make frequent applications of the fundamental principles of our holy religion to our personal, private lives.

How are we to obtain that spiritual insight into self, and that speediness and dexterity, so to speak, in shaping our lives so as to reproduce ever more perfectly the Divine Exemplar shown to us on the Mount? Leaving aside those special and wholly extraordinary helps which, from time to time, Almighty God has seen fit to bestow upon His chosen servants,—helps which we may not claim for ourselves, and to which it would be foolhardy to aspire,—we have certain ordinary and readily available means of spiritual enlightenment from which we may easily draw abundant profit. The Sunday sermon, for example, though addressed to a congregation composed of old and young, men, women, devout and undevout, will always provide some solid instruction for whoever hears it in a spirit of meekness and docility. Those who are wise in their own conceits, men consumed with an exaggerated notion of their own excellence and superiority, will draw nothing from a sermon which might both reclaim a Magdalen and inflame a seraph; for they have stopped the ears of their understanding to any uplifting call and beguile themselves with the enchanting music of self-praise. But even with the best of wills, the pious hearer will possibly draw less abundant fruit from the spoken Word of God, because, while he is dwelling upon some particularly uplifting utterance, the preacher has passed on and his words are not heard, or, if heard, are not assimilated.

Quite otherwise is it when we take up a book of religious instruction, for the printed page really speaks to us and, moreover, does so in a most obliging and condescending way; for, if I wish to pause and reflect upon some striking truth or a touching sentiment, the speaker promptly stops and awaits my good pleasure before going on with the discourse. Hence, Spiritual Reading is an abundant source of enlightenment for the mind and of strength for the will.

We quite naturally expect that a means so useful and available for progress in piety should be countenanced and encouraged by Holy Mother Church; but she goes farther and makes it a part of the daily duty of all those who have been promoted to major orders. The Breviary, which is the book enjoined for the spiritual reading of the clergy, felicitously combines the three kinds of writings which are commonly distinguished when masters of the interior life treat of this subject. We have, first, selections from the Holy Bible, the greatest and best of books, for in it we have God's message to His children; next, we have moral discourses from the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, who teach us no less by their lives than by their pens how to raise a splendid spiritual edifice on a solid foundation; and, finally we have brief lives of the Saints, in which we see vivid pictures of what the soul becomes by diligently correcting defects and by perseveringly practising virtue. The Breviary has been done into English by the Marquis of Bute for the benefit of those not sufficiently familiar with the Latin tongue, to enjoy to the full the spiritual feast which it provides from day to day.

Until a few years, the reader of English had a but meagre assortment of spiritual books at his command; but thanks to Father Faber and Father Coleridge, two venerated names which may stand for a group, and thanks, also, to zealous translators of foreign spiritual classics, he has now within his reach a surprisingly rich treasure suited to any and every phase of devotion.

Although, study and pray as we may, we shall never arrive at a comprehension of Almighty God, for the finite mind of man cannot penetrate the deep recesses of the Infinite, and even the Blessed in Heaven, illuminated as they are by the light of glory and thrilled as they are with ecstatic bliss, are incapable of sounding the depths of the mystery of the Godhead still, as the eyes of John the Beloved were opened by the Divine Power to things celestial as he gave witness to the truth in the exile of Patmos, so have other servants of God been privileged to obtain a glimpse, as it were, of the majesty of the Creator and have striven to express in dull, cold words what eye hath not seen nor hath ear heard. One of the most valuable works on the Divine Perfections lately placed within the reach of readers of English is The Names of God, composed in Latin some three centuries ago by the Venerable Leonard Lessius of the Society of Jesus, and translated by Father Campbell, who has brought out in faultless style the profound learning, the tender pity, and the affecting unction of the original.

The providential legislation of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius X, in the matter of the frequent reception of the Blessed Eucharist has prompted many devout clients of Our Sacramental Lord to commit to paper the outpourings of their own fervent souls for the purpose of animating the faithful to avail themselves of the inexhaustible spiritual riches of which the voice of the Supreme Pontiff urges them to partake. All nations have felt the impulse of this legislation; all nations have seen books and pamphlets issue from the press in a variety of forms suited to every stage of mental and spiritual development, from the innocent, big-eyed child to the aged recluse, purified and uplifted by long years of retirement and contemplation. In England, for instance, Father de Zulueta, S. J., has written unceasingly, untriniting, enthusiastically, in favor of frequent and daily Communion. Whoever understands English is under obligations to so zealous a champion of this holy cause. "The Science of Salvation" is what might be called the systematic study of virtues and defects, with rules or principles for conducting our lives to what must be most pleasing to Almighty God. This branch of Spiritual Reading will be found to contain among its writers some of the most eminent Saints that have added lustre to the Church. St. Bernard, St. Francis de Sales, and St. Alphonsus Liguori are among them; but, though he has not reached the honors of our altars, it would be hard to name a more widely read or more closely studied writer or advancement in the practice of virtue than Alphonsus Rodriguez, S. J., whose Christian Perfection, even in its archaic English garb, has become the common property of religious and the devout faithful in the world.

The difference that we perceive between a treatise on teaching, for example, and the actual work of a successful teacher explains why the lives of the Saints are more popular than formal treatises on piety. A Saint is simply a moving picture of virtues in process of development and of defects in process of eradication. The life of the Saints comes home to us, for they show us that virtue can be practised by us, since it has been practised by others and under conditions more difficult than we shall find. Nor is this true simply of the holy martyrs, whose heroic zeal led them to sacrifice cheerfully, joyously, what we hold most dear in this world, namely, our lives; for the confessors, the virgins, and the saintly men and women in all ranks and states of life who have glorified God by the practice of exalted virtue invariably met with trials, hardships and reverses which purified them even as gold is purified in the crucible. Open enemies, false friends, insidious tempters, and narrow-minded persecutors often found a place in their lives, which, if these elements of probation