

LINKED LIVES.

By Lady Gertrude Douglas.

CHAPTER XIX.

MISGIVING. "Yet for through the misty future, With a crown of stars bright, An hour of joy, you know not, Is winging her about flight. Pray, though the gift you ask for May never comfort your fears, May never repay your pleading, Yet pray, with hopeful tears, As an act, not for your long for, But as a sign, that one day, Your eyes are too dim to see it, Yet strive, and wait, and pray." —Alfred P. Victor.

would have been very much surprised; but no need to anticipate! The very last thing Hugh desired for Mabel was a renewal of her intimacy with the Vaughans, whose influence over her he dreaded exceedingly; but no such fears ever entered Jessie's head. She had heard of the Vaughn's conversion to the Catholic faith with very little surprise. She had never expected anything else from them—her only wonder was why they had remained so long in the Church of England. Religion to her was very different from what it was to Mabel, nor had she the smallest idea how deeply Mabel had felt her friend's defection from the Church of her baptism. If she had given a thought to the matter, Jessie would have concluded that Mabel was not the least likely to follow Genevieve's example, unless Hugh did so likewise. It never would have occurred to her that Genevieve's influence could possibly be stronger than his—and as for a higher influence working in the matter, Jessie simply never dreamed of such a contingency. Had anyone attempted to reason with her on the subject, Jessie would merely have reminded them of how she herself had been brought up in a convent, surrounded by Catholic influences, yet that she had not only suffered no damage to her faith, nor had she ever felt inclined to change her religion. Why should it be otherwise with Mabel? Besides, the fact of her engagement to Hugh made her perfectly safe—if ever she had shown Romish tendencies, which she certainly had done in the past; well, now, at any rate, there need be no fear. Mabel would not do anything to vex Hugh, so of course she would never have anything to do with the Catholic religion. So argued, or rather would have argued, Jessie, had she given a thought to the matter.

shall rise beyond it, upon its ruins, a reality so beautiful, so glorious, that thou shalt yet wonder how it was that the vague ideal could have ever satisfied thy cravings. Be patient, Mabel—strive, wait, pray. Oh! if thou couldst but know how far more fully than all thy yearnings God has heard thy prayer!

view. Miss Vaughan, in fact, merely looked in for a moment, to gladden herself with a sight of Mabel, and make sure that she was come; then she hurried away, promising to return early next morning. The next morning had come, but not yet Genevieve. Jessie was too tired to get up, and was having her breakfast carried to her room, so that Mabel sat down to take her first morning repast in the quiet *salle-a-manger* of Chateau St. Anne. The place, as much as she had been able to see of it, pleased her fancy. It was a curious, old-fashioned chateau, which, before the Revolution, had belonged to one of the noble legitimist families. Its owner, like so many other loyal, true-hearted adherents of the King, had been ruined, and had gone to end his days in exile. His successors had not money to redeem the beautiful home of their ancestors from the hands of the mercenary wretches to whom it had been awarded as a reward for their disloyalty. It was consequently allowed to fall into partial decay, and had been bought within the last fifteen years by an enterprising speculator, who realized a small fortune every year by letting it during the bathing season; for Vranche was a favorite resort during the period for all the provincial families round about the neighboring departments, not only of Brittany, but of La Vendee, Normandy and Touraine.

"And there is no mention of Rome in the Nicene Creed, which you are quoting." "No, dear Mabel; the fathers of the Nicene Council were not rebellious to Rome. There were no Christians in those days but such as acknowledged the supremacy of St. Peter above the rest of the apostles. It is herey that has sought to cast obliquity upon the Church in these days, because she still acknowledges Rome for her mistress." "Oh! well, Veva, don't let's talk about it, pray," said Mabel, quickly. "I cannot bear it yet—it is too sore a subject with me; and remember I will never forgive you if you try to make a Romanist of me. Hugh would be very angry if he knew I had spoken about it to you at all, so don't try, Veva, or we shall quarrel." Again the tears sprang to Genevieve's eyes as she murmured, "Mabel, darling, I have no thought of trying such a thing; it is you who started the conversation." "I don't mean to grieve you, darling Veva," said Mabel affectionately, putting her arms around Genevieve's neck. "Only, if you love me, as I know you do, promise me that you will never try in any way to influence me to change my faith. I could not bear it, and it would break Hugh's heart. Do you know that he told me, the day he went away, that only one thing could part us—that would be if I forsake the Church to become a Romanist." "Did he say that, darling? Ah! well, never mind. I promise you not to talk to you about religion—unless you begin, you know, as you did just now. Otherwise I will not talk, Mabel, I will only pray." "But don't pray for me to be a Romanist," added Mabel, with some impatience, "for that would be the sure way to make me miserable." "Mabel, darling, I will only pray that you may always have the courage to do God's will, wherever you see it calling you. Is that not the right prayer?" "Yes," answered Mabel. "Oh! Veva, God's will is very hard sometimes." "You have found it so lately, indeed, poor Mabel," said Genevieve, sorrowfully. "But now won't you come and see my father? He is so anxious to see you again?" No one in the world, not even Hugh, was so intimately acquainted with Mabel's character as was Mr. Vaughan. He had watched her from her early childhood, he had trained her himself in the path of virtue and piety. He it was who, first discovering in her the germs of Catholic faith, had sought to develop them still further, and to mature in her those longing aspirations after the good and the beautiful which could not fail ultimately in producing rich fruits of practical self-devotion and self-sacrifice. He knew, as no one else could possibly know, the great rectitude of her heart, as well as the naturally logical turn of her intellect. He knew how anything approaching to doubt in matters of faith was repugnant to her sense of honest fairness, therefore he could foresee, better than anyone else, what would be the probable consequences of Mabel's residence among Catholics. His earnest desire was that Mabel, when brought to a clear knowledge of the truth, should be so, not through his influence, or through that of Genevieve, but only through the working of supernatural grace in her soul. Her engagement to Hugh would, Mr. Vaughan knew, prove the most difficult obstacle in the way of her conversion. He could, from his knowledge of Mabel's character, well understand what must be the depth of her ardent attachment to Hugh, and not without much heart-aching could Mr. Vaughan look forward to the dreadful anguish which a conflict betwixt her faith and her love would entail upon the beloved child, who was to him as dear as his own daughter.



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