

A CHRISTMAS TOKEN.

By M. Dick.

The afternoon was quite cold, but the sun was shining brightly, and Ruth walked with Robert to the end of the low porch that they might say good-bye there, where they had often said good-night in the old days.

"I wonder, Ruth," said Robert, "when we shall stand here together again?"

"Not for many long years, I fear," she replied, "if ever again."

"If ever again," he echoed slowly. Then he added quickly, "Yes, Ruth, I shall see you again. I am going far away, but I shall return. Will you be waiting for me, Ruth?"

"Robert," and her face grew very white as she spoke, "I may always be here just as I am now, but I shall not be waiting for you; you must not come back for me. You know how weak and ill I am. The physicians say that I shall never be well; they even say that I may soon become a helpless invalid."

"Listen to me, Ruth. I will work hard, and I think that in a few years I can have a home ready for you, and I have not the least doubt but that the warmer climate will soon restore your lost health. But, Ruth, the fact that you may become an invalid need not prevent our marriage. I shall devote my life to you; I should find my greatest happiness in caring for you."

"No, Robert," she said, "it cannot be; I should be only a burden to you. I try to be content, and sometimes I seem to rise far above my sorrow; but again all my old ambition and longing for a broader, larger life comes surging back and I rebel with all my strength against my lot. It is not the giving up of my love that causes me the deepest pain. It is the knowledge that this lonely old farmhouse must always be my home, that those blue, bare hills must mark the boundary of my world, and that I, who had meant to do so much, must sit with idle hands and let my life go by, empty."

For some moments Robert did not speak; then he said, "Ruth, do you not love me?"

Ruth turned and stood for a moment looking away over the western hills to where the sun was just sinking out of sight. Then she raised her white face and, placing her hands in his, murmured: "Yes, I love you. I love you so much, Robert, that I am able to stand here and break my heart by refusing to become your wife, because I know that it would burden your life."

"Will you give me some little thing that I can always keep in remembrance of you; something that shall be a token of your love?"

A heap of dead leaves had gathered in a sheltered nook at their feet, and as Robert spoke a gust of wind scattered these, revealing among them a small, perfect leaf of a bright crimson hue, without a blemish to show that it had been exposed to the winter snows.

Ruth stooped, and, picking it up said: "To-day is Christmas; let this little red leaf be your gift, and as I in my quiet life here shall try to live nobly, however narrow and careless those about me may be, so, Robert, I hope that you, my one friend, out in the world, may be, among all its temptations and sin-stained people, just as perfect, just as pure as was this little bit of brightness among the dead leaves."

The years passed, and Ruth's regret for her lost happiness was becoming less keen, when one day she received a letter from Robert. It had been years since he had written to her. Ruth had refused to correspond. She did not mean that Robert's life should be hampered by thoughts of her. It would be well, she tried to tell herself, if he should forget her and marry someone else. But the sacrifice was greater than even Ruth could make, for of late a great hope had sprung up in her heart. Although never quite well, not strong enough to go out among the world's workers as she had hoped to do, she was not by any means helpless. "I should be far from a burden to Robert," she sometimes whispered. So it was with a great hope and gladness that she sat down that dreary autumn afternoon to read Robert's letter. It was such a letter as one might write to a very dear and trusted friend. It told her of his great success in his chosen work, of the strange, unusual power he seemed to possess of moving people's hearts. And then followed page after page in praise of a beautiful, cultured woman

A PRESENT WORTH A GUINEA.

AN OFFER OPEN TO EVERYONE.

256 PLATE PICTURES WITH APPROPRIATE LETTERPRESS, GIVEN AWAY.

The Proprietors of the "CANTERBURY TIMES" having made Arrangements with the Publishers of those most Beautiful and Interesting Portfolio Photographs

FAMOUS SCENES, CITIES, AND PAINTINGS.

A RARE AND ELABORATE COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWS OF THE ENTIRE WORLD OF NATURE AND ARE Presenting and Describing the Choicest Treasures of

EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AUSTRALIA, AND NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

Have decided during the Months of OCTOBER and NOVEMBER to Present to every Person SUBSCRIBING to the "CANTERBURY TIMES" a Set of these Magnificent Photographic Views. The Set comprises 16 Parts, and each Part contains 16 Full Size 3 x 10 Views—256 Plates in all. These Pictures, with full Descriptive Matter, will be GIVEN AWAY FREE to anyone Subscribing to the "CANTERBURY TIMES" during the months named, and paying his Subscription in Advance.

THE YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION TO THE "CANTERBURY TIMES" IS 24s PER ANNUM. By remitting this amount the Subscriber will be entitled to a copy of the Paper for Twelve Months, and a Full Set of these beautiful Portfolios; or by remitting 15s, six months' Subscription, the Full Set of Portfolios.

To the Young and the 40,000 Studios Readers of the "CANTERBURY TIMES"

The Proprietors have determined to add yet another important feature to their already popular journal. In OCTOBER they will commence a Series of ILLUSTRATED COMPETITION PROBLEMS. These Supplements will be issued weekly, and Prizes will be offered for their Solution.

The "CANTERBURY TIMES" is the only newspaper published in the Colony that can claim to be a thoroughly representative Colonial Magazine.

THE "NEW ZEALAND CYCLIST" ROAD MAPS.

Four of these Maps have already been Published, and the run on the "NEW ZEALAND CYCLIST" has been so great that the paper has been sold out on each occasion on the day of publication. These Road Maps are being published fortnightly, and issued as a Supplement (GRATIS) with the "NEW ZEALAND CYCLIST." Tourists wishing to obtain them should apply at once.

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION TO THE "NEW ZEALAND CYCLIST" (including Maps), 6s 6d PER ANNUM, payable in advance.

The "NEW ZEALAND CYCLIST" is now recognised as the only Up-to-date Cycling Paper published in New Zealand, and is increasing in circulation and popularity daily. Copies are obtainable from any of the numerous agencies of the "CANTERBURY TIMES" throughout the Colony and Australia.

who was soon to be his wife. "I love her, Ruth, my friend," he wrote, "love her as I did not think it possible for a man to love. The whole world is changed to me since she has come into my life. And I come to you in this, my greatest happiness, as I would turn to you in a great sorrow. You will understand what I feel, but cannot express, as no one else, perhaps not even my beautiful Margaret, can."

And Ruth, when she had read the letter through and had put it very tenderly away—Robert's hand had held it—turned, as was her wont when deeply moved, and looked away toward the cold, barren hills. They seemed the only thing to which she could look in her desolate life.

"The something that we both thought was love was only pity and friendship on his part. Had he cared for me as I cared for him, he could not have forgotten," she murmured, bitterly. And going about from day to day, seeing only those lonely hills which bounded her world, the bitterness did not go out of her heart.

One Christmas Day a woman, old, and feeble, and ill, was sitting in the cheerless farmhouse. On the late afternoon a little girl laid a letter in the wrinkled hands.

"Read it," the woman said, handing it back, and turning her sightless eyes in the direction of the girl, who opened it and read in a loud voice, for Ruth was growing very deaf now.

"Dear Ruth: 'You have doubtless heard before this of Robert's death. He wished me to tell you that it was to you he owed all of good he ever accomplished: that you were the inspiration back of all his greatest work. He has often spoken of Ruth, in that little farmhouse among the hills, struggling, against so many disappointments, to live her life well, patiently doing there whatever her hand found to do, when she had so longed for a broader, fuller life. Many times have I seen him take from his case a little red leaf and say—"

"This is typical of Ruth's life. I promised to keep this little token and to make my life beautiful and spotless as was it." Then would come his mightiest sermons, and hundreds of listeners would be thrilled.

"I think his life was all you could have wished; it was grand, beautiful, noble."

"Dear Ruth, I shall never see you in this world. I am almost at the end of the long journey now, but while I live I shall keep, as the most precious thing in all the world to me, a little red leaf, mounted, by my dead husband's hand, in a most costly casing, and labelled also by that dear hand, "A Christmas Token,"—Robert's Wife."

After the letter had been read Ruth rose and groped her way, very slowly and feebly, for she, too, was almost at the end of the journey, out to the old porch where she had stood to say good-bye to Robert, more than half a century before. Claspng her hands, and turning her darkened eyes away toward the hills, she said aloud, "And this is why I have lived. I am glad, glad, that Robert never knew of the despair I have felt." And for the first time since that other letter had come, long years before, the bitterness that had crept into her heart then died completely away; and as she stood there the setting sun seemed to cast a halo about the grey head, and from somewhere up among the naked boughs a little red leaf came floating down, and rested upon the thin, wrinkled hands.

THE LUCK OF LILY LANGTRY.

Who says a fool for luck? Not Lily Langtry, you may be very sure, as she sits in her magnificent London home and reflects upon the events of the last 20 years, and which have brought to her through her own extraordinary management, the tremendous wealth which is all she loves—the notoriety which is, next to money, so precious to her.

A fool for luck, indeed. Never. A shrewd, heartless, soulless, beautiful creature, dominating time and fate by these very characteristics—these are the attributes, says the 'New York World,' that have made the luck of Lily Langtry.

From a childhood passed in the rustic simplicity of a Channel Island, the daughter of the Dean of Jersey, Lily de Breton, grown to womanhood, was considered to have made a very excellent match when Ed.

In all parts of the World
THE NATURAL FOOD FOR A BABE
 is
MOTHER'S MILK
 And this Does NOT contain Starch.
YOUNG INFANTS
CANNOT DIGEST STARCHY FOODS
 A perfect Artificial Food for Infants must, therefore,
NOT CONTAIN STARCH.
MELLIN'S FOOD
CONTAINS NO STARCH
 But makes a PERFECT FOOD for the YOUNGEST CHILD.
 MELLIN'S FOOD for Infants and Invalids may be obtained
 of all dealers throughout the World.
MELLIN'S Food Works, Peckham, London.