

constitutional machinery than the branches of the National League. He could not profess to hold the same opinion on the Irish question that he did a year ago. He was not ashamed to confess that the generous teaching of the English democracy, its desire for friendship with the democracy of the Sister Isle, and the way in which that desire for friendship was being reciprocated, has greatly influenced his opinion of what was possible and what was desirable." This is the first record made of the educative effect of the results already attained by Mr. Gladstone's proposals. It shows how completely barren of result has been the campaign of slander, that campaign has been defeated by the promptness of Ireland's response to the concessions of the British statesman; and to the temporarily unsuccessful effort of the British democracy. Mr. Maude registers by this acknowledgment the help which the cause has received from the magnificent self-restraint, determination, and spirit of conciliation shown by the Irish people. It will be an encouragement to the people to persevere on their old lines, now that they know that the lessons of their action in the present hour are not lost, but that they are potent factors of enlightenment.

THAT WICKED PARAGRAPH.

(By MAURICE F. EGAN in the *Ave Maria*)

VI.

"YOU say the phenomenon I mentioned in my last letter, dear Ned is not uncommon, and that Catholic young ladies are frequently as devoted to their religious duties as the one I have mentioned. Perhaps so. It strikes me as strange in this mocking nineteenth century that anybody can take religion seriously. It makes me uneasy."

"I have seen the old gentleman. The amiable landlady came up and asked me if I could play whist. I said I could, and, as his daughter has gone to New York for a few days, I go into his room for a game occasionally. It will amaze you when I say that he is the man I pulled from under the horses' feet on Broadway! The young lady is—the Unknown. His name is Vernon. He is good-tempered, but rather sad and reticent. Something seems to weigh on his mind. His daughter's name is Anita."

"As I was writing that last line she came home in the coach—it looks like an ambulance—which brings passengers from the station. Later I went down stairs with a newspaper in my hand. I had promised to give it to Mr. Vernon. As I was about to knock at his door, I heard a slight rustle near me, and I turned. The young lady was there."

"Do you want to see father?" She asked, looking at me frankly from a pair of very earnest eyes.

"I came to give Mr. Vernon this newspaper," I said. "She coloured slightly and hesitated. 'Will you please give the newspaper to me?' I always look over any newspaper intended for him." She saw that I looked surprised; she coloured more vividly, and said: "You no doubt think this strange. My father had a dreadful shock from a newspaper once, and I am always very careful now."

"I gave her the newspaper, and she thanked me. She had an air of charming dignity, and of—I don't exactly know what to call it, but it was very pleasant to look at her."

VII.

"You accuse me, Anita Vernon, of having forgotten you, Anna Arthur. How unreasonable! I have thought of you every day, and I am sure I've written more letters to you than you have written to me since we left the convent. We have been at this dear, delightful place for over five weeks. At first the wind was awful; the sky was the grimmest expanse of gray clouds I ever saw, and the sea roared like a monster. I assure you I have often come back from early Mass drenched with the spray, which was flung almost in to the very city itself."

"I told you that the only guest at the cottage is a young man from New York, Mr. Weston Lee, who is a writer. It turns out that he is the gentleman who saved father's life on that awful day in Broadway. He plays whist with papa, and I have acquired a habit of sitting with them. He certainly is nice, but hopeless. It is the saddest thing to hear him speak of the weariness of life. He has high views, too; and, in speaking of the journalistic life yesterday, he said he had never written a line that he would want to blot. It is a great thing to say. Father—you know how he loves me, and thinks that everybody else should be in love with me,—warned me to-day that I was becoming too friendly with Mr. Lee. He says that I ought not to encourage him. This warning was founded on the fact that I let him walk to Mass with me four mornings last week. How queer of father!"

"P.S.—As I was going to the post-office to mail this, I met Mr. Lee. He is generally very self-possessed. He seemed nervous, and he asked me if he might walk back with me to the office. I was glad to say yes, for I do like him. He said he was about to leave, the office wanted him, and he would have to go to-morrow. I felt all of a sudden that I should miss him very much. Returning along the beach we were both silent. We seemed to be walking on a glass floor coloured with the glow of a million rubies. The sunset was magnificent, and the wet beach reflected it until both earth and sky were on fire.—Well, my dear, he asked me to be his wife, and I told him that I would never marry a man outside the Catholic Church. He tried to argue, and then I told him that I would never marry at all, that—and you how bad that was—my father's name was tarnished in the eyes of the world, and that his daughter was too proud to take to her husband a tarnished name as her only dowry. O Anna! how sad and astonished he looked, and how wretched I felt! I began to sob in spite of myself, and ran ahead of him, though I heard his voice asking me to pause. Don't try to comfort me, Anna; I can find comfort only at the foot of the Tabernacle. Ah, Anna, it is hard to do one's duty sometimes."

"You know that I have not known him long and it may surprise you that I should suddenly have become conscious of so great a regard for him. He has been so very kind to my father, and so reverent when any subject connected with our holy religion was brought up. I could have cut out my tongue for having spoken of my father's misfortunes, but I felt as if I must tell him the truth. He naturally cannot comprehend my reasons for refusing to marry a non-Catholic. He might persist in his attentions if he did not know there were other reasons for my refusing him. As it was he joined me near the cottage. 'Let me add one word Miss Vernon,' he said. 'I will even join your Church for your sake. Forms make little difference.'

"No," I said, 'you must not think of such a step. The barrier that separates us is no mere form. Your conversion for my sake would neither satisfy God, yourself, nor me. It would be the most empty of forms. Good-bye.'

VIII.

"Well, my dear Redmond, you know all that occurred during my last day at Atlantic City from my last letter. I have been deeply impressed ever since by the thought that there must be something under all your Catholic ceremonies when a young girl can act as Miss Vernon has acted. I give no weight whatever to her words about her father's 'tarnished name.' I find out that Mr. Vernon failed in business because of bad debts, and that he honorably discharged his obligations as far as possible. I do not imagine that I shall ever meet her again, but I will never cease to remember her sweet womanliness, her patience, her regard for duty, and the serenity which seemed to emanate from a heart filled—yes, I will say it, though many of my friends would call it cant—with the love of God. Oblige me, my dear boy, by sending some books to me,—books that will answer why Catholics believe so firmly in these days of doubt. I cannot get rid of the influence of Miss Vernon's daily example."

IX.

"Dear Lee:—There is an acquaintance of yours on a visit to my mother. It is Miss Vernon. Will you run down to Sawmppscoot with me? Meet me at the Grand Central Station on Saturday."

"REDMOND O'CONNOR."

X.

"Dear Redmond:—With pleasure. Ex-Governor Jinks is there just now, too. I will mix pleasure with business, and interview him at the same time. I am to be baptised conditionally to-morrow. It is sudden, but, you see, I had prepared myself for it unconsciously. It may amuse you when I say that Mallock's 'New Republic' had as much to do with it as anything, except Miss Vernon's beautiful example, and, above all, God's grace. I have always worn that medal since I received it. I can't understand why the author of 'The New Republic' does not enter the Church. I can say honestly that the hope of one day marrying Miss Vernon has had nothing to do with this change in my belief—or, rather, my adoption of the only belief possible for a logical mind; but, as I have said, her example was my first impetus towards the Faith."

XI.

"Dear Anna:—Father and I were surprised to meet him" ("him" is scratched out in the original letter, and "Mr. Lee" written over it) "at Mrs. O'Connor's. He looked happier, and I soon discovered the reason. He has become a Catholic. He told me so as we stood in the little parlour waiting for the others to come down. And then I had to listen to a new proposal. I told him that, although it made me happy to hear that he had entered the Church (and you know, Anna, I prayed for it very hard), I could not be his wife. I repeated that we were under a cloud. My father had been braided as worse than a thief in a public print. We had sought refuge from the sneers of the world in quiet places, and that I would never marry any man with a load of disgrace on my father and me."

"He seemed amazed at my vehemence."

"I know all about it. The world does not sneer at your father. He is much respected, notwithstanding his misfortunes."

"You don't know," I answered, wishing from my heart that I could have been saved from this cruel ordeal; and then I drew from my pocket-book that cruel, cruel article, the sight of which in a New York paper gave papa his first stroke of paralysis. "I will show you, Mr. Lee, what the world says of my father. And then I will ask whether you can marry a girl whose name has been dragged into the mire, and whose father you would have to call father."

"He started at this and turned paler. I gave him that heart-crushing paragraph. He started to read, and turned it over. 'I think I know this type,' he said, 'it's a bit out of our paper'; and then he read *sub voce*:

"Mr. Vernon—carelessness—criminal to reduce working-men to despair by taking the bread out of their mouths—"

"That was said of my father—my father, who reduced himself to poverty, who knew them all, who never refused to help them!" I interrupted, tears coming to my eyes. "O Mr. Lee! why did you force me to show you this?—why did you? Look in his face and see whether he is capable of defrauding labourers of their wages. He failed, it is true; but he has left no man worse by his failure. My mother's property has gone to pay his debts. His creditors have shown their appreciation of this, and allowed him enough for his old age. But tell me, Mr. Lee, if you would marry the daughter of a man whose name was tarnished by such a stain? He has suffered silently: for when he recovered from the blow that those cruel words gave him it was too late to meet the charge. Let us say no more of marriage, Mr. Lee."

"He tried to take my hand, but I would not let him. 'You cannot comfort me in any way. I must bear my burden.'

"He read the paragraph to the end, colouring up to the eyes. I could not help thinking that men are not like us—constant to those we love in all darkness and storm. I, in his place, would not have blushed for the woman I loved."