

freshness during the centuries' (p. 33); 'The personality of Christ is and remains the only foundation of all moral culture' (p. 78).

And this is how the reading of this book struck von Ruville: 'Considering that all these utterances . . . proceed from a scientist who desires Jesus Christ to be regarded only as man, I could surely take it for granted that they described Him in a light, not more favorable than strict science absolutely demands, and that they contain only the minimum of those eminent qualities which must be conceded to our Lord.' Yet 'these utterances represented a superhuman personality, free from all earthly weakness, rich in sublime virtues, unsurpassed in importance; then is it not unavoidable to explain the appearance of such a personality in the world as a miracle of the highest order, a direct mission from God?' (pp. 4-5). And of course if the very appearance of this Person in the world is a miracle, if He comes with a direct mission from God, He must be God Himself, for He has claimed to be God, and God would not, could not, work a miracle in favor of, or send one, who was an impostor.

So this pilgrim found his way back to God in Christ. Later, he found in the Catholic Church the 'community in which Jesus Christ is best loved and adored, and in which He is most accessible.' Peace of mind and true happiness of soul followed. 'I was filled with a joy and happiness such as worldly successes had never given me. . . . Many things which I had formerly considered devoid of all inner meaning became precious, and a spring of pure joy; while others, which I had considered necessary or desirable, sank down into nothingness. Purity, holiness, association with God were henceforth my standard of value even for earthly things' (p. 7).

## The Storyteller

### THE RETURN

The opera was 'Faust,' and the theatre presented an animated scene, for the whole of official Washington was clamoring at its doors. One would almost doubt the bill-board's announcement that a new singer was to make her debut and think that some queen of song was to appear. The lines of automobiles and carriages; the crowds about the doors and in the lobby; the magnificently gowned women and the faultlessly groomed men—all were eloquent proofs of the fact that at the nation's capital there is one thing equal to fame, namely, the possession of a father holding a high place among the 'powers that be.'

From her box near the stage, the mother of Constance Cathro, the young prima donna, watched the gathering of the brilliant audience. She was not torn between the hope and fear that often rob the parent heart of the triumphs of such an occasion. She had heard her daughter sing and was confident of the outcome. All during the tense opening scenes of the opera, with their encompassing by the wily Mephistopheles of the downfall of a human soul, she continued to busy herself with a critical survey of the stately assemblage.

And what a cosmopolitan gathering it was—foreign diplomats in all the splendor of their official regalia, their ladies bravely upholding in elaborateness of attire their respective countries' rank; a goodly sprinkling of the military element; members of the visiting German fleet, whose lusty applause testified to their national love for music, and in the Persian Minister's box some distinguished visitors from the Orient.

Mrs. Cathro noted with pleasure, well down in the centre of the house, the entire delegation from the State her husband represented—all there to do honor to the girl from home.

Without doubt the young songstress would have every stimulus to appear at her best, for the audience, taking its cue from the politically mighty, was ready, if given half a chance, to bestow the spur of its approval.

Toward the close of the second act she appeared, a fleeting vision of youth and beauty that left the spectators, like the lover Faust, pining for another glimpse of her. When she entered again her voice was greeted with the applause of an assemblage that is reserving its opinion, though even here friendship had intruded to add a degree of spontaneity quite unusual.

Her enraptured mother felt no dejection in the moderate applause, for she was sure it would be forced to cheers long before the curtain fell. She knew the girl could sing, even through the awful strain of a first appearance. Moreover, her talent was an inheritance as well as a gift, for the voice, wondrous beauty, and graceful figure of the youthful 'Marguerite' were those of her maternal grandmother. With the complete comprehension of this latter fact, the swift passions worked in the face of Mrs. Cathro. She fell suddenly to trembling. It was plain the thought dragged her soaring spirit down. Her breath caught once or twice, and she brushed from her forehead the moisture that had gathered there.

She felt the need of restoration, and, glancing at her husband, found it in the exultation and pride which covered him like a garment. She was winning, his little girl; singing herself straight into the great, discriminating heart of Washington. Congratulations were being flung at him from diplomats and statesmen round about.

'Such youth, such beauty, and a voice beyond the reach of mortals! Senator, you have given us a Marguerite for whose love any Faust would be justified in making any sort of a bargain.' This from North, the celebrated musical and dramatic critic, left him on the heights.

The curtain went down on the third act amid a storm of applause. Washington never withholds approbation from merit, and Constance Cathro, as Marguerite, radiant in the joy of success, was called out again and again. This, together with the influx of friends who sought their box from all parts of the theatre to offer felicitations, laid the ghosts that tortured the interval of retrospection Mrs. Cathro had allowed herself. From the President's box came a hastily scribbled note, and Mrs. Cathro looked up from the warm, congratulatory words to meet across the house the kindly bow and smile of the writer, the gracious first lady of the land. Never in all her life had she known a prouder moment.

The curtain had gone up again and the young prima donna returned to even greater conquests. Once more her voice, rare and sweet in the Spinning Wheel song, caressed the ears and stirred the hearts of the auditors. During a charged moment, when the great assemblage sat hushed and breathless under the singer's spell, words spoken in the Italian ambassador's box reached the mother's ears.

'You have singers, you Americans! To have been here to-night is to have heard one!' The tones were excited, those of a person moved to enthusiasm.

'She certainly has a divine gift,' came the answer, 'but they say she has no faith, is an atheist.'

'What, so lovely a flower without perfume! Impossible!'

'It is a pity, for a woman without religion is like what you say—a flower without perfume.'

'If it is true, someone is to blame for it. Behind her work is a heritage of religion. Yes, yes, otherwise she could not be so convincing.'

They were applauding now, but Mrs. Cathro heard and saw in a dream. At the remarks of the Italian, the phantoms again walked. She was scarcely conscious of the opera's shifting scenes.

'If it is true, some one is to blame for it.' The words burned in her brain like letters of fire. Yes, it was true, and, oh God, who was to blame for it but herself! She had given up her faith for a worldly marriage, and her husband, who was a materialist, had brought up their child without religion. The fact that her mother had once been a Catholic was carefully kept from her. To-night, in the midst of fulfilled ambitions, remorse threatened to overwhelm Mrs. Cathro as it had not done since she turned her back on her God.

**"Pattillo"**

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