

Madeline had come up and whispered to Marie Rénaud. Marie Rénaud had put on her dress, and I heard her go downstairs. Directly afterwards she came back with M. le Curé. He rushed into Sister Marie-Aimée's room, and Madeline closed the door behind him. He did not remain very long, but he went away again much more slowly than he had come. He walked with his head sunk down between his shoulders, and his right hand was holding his cloak over his left arm as though he were carrying something valuable. I thought to myself that he was taking away the holy oils, and I did not dare ask whether Sister Marie-Aimée were dead. . . . As soon as she was well again, Madeline was kinder, and everything went on as before."

The story of Marie Claire's life on the farm with good Master Silvain and his wife cannot be told here. Suffice it to say that sent there by the Mother Superior with "a smile on her face which was like an insult" as a means of humbling her pride, life there, in spite of its hardships, and her yearning for Sister Marie-Aimée was congenial to her. The farmer's death, and the passing of the farm into other hands, caused a great change not for the better in her life, but it brought also her own idyll, through the friendship of Henri Deslois, brother of her new mistress.

On Sunday Marie Claire was accustomed to visit Jean le Rouge and his wife, who had always worked for Master Silvain, at their house on the hill, and after the new master had dismissed him she still kept up the practice of visiting the empty house. "Now," she writes, "that I was in the open garden, surrounded by broom in flower, I longed to be able to live there always. There was a big apple tree leaning over me, dipping the ends of its branches in the spring. The spring came out of the hollow trunk of a tree, and the overflow trickled in little brooks over the beds. This garden of flowers and clear water seemed to me to be the most beautiful garden in the world."

To the garden came Henri Deslois, and in his eyes "there was so deep a gentleness that I went to him without any shame. . . . He took my two hands and pressed them hard against his temples. Then he said, very low, 'I am like a miser who has found his treasure again.' . . . When he left me just before we came to the avenue of chestnut trees I knew that I loved him even more than Sister Marie-Aimée."

So the house on the hill became enchanted ground, until fate in the shape of unsympathetic relations stepped in, and one day when according to his custom Henri had ridden over to the farm on his white mare, the farmer announced that the house was sold.

Once again Henri and Marie Claire met at the house on the hill in a snowstorm. "The white mare didn't find it very easy to climb the snow-covered path. Her master leaned down and took my two hands, which I held up to him. There was on his face a look of worry which I had never seen before. . . . I felt quite certain that his words were going to bring me happiness. He held my hands tighter, and said in the same breathless

voice as before, 'I can no longer be your friend.' I thought that somebody had struck me a violent blow on the head. There was a noise of a saw in my ears. I could see Henri Deslois trembling, and I heard him say, 'How cold I am.' Then I no longer felt the warmth of his hand on mine. And when I realised that I was standing all alone in the path, I saw nothing but a great white shape which was slipping noiselessly across the snow."

In her desolation Marie Claire returned to the orphanage only to find that Sister Marie-Aimée was not there. One day, however, she returned. That evening Sister Desirée-des-Anges, whose room Marie Claire shared, came to bed later than usual. "She had been taking part in special prayer for Sister Marie-Aimée, who was going away to nurse the lepers."

The story of the passing of Sister Desirée-des-Anges, young, brave, beautiful, is exquisitely told, but space will not permit it to be quoted here.

The present narrative leaves Marie Claire in the train on her way to Paris, but we have not heard the last of her. So fine a gift as Mlle. Audoux's cannot remain unused. It must have outward expression, and all who have read "Marie Claire" will find it hard to possess their souls in patience till next year, when she promises the book on which she is now engaged, on a subject on which she is an authority—working class life in Paris. Let us hope that her translator will not be able to write as he has done of the publication of "Marie Claire": "She does not know herself now whether she hoped to have it published when she wrote it. She did hope for publication when she had finished it, but that was because she was hungry."

We have devoted considerable space to this literary gem. Some of our readers may already know it, for it is greatly in demand, but it is a book not to be missed.

M. B.

COMING EVENTS.

April 27th.—Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland. Meeting, Leicester Infirmary, Business, Address by Mrs. W. H. Klosz, on "Nursing in India." 3 p.m.

April 27th.—Meeting Central Midwives' Board, Caxton House, Westminster, S.W., 2.45 p.m.

April 28th.—Guy's Hospital Past and Present Nurses' League. Annual Dinner. Miss Swift (formerly Matron) in the chair, 7 p.m. Annual Meeting, 8 p.m. Annual Exhibition, Guy's Hospital Nurses' Photographic Society, 4 p.m.

April 28th.—Lecture on "The Medical and Sanitary Organisation of the Field Army Home Defence," by Dr. F. J. Warwick. 12, Buckingham Street, Strand. 7.45 p.m. Admission 6d.

May 3rd.—National Convention in support of the Women's Suffrage Conciliation Bill. Mrs. Henry Fawcett, LL.D., presiding. Portman Rooms, W., 3 p.m.

May 4th.—The Maggie Madrigal Society's Concert in aid of the Hammersmith and Fulham District Nursing Association. Royal Horticultural Hall, Vincent Square, Westminster. 8.30 p.m.

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