

horrible, that, had he not been insane he must surely have been perilously near committing the sin against the Holy Ghost, is a psychological study more suited for medical literature, than for a book put into the hands of the general public.

We first meet Mr. Reay and Dr. Clevion at the funeral of Bob Saunders, a patient of the doctor's; he died from pneumonia, following on influenza, "and she in a fury against the mildewed walls and earth floors of Ruthers' Row, had raged her way from the sanitary inspector to the local paper, and thence to the Borough Council."

"They gave Bob Saunders a good funeral on the Club money, with his six children decorously happy in the first new clothes they had ever had; proud of the swishing tails of the funeral horses, of the nodding plumes of the hearse; they watched interestedly as the coffin, brightly varnished, splashed down into two feet of clayey water in the cemetery. When Mr. Reay's beautiful voice spoke of their father as his 'dear brother' and seemed to suggest that he might live again, they looked furtively at the new black clothes, wondering if they would be allowed to keep them if that shiny box opened, and Dad came out, grey faced and coughing and unaltered. That, perhaps, was why they hurried back so quickly to Ruthers' Row, to make sure of the funeral feast before a glorious resurrection should make a hoax of it. But Bob Saunders was thoroughly dead, and Ruthers, coming fur-coated in his famous claret-coloured car from the old, beautiful mansion on Brompton Avenue to see Dr. Clevion and stop her disgraceful slanders about his property, stood coughing, white faced, blue-lipped, in her little white drawing-room that overlooked the smoky graves in Shellpit Old Churchyard."

Then we have the funeral of the twins burnt to death and charred beyond recognition while their mother was out at work. The grief of the mother, and the anger of the young father, in a decent cheap black suit, and the flaming-red tie and badge that proclaimed him a Socialist, and the ribbon that lurked a little behind the badge, to show that he has won the D.C.M. in the war.

Again, there is the tragedy of Miss Wembley, destined by nature for matrimony, and denied it by fate, torturing herself, and seeking counsel from the woman doctor, who gives her some very sane advice.

"Yes, yes—I understand," cried Miss Wembley, eagerly. "So then I'm not really vile and disgusting. . . .?"

"Of course, you're not—not in the least. . . . There is nothing vile or wrong in loving a man."

"He is married," murmured Miss Wembley.

"But if you face the thing squarely, Miss Wembley, tell me, how can it hurt him, or anyone who loves him, for you to love him, too? You ask nothing for it. You don't even ask to see him."

"Once again silence fell on the room. Miss Wembley's colour came and went, until she burst out passionately:

"I do! I do want more! I know I do.

I am growing old, and I never, never have had anything golden or glowing in my life—only three kisses."

"The white, delicate hands fell on her lap in a gesture of hopelessness."

Again, we have the picture of Amy Willis, "bunched on the fender of the house in Ruthers' Row, trying to hide pain and fear. . . in the corner two babies lay; both belonged to Amy's sisters—girls who had got into trouble and been lucky enough to nail the man down for a weekly four shillings."

Greedily the mother appraised the value of the dole. "It isn't," she said to her friend, "as if it cosses much for feed 'em. Master Reay's landlady gives me the pieces of bread, and the Rector's lady gives me a couple o' tins o' milk a week, and we all manage for live out of that, as you may say, for put us tea. Really and truly the eight bob a week is found money."

"I've sometimes wished mine wuz daughters," said Mrs. Wall, pensively; "eight bob a week found money."

Then the ghouls bethought themselves that Amy's time had nearly come; that they must get out of her now the name of her lover, if another four or five shillings was to be obtained, and threatened her with the Bastille (the workhouse-infirmary) on her refusal to disclose it.

"In her dull brain was only one thought—she wanted to get away, to escape from this all-surrounding dirt and squalor and disease. Her way of escape, it seemed, lay through the boy who so incomprehensibly had fallen in love with a thing so unattractive as she. She had sought to hold him, pathetically anxious to please, wistfully grateful for his notice, the only kindly notice she had ever had. She would have been burned alive rather than tell his name, bring him to the shame of the Court, bring upon him the weekly fine of four shillings."

Callously they threatened her till she accused her father, a sufferer from lead poisoning. Callously her mother then beat her on head and body with a stout bottle, till it splintered into fragments.

Said Mrs. Wall, "I should be annoyed mesel' if my old man was to —"

"Do yo' believe her?" screamed Mrs. Willis. "Why ask any bloomin' doctor yo' like! That's the one crownin' blessing o' the lead—there's never no kids i' th' question. An accusin' her own father!"

So Amy bore her pains in silence until her child had been in the world ten minutes, and then, quite sure of having scored off her mother, shrieked for her to come.

Later—it seemed so easy—she deliberately overlaid the tiny child. Into this house and many similar ones came priest and doctor, one striving to raise souls, the other to heal bodies.

We have a glimpse of the Crannere Neurological Hospital, where splendid remedial work was done. The book is terrible, but it bears the impress of truth.

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