A Coup on Poverty

By LLOYD LOGAN.

"It is miserably true, ma chere, Marie refused positively to follow Antoinette and myself to town and cerry our scarfs, umbrellas and parcels. She said to be a maid in a great family did not compake with her self-respect as an individual," Vivienne de la Vergne disconsolately threw herself on the window seat.

Mme. de la Vergne was looking over bills at the escritoire. Without answering her daughter she buried her face in her hands and wept.

"'The last rose of summer left blooming alone,'" sang Antoinette, the other daughter, as she came down the hall and entered the room.

"It seems," she added pleasantly, "that I am the last rose."

She was standing in the doorway. Neither Vivienne nor Mme. de la Vergne looked up, so absorbed were they with their own thoughts.

"Pere is walking the floor in the library, she continued. "He is horribly distrait. He told me Vivienne's jewels went last night."

"My jewels!" cried Vivienne, suddenly aroused and thoroughly alarmed. Madame lifted her tear-stained face.

"Vivienne's jewels also?" she reiterated dismally.

"Also," answered antoinette bitterly—"also. That is not the point. He grieves because they are the last things he can legitimately take. I am of age, and my belongings are mine, 'To think,' he says, 'I shall be compelled to steal from my own family!'"

Vivienne rushed from the room in a rage.

Antoinette, going to her mother, put her arms around her.

"I'd be a help, ma chere."

"Antoinette, what could you do—you, the daughter of Marquis Auguste de la Vergne, the great-granddaughter of Vivienne Casnavette, who was one of the maids of honor to Marie Antoinette? My whole life has been a series of negations. This is just one more. The first trial was when we lost our ancestral home in France." Madame always said "we lost." She would not acknowledge she lived with a gambler, even though a gentleman. The little pretense was a matter of self respect. "The next to go was our villa just out of New Orleans. Since you were a wee child we had lived in this orange grove in Florida. Your father always would play as a gentleman, losing thousands at a single game. Oh, these games, elusive sirens, luring him on to destruction, poor man! The Cerves vase he cannot touch without my signature; it has come down directly through my family."

"I don't know where we shall live," she continued. "I have been struggling to make respectability dwell with poverty, and," she added softly, "it is pure poignant tragedy."

The debonair Auguste de la Vergne tripped lightly in the room, clad in white flannel of exquisite texture and correctly tailored. With the perfect savoir faire of a Frenchman he gently kissed his wife's forehead. Going over to the glass door, he stepped out on the verandah. With the utmost sang froid he turned, waving his hand. "Au revoir!" he called and passed out on the shell walk beyond.

He had clung, iron willed, to the youth of his mind, though it was indisputably true that age had crept prematurely on his face. After a fashion he loved his wife and daughters. He would have been proud to have given them every advantage that had been theirs for generations. They had ceased to be interested in these dreams. There was nothing more fundamentally wearisome than his pretenses and talk about ideals without any actual accomplishment.

"I can do something," Antoinette repeated, with gentle emphasis. "Ma chere, we will take count of stock, as Marie's husband says about his store. We will see, first, what our assets are." Antoinette held up her pretty white hand to count the "asset" on her fingers as her mother told them off.

"Dear heart, our most valuable asset' is our family name, that hardly has a money value."

"I am not so sure," mused Antoinette. "There are hordes of people—good people, too—who would give anything to be a guest at our home, to be able to speak with familiarity of our belongings."

Antoinette, sitting on an ottoman at her mother's feet, clasped her hands around her knees and thought, wrinkling her smooth white brow in perplexity and doubt. She had a remarkable aptitude for that kind of addition known as putting two and two together.

"Pere has said positively that this house will be the next thing to go. Now, we have many beautiful pieces of furniture, much bric-a-brac and china that is really very good, charming associations that make the relative value high. You and I, dearest, will go through the house and put a price on what we would be willing to sell and gather them together in the music room, library and drawing-room, mixing them with the things we would not part with for untold gold. That will apparently give them a greater value."

Madame dramatically clasped her hands.

"You do not mean we would sell our belongings to a vulgar mob like common tradespeople?" she cried in horror.

"No, no! We would give a little 'at home' or 'tea,' very informal. You could wear your black lace, and the lace scarf thrown over your shoulders would hide the hole in the back; Vivienne her cream colored silk, the one made out of grandmother's tea gown, and I the violet chiffon with black velvet.

"Then," she continued, "we would invite a choice few, thirty perhaps, not more. Believe me, they will slay every engagement to accept an invitation to the first entertainment given by the De la Vergnes. See, mother, using our asset No. 1, our family name. After they have been here some time we will casually remark; 'We are going back to New Orleans. We are distressed about our collection of antiques. We are going to board, and articles of such value we really cannot store. We would be willing to dispose of a few but cannot bear the thought of just any one—unappreciative people, as it were—owing them."

Antoinette was so delighted with the idea she danced all over the room. Coming back to her mother, she kissed her on her forehead.

After much debate and family conferences the "tea" was give. What wonders, weariness and hope delayed and anxiety for the welfare of one's best loved will accomplish in the way of disintegrating self respect! Punch was served in the library, ices and cake in the dining room; on the veranda were confections and fruit. The guests were congenial, delighted, complimented and bought freely; they were also all wealthy. Antoinette saw to that.

Every woman there took particular pains to call immediately on all her best friends who were not among the chosen and casually to refer to "the other afternoon at the De la Vergnes' I picked up so and so. They would hardly part with it even to me. I told madame I could not buy it, just to give it to me, and I would leave a few gold pieces in the cabinet for one of the girls." Invariably it was followed by the remark, "My husband thought it rather high, but I did not, considering the associations and so on."

Those thirty women were the envy of every person of means in the city. They schemed how they, too, could manage an invitation. Not being a public sale an invitation was a necessity. In about two weeks Antoinette in her mother's name telephoned the chosen thirty telling each one to bring a few friends—she could trust them, she knew—and spend another fortnight at the Chateau de Fleur.

This time a different costume was arranged for the three ladies of the household. The second "tea" was even a greater success than the first. One dozen of Napoleon's breakfast plates sold for $200 and a Persian rug for $900. The bank account was growing to most encouraging proportions. The trouble now was they had really few pieces left they cared to sell. The Sevres vase and some family heirlooms madame refused to part with.

"It is a miserable shame," wept Antoinette, "after we have created the demand, established the fad, we cannot create the supply."

Unheard of circumstance! The next morning Antoinette drove to the city alone and unattended at a very early hour.

Arriving at the telegraph office Antoinette wired to certain dealers in antiques, little holes in the wall, in New Orleans to ship immediately various articles that she named. She knew of these places because many of their beautiful pieces had found in these stores a temporary home.

So events developed. The de la Vergnes received antiques in the back door and sold them out the front door. Every other Thursday witnessed crowds of buyers. Every one's "dear friends" were now invited. The "few gold pieces given to the dear girls" was a horde sufficient to place them both in a convent in Paris for a year, leaving a "dot" large enough for an enviable dowry, which would insure a successful marriage. Poverty had played quite a dramatic part in the success, which was really quite a coup.

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Go to your druggist and get a 50-cent case of Pape's Diapepsin now, and you will always go to the table with a hearty appetite, and what you eat will taste good, because your stomach and intestines will be clean and fresh, and you will know there are not going to be any more bad nights and miserable days for you. They freshen you and make you feel like life is worth living.

FLOCKING TO CANADA.

Special Trains From New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

The Newark, N.J., Star says editorially: "Canadian enterprise in drawing upon the United States for population, which has had such extraordinary results in the northwest, is now to be directed to the east. It is stated that special trains are to be run from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, beginning April 1st this year, to the province of Alberta, to transport people who are to change their residence and citizenship. The Canadian system of emigration is splendidly planned, well organized and thoroughly carried out. It has stripped the Northwestern States of thousands of their farmers, who have taken their capital and energies into British territory. This drain of our best class of population is a severe loss to the nation. Canada selects the best that we have, and is getting it. How does the American emigration system compare with that of Canada? At New York a few undesirables of the worst class are sifted out from the masses that come to us from Europe, but disease, penury, vice and crime creep into the country nevertheless. The States practically have no system of attracting and locating emigrants. There is a cry every year for farm labor and state governments make no effort to draw the population congested in the cities out to the farms. The federal government admits foreign emigration and lets it go at that. Instead of directing it as is needed, the government permits it to settle in the congested cities to form foreign colonies or drift into the slums. If the state and national governments were as wisely conducted as the government in Canada the congestion of the labor in the cities would not exist, while labor would be amply supplied in the agricultural districts, where it is so much needed."

The Predominating Issue.

Toronto Globe.

The matter of the House of Lords will predominate over all other projects, as home rule and disestablishment cannot be taken up at once. The government's immediate policy for dealing with the lords is embodied in what is termed the parliament bill. It practically wipes out the power of the upper chamber to kill legislation in the commons by providing that any bill shall become law which the commons has sent to the lords for three successive sessions, in a period of time not less than two years, and which has been three times rejected or not disposed of. To insure the control of finance by the commons and settle the issue which the lords raised when they rejected the Lloyd-George budget the bill provides that any money bill which the upper chamber does not pass within one month after it is sent up from the lower house shall, with the royal assent, become law. The speaker of the commons is given final authority to decide whether any measure deals with taxation, applications and loans, and is properly a money bill. The last and not the least important provision reduces the life of a parliament from seven years to five.

This is Very Kind

Toronto News.

"The News does not believe that the government deliberately designs to check Canadian industry, to prejudice Canadian investments or to endanger Canadian nationality."

Not Too Bad.

Ottawa Free Press.

An increase of $65,000,000 in nine months' trade of Canada does not look so bad even in mid-January, does it?

The home heathen ought to have the preference over the foreign kind.

Sometimes you help yourself when you help the other fellow to reform.

DRINK CURE A MIRACLE?

No, Just Sound Science.

Many drunkards are sent to jail when what they need is medicine. Drink has undermined their constitutions, inflamed their stomachs and nerves, until the craving must be satisfied if it is not removed by a scientific prescription like Samaria.

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Now, if you know of any unfortunate needing Samaria Treatment, tell him or his family or friends about it. If you have any friend or relative who is forming the drink habit help him to release himself from its clutches. Write to-day.

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