

Dr. Hall Tells of New Story

Among those who were assumed to know the assassin's guilt with the girl was a fellow advocate, also a man of brilliant attainments and of scarcely more scrupulous character. These two had long been rivals at the Bar, and advocates in the insular legislature of which they were both members.

Each had his dark secret, the secret of Advocate No. 1 being (among other things) that of his seduction of the girl in question, and the secret of Advocate No. 2 being that of his birth, which was thought to be honorable, but was alleged to be doubtful—the report (not too certainly true) was that he had been born in a prison while his mother was there as a prisoner. At one heated moment of public debate the clash between the men had been starting in its violence. Advocate No. 2 that "the trail of the serpent was over every act of his life."

Such were the relations between the two when the inquest over the murdered child was suppressed and the alleged murderer was acquitted. What happened next, but what happened afterwards suggested the operation of his enmity. It is said that the benighted husband wrote a letter to the newly-appointed Judge saying that he intended to return to the island on the following day, and unless His Honor was prepared to do something (easily guessed at) he would accuse his wife to the police of the drowning of her baby, with the result that he (the Judge) would have to sit in judgment upon the murderer of his own child.

In this dilemma the Judge acted in the most tragic way possible. He waited until the hour of the following day when the steamer from England was due to arrive at the chief port of the island, and the moment he saw it rounding the headland he went out into the gulf in which his house stood and stabbed himself.

Conceals Identities
Such was the story as it came to me in my early manhood, and I vouch for none of its details and have done the little I can to conceal the identity of its principal characters. It struck me then as very peculiar, but intensely painful and entirely without the redeeming and uplifting qualities which would make it good for a novel or of any real service to the world, and therefore I had to wait many years before I saw my way to use it as the foundation for a story.

Meanwhile, at the time of the Russo-Jewish persecutions nearly thirty years ago, I met in Berlin, on my way to Russia as a philanthropic messenger of the Relief Committee of London and Paris the Russo-Jewish writer, Karl Franzos, and found that he had lately published a fine novel, "The Chief Justice," on almost the same subject. But in the story by Franzos the murderer of the child was the daughter of the Judge by an illicit connection, and it did not seem to me that the first author of the murder (the Judge) was made sufficiently responsible for the crime. I told Franzos of the story and told him my Manx story, whereupon he said, "But that is another novel, and you certainly ought to write it." I waited twenty years, and then, about the time when Tolstoy published his great novel, "Resurrection," I met his daughter in Rome, and again I thought I saw in Tolstoy's story some resemblance to the tragic happening in the Isle of Man, with the difference that the first author of the crime was merely a member of the jury who tried the criminal, not the judge upon whose decision of life and death would finally depend. I mentioned this difference to Tolstoy's daughter as a possible weakening of the moral responsibility of the sinner for the consequences of his sin, and she wrote a letter to her father explaining my objection.

A few weeks later I was told that Tolstoy was very angry with me for my criticism, saying in a long letter that the situation I suggested might have been exactly as he had found it in real life, but that he had altered it to what it was in his story with the intention of strengthening and clarifying his ethical motive. I was a younger and perhaps more modest man than I am now, and I took my rebuke in a chastened spirit, but I am still of opinion that the great Russian novelist would have served this ethical intention better and perhaps produced a still more human and dramatic story if he had left his principal facts where he found them.

Purifies Ugly Facts
That, at least, is what I have been content to do myself in "The Master of Man," although, of course, I have tried to purify the rather ugly facts as they appear in the story, and in the Isle of Man by making my Manx story a far nobler type of man than his prototype in life, his sin a more pardonable one and his crime a more necessary one by his crime by a true and even great renunciation.

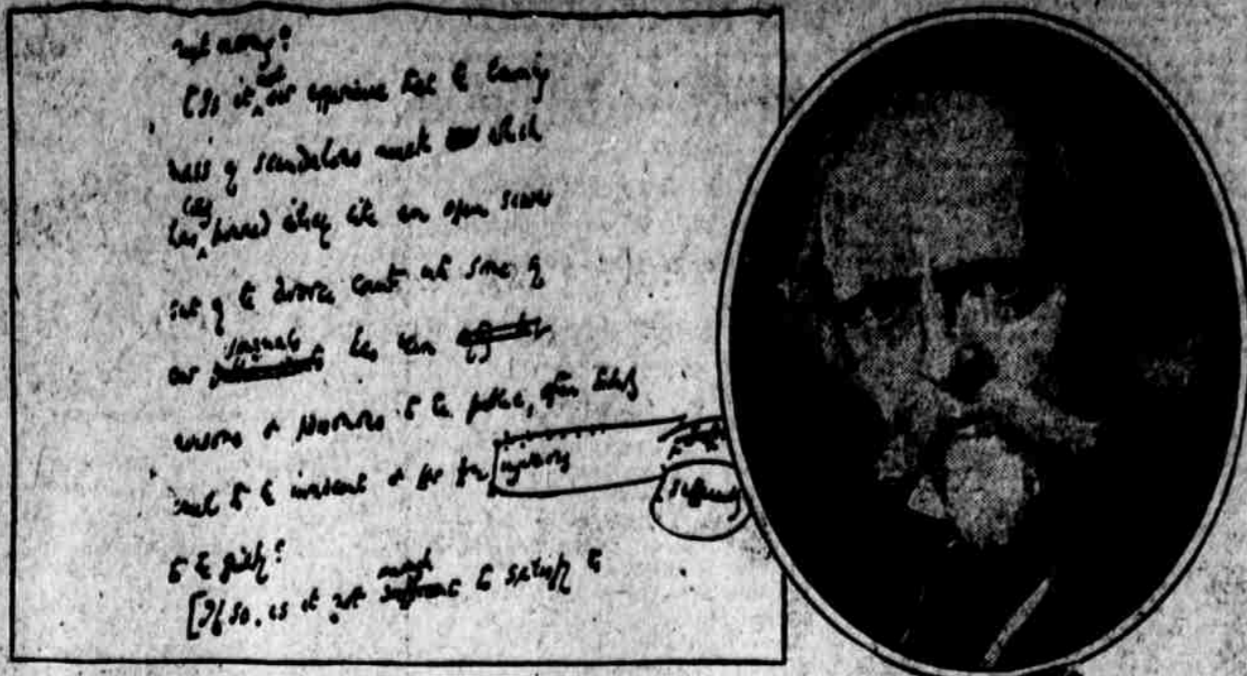
But inasmuch as a novel, to have any breadth of appeal, of value for the humanity (if it may be said to have functions), must deal with facts of common everyday experience, it soon became clear to me that the sin of a Judge who had tried his own child in the murder of his own child in a little island in the Irish Sea was too exceptional and too remote an event to build a story upon without other aid.

So I had to see in that sin a temptation which comes to one or another, to almost every man in every part of the world and in every walk of life—a temptation which every man has to overcome if he is not to be destroyed. The temptation lay in the very essence of sin itself. Just as a lie once told provokes another lie, and yet another and another, until the liar's life is enmeshed in falsehood, so sin in all its forms grows by what it feeds upon, creating other and still other sins, until it threatens with ruin not the sinner only but everybody and everything about him. This, then, was my central theme in the "Master of Man," and I am indeed repaid if I have been able to show that an evil act once done can never be undone or wiped out by any effort, at least, and that it is to bring home to the reader the cumulative effect and merciless nature of sin and the certainty that the sooner it is cast out (no matter at what cost) the sooner the sinner finds peace for himself and safety for all who surround him.

There was another series of events in real life to which I lay at the foundation of my story, and as they are of more recent occurrence I must try to observe still more reticence in narrating them. A young woman of entirely respectable character (also in my native land) fell in love with a young man of her own class against whom nothing could be said except that her father (no doubt for his own good and sufficient reasons) objected to him as a son-in-law.

A "Mutual Transgression"
Out of the opposition, as the girl thought, the catastrophe came. It seems to have been a mutual transgression (as such transgressions nearly always are at the beginning), and I have never heard that the girl thought her sweetheart had been more to blame than herself. Times were hard and the young man who was out of employment, decided to emigrate to one of our colonies. The girl, who, down to that date, did not see her father and that

HERE "MASTER OF MAN" WAS WRITTEN



Grusha Castle is the seat of Sir Hugh Caine, K. B. E., on the Isle of Man. A portrait study of the novelist is also shown, with a page of his writing, revealing the care with which he composes and corrects his manuscript.

thought to possible consequences, saw him off at the pier of embarkation, the young man undertaking to send for her as soon as he was in a position to marry her, and she promised to go out to him.

Then, to escape from unhappiness at home, she left our island and took domestic service in England, and there, never having heard from her sweetheart, again feeling herself deserted and forgotten, afraid to return to her father's house with her fresh burden of trouble, she gave birth to a child and strangled it.

The circumstances of her confinement are sufficiently remarkable to deserve mention. It appears that down to the last her condition was never suspected by her mistress, that her child was born the night when she was quite alone, and that she came downstairs to her work at her usual hour in the morning. Later in the day she became unwell and was sent back to bed, and a doctor was called to see her, but he prescribed for some trifling ailment without realizing the cause of the girl's illness. The same night, the household was asleep, she got up again, wrapped her dead child in a newspaper, carried it to a waste inclosure at a considerable distance, threw it over the fence, and then walked home, and on the following day she was found in her room unconscious.

Discover Babe's Body
The body of the child was discovered by the accident of a little boy playing in the neighborhood of the waste inclosure, and in the inquiry which followed, the girl was arrested, and in due course she was arrested. At the coroner's inquiry she denied everything—that she had killed the child or had ever given birth to a child at all, but the evidence against her, particularly the medical evidence, was overwhelming, and ultimately she confessed, telling the full and true story of her crime, her remorse, and her great temptation.

Then public sympathy was strongly awakened in the girl's favor; the Attorney General of the Isle of Man voluntarily took charge of her defense, and when she was brought to trial a conspiracy of mercy on the part of Judge, jury, and prosecuting counsel for the Crown resulted in her acquittal.

Such were the facts of a rather ordinary case of child murder (a crime of frequent occurrence), but I found my imagination strongly stirred by it. According to the law of England the girl had been guilty of willful murder, and was therefore deserving of death, and though the judicial practice of the past fifty years has been to regard her crime as felonious homicide, and to commute the death sentence to penal servitude for many years, perhaps (as in a recent case) for life, the enormity of the offense against humanity which the law allowed of seemed to me to be terrible.

And when I brought it into the scheme of my story, and saw it as a sequel to the transgression of my judge who had to sit in judgment upon his own victim, and might have to condemn her death, the power of sin to find out the sinner and to punish him became almost frightful.

Pain and Tears
After the trial was over and the girl was made as happy as could be, I prevailed upon the Attorney General to permit me (for a good purpose, as I thought, the service of humanity, and the benefit of the official papers. They were a portfolio of pain and tears—the charge, the depositions, the evidence, above all, the girl's simple letter to her father, in which she confessed, in contradiction, of shame, of remorse, of forgiveness for those who had cast her off, and even of love for the absent man at whose altar she had atoned for her crime, and in which she begged for whom no word came to her in time of trouble. I was deeply moved by all this, and determined to make it the foundation of the story of Beattie Collier.

But in doing so I speedily became aware that over the same ground two great writers had gone before me. One of these was George Eliot, who in her story of "Adam Bede," had described the tragedy of the girl's forlorn position with a poignance I could not hope to exceed. But I thought I saw that there were things to do which George Eliot had not done.

Never for a moment has she questioned the justice of the law which charged Hetty with murder, and I could not do so. Her whole conception was with the falsehood which the girl had told at the trial in denying her crime and in adhering to her denial. The light was cast on the most cruel of the soul about to go before God with a lie on her lips, and hence the introduction of the woman preacher, Dinah Morris, and the marvelous scene in the cell in which the guilty girl is made to confess.

The other great writer who had gone before me with a case of infanticide was no less a person than Walter Scott, whose show-letcher I well knew I was unworthy to unpose. But neither had Scott questioned the law and its sentence. His criminal, Effie Deans, in the "Heart of Midlothian," had not killed her child at all, but had only concealed the birth of it, the assumption of the law being that when she was about to become a mother, when one word of admission, only half a word, might have saved her sister's life. But I felt then, and now, with all humility I say it, that neither of these great writers had touched the central heart of the terrible situation, which seemed to me to be this: When an unmarried mother has killed her newborn child, in she guilty of murder and therefore deserving of death?

the absence of responsibility acquits of the crime. Such, then, are two of the cornerstones of my story of "The Master of Man," which is now to be presented to the readers of this newspaper, and I must leave them to judge for themselves how far I have carried out my intentions and how far the motive of my novel is likely to be of service to humanity.

I might tell them of the labor I had in the writing of the story, how often I had to stop in despair and begin again, how at one moment I abandoned it altogether and asked to be relieved of my contract to finish it, and how at length, with a new wave of health and spirit, I brought it to a conclusion in a rush of almost heart-breaking emotion.

But these are the secrets of the author's workshop, and he can ask no sympathy for his struggles. I might also tell the readers of the reception of the story on its first publication, how it sold all over the world as few books had ever sold before, and brought me many tributes that are more dear to me than any other kind of reward, together with the usual proportion of the critical stupidities which have always come to any author who has taken his work seriously and is worth his salt. But these, and the matter upon which it is not proper for the writer himself to dwell.

Finally, I might tell of the thousands of letters which have reached me from readers in many countries, not all of them approving of my subject or favorable to my treatment of it, but nearly always touching me deeply as showing that I had spoken to the heart of the world.

They fill a broad drawer in a cabinet in my study, and I can hardly hope to reply to a tenth of them, for I cannot permit a secretary to send a formal acknowledgment, and my strength for the writing of letters is not what it was.

But if, in a last word, I may say anything to the readers of the EVENING POST, it shall be this—that if ever the spirit moves them to write to me (without expecting a reply) about the story which is about to begin in these columns, I can at least assure them that their letters will be read with all the attention and sympathy they deserve.

TRIES TO RESCUE SON; HURT
Camden Mother Seeks to Pull Boy From In Front of Truck
In an effort to rescue her five-year-old grandson, Charles Tranch, when he ran into the path of a motortruck at

Twenty-fourth and Federal streets yesterday, Mrs. Mary Kienale, 140 North Twenty-fourth street, Camden, was injured and the boy probably fatally hurt. The boy's right hand was crushed, his jaw broken and he also received internal injuries. Mrs. Kienale was jammed under the front axle of the truck. Both are in Cooper Hospital.

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