

# Madame La Crosse.

Annie Mathewson, in the London Star.

To say that Mrs. La Crosse was a party of immense proportions, and that she was a peculiarly wrong-doing, and that it was a peculiarity of Mrs. La Crosse that she never consented to do wrong, and that the misrepresentations which spread her conversation would often have proved a much less dangerous form of slander if she had not been so thoroughly imbued with the notion of her own belief in them.

If anyone had accused her of a love of power, she would have replied with perfect satisfaction that no human being ought to desire to influence his fellow creatures, since we are none of us wise enough to do that; and that, as for loving power, she was not a person who was so thankful to be spared, yet undoubtedly the sense of power was very pleasant to her at the moment in question.

A small, fragile girl of twenty, with soft, pleading eyes and delicate Jewish features, sat in the low chair before her, quivering with cold and agitation, and Mrs. La Crosse knew that she might, if she chose, change the direction of at least one thread in the pattern of her career.

The two women were in striking contrast. Madame's quietly height and finely proportioned figure were the more noticeable in the closely-fitting black gown which she wore, while the little fluttering creature who sat gazing up at the aquiline features and shining blue eyes was a child-like figure in appearance, though there was an indefinable suggestion of strength in the delicately moulded chin and wide brow, and a hint of self-control in the sweet firm curve of the red lips. It had been said that Mrs. La Crosse's features were Jewish; but the large soft eyes, now dilated with excitement, were grey, not brown, and the curly hair that strayed from beneath her white hat had too much gold in it for the conventional Jewish type.

Mrs. La Crosse, who had known the girl from childhood, had been asking a series of innocent questions, and she regarded to an avowed lover, who had set himself silently and determinedly to win Mrs. La Crosse's heart. Madame was undoubtedly one of those women who are to be feared than loved, for she was a woman who loved herself, her deeds of self-sacrifice, her tender devotion to her husband, and who could suspect so kind a woman of slandering, or so wisely-worded a person of insincerity.

"Adela, you do not answer my question, but your silence is enough. You love this man. It is a great responsibility, the most serious one that has ever been given you occasion to suppose that he cared."

A great wave of color swept over the girl's face, and she looked up at Mrs. La Crosse and stood before Madame, who still towered a head and shoulders above her as she adjusted the orange lilies in the Sevres vase on the mantelpiece.

It was not for Adela to contradict Madame's last statement, which she knew in her heart to be untrue; but the faint haughty smile which she gave, struggling to forgive it as she answered:

"I have said quite enough. I have told you that I cannot marry a man who is not of my own race. I have promised."

"I think the less that is said on such subjects the better," said Madame, severely.

To Adela the conversation had been tortuous; but she did not, as she might have done, resent it, as the charming, consistent on the part of Madame to persist in speech and then rebuke it. Adela always felt bound and gagged by the sense of all she owed to Madame, of affection and gratitude, and it humbled her with a kind of shame to realize that Madame was not all she had once imagined, and that, as the charm gradually lessened, the sense of bondage remained. There was a moment's silence, in which the scent of the orange lilies became oppressive, and Adela was conscious of Madame's magnificent pose as she fingered them.

The room, like its owner, had a certain air of precision, and seemed to be a little too plainly, "I am neither poor nor commonplace," though there were one or two unexpected flaws in the beauty of its appointments, which suggested to conventional a striving after unconventionality.

It looked out upon a lovely old garden on the banks of the Thames above Richmond, and as Adela took a step or two towards the window, she caught the swallows flying hither and thither, and the sweet outdoor fragrance of the roses and yew. She took a deep breath, and then said quietly, "It is very difficult to be truthful."

"I never find it so," said Madame, briefly, and as she spoke, the man of whom they had been talking was suddenly announced.

"Mr. Arkwright," said the housemaid who admitted him.

At a first glance, Mr. Arkwright appeared a plain, insignificant person, with a manner suggestive of a fastidious mind, conscious of power and laughing at its own display. But when he turned to Adela after the momentary greeting to his hostess, a rare beauty lighted up the colorless face, a beauty deeper than the lovely glow which shone through it. He would have made a good study for Sir Galahad in his graver moments; though it has not been recorded of Sir Galahad that he was given to delicate jesting, and it is possible, therefore, that he might not have appreciated Edward Arkwright's whimsical humor. Certainly he could hardly have been a young man further from the Byronic type loved of women.

Adela was very young, but a great trouble through which she had passed three years earlier had broken down several common illusions, and especially the crude notion that a masterful and reticent man was necessarily indicative of unfathomable depths of affection and incalculable force of character. She was still a little flushed with the preceding conversation, and she was crimson deepened as she met the newcomer and said with a bright air of self-possession: "We must congratulate you on your new appointment."

"Is that what people do when one is sent to Siberia?"

"But you are not going to Siberia," said Madame. She always took Arkwright's mocking speeches seriously, her own attempts at a joke being invariably of that poisonous character which betrays more than anything else the absence of humor.

"How did you know? Did he tell you?"

"Yes; his people are stupid enough to be ashamed of it. And he and I are what you call in English rather chummy."

On his way to the tennis club the good doctor met Adela himself.

"You go to tennis?" he inquired, as he made her one of his most courtly bows.

"We go together. I wish you would persuade my wife to join the tennis club. It would be good for her health, and it would make me three times the pleasure I have without her."

"I have tried already," said Adela; "but I shan't try again."

"I am sorry to hear that I missed your visit today. But I was in time for our other call, Mr. Arkwright. He is the second person of your nationality that I have the honor to call this evening."

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W. W. WATSON, Vice President.  
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A number of our great and most inveterate tobacco smokers have quit the use of the filthy weed. The No-To-Bac form was started by Aaron Gorber, who was a condition of mind for many years to the use of tobacco. He tried the use of No-To-Bac, and to his great surprise and delight, it cured him.

**TO OUR PATRONS:**  
Washburn-Crosby Co. wish to assure their many patrons that they will this year hold to their usual custom of milling STRICTLY OLD WHEAT until the new crop is fully cured. New wheat is now upon the market, and owing to the exceedingly dry weather many millers are of the opinion that it already cured, and in proper condition for milling. Washburn-Crosby Co. will take no risks, and will allow the new wheat fully three months to mature before grinding. This careful attention to every detail of milling has placed Washburn-Crosby Co.'s flour far above other brands.

**MEGARGEL & CONNELL**  
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**IRON AND STEEL**  
Bolts, Nuts, Bolt Ends, Turnbuckles, Washers, Rivets, Horse Nails, Files, Taps, Dies, Tools and Supplies. Sail Duck for mine use in stock.

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