

A Great Master

MAXINE DEMLOW

In a huge, deep, easy chair, a bit to the side of the enormous fireplace, reclined an elderly, distinguished-looking gentleman in whose face were indented the lines belonging to fatigue and age. Calmly he sat there, peacefully smoking his beloved, favorite pipe, one of those old English types, providing a deep bowl with a huge capacity for tobacco, one quite resembling the pipe of the famed, illustrious character, Sherlock Holmes. The smoke curled around his head until it gave the appearance of a hazy, misty wreath entwined above him. The gentleman was deeply, profoundly engaged in thought. This was easily determined by one glance into the fathomed brown eyes — eyes of mystery, eyes containing a certain far away look, eyes filled with beauty.

The old man, undisturbed in thought, unconsciously stroked his long flowing beard, as was a peculiar habit of his when in one of his creative moods. The flames from the glowing fire reflected upon his silver beard, the length of which was, approximately, to just above the middle of his chest. His full, brisk mustache of matching color, together with the white hair on his head, falling into ripples of waves, completely offset the tired, weather-beaten, yet peaceful face of the gentleman.

During all of his eighty-two years of living the great experience of life, he had accomplished many things. He had completed the creation of several beautiful,

mysterious paintings and a few wonderful portraits of very close associates. He was a master of the heavenly instrument, the harp, and was also talented in playing the organ. His friends boasted his haunting, fantastically beautiful hymns created for use in his church, and which were played faithfully from time to time.

A wise man of knowledge and experience, he attributed his long span of life to the following habits: a meaningful prayer to the most high Being each day, an intelligent knowledge of the Bible, good, wholesome food, not including freshly baked bread, a small glass of his particular brand of aged wine, and a rest in his easy chair plus a quiet evening with his thoughts and his pipe.

His neat, black suit showed signs of wearing at the elbows and the pockets, and the frayed collar at his wrinkled neck was evidence of his conservative mode of living. His right leg was crossed upon the other and slightly swung to and fro. His feet were shod with heavy black shoes, the sole of the foot in motion being worn quite thin. Everything about this gentleman was significant of an unselfish, intelligent, pleasing nature. Friends were easily won by him, and, philosophically speaking, his statements were quoted and practised by his acquaintances. This man, the philosopher, the artist, the musician, the educated human being was looked up to and worshiped by all who knew him.