

A Laodicean - A Story of Today - By Thomas Hardy A Laodicean is a novel by Thomas Hardy, published in 1881. Set in the more technologically advanced contemporaneous age, the plot exhibits devices uncommon for Hardy, such as falsified telegrams and faked photographs. A Laodicean is a novel by Thomas Hardy, published in 1881, by Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington. Set in the more technologically advanced contemporaneous age, the plot exhibits devices uncommon for Hardy, such as falsified telegrams and faked photographs. Synopsis Paula Power inherits a medieval castle from her industrialist father who has purchased it from the aristocratic De Stancy family. She employs two architects, one local and one, George Somerset, newly qualified from London. Somerset represents modernity in the novel. In the village there is an amateur photographer, William Dare, who is the illegitimate son of Captain De Stancy, an impoverished scion of the family. Captain De Stancy represents a dream of medieval nobility to Paula. She is attracted to both men for their different virtues but William Dare decides to intervene to promote his father in her affections. He fakes a telegram and photograph to make it appear that Somerset is leading a dissolute lifestyle. His subterfuge is discovered by Captain De Stancy's sister Charlotte who has befriended Paula. She decides to tell Paula the truth and Paula pursues Somerset to the continent where he has gone mistakenly believing Paula and the Captain to have been married. She finds him and they are reunited and marry. The castle burns down and Somerset proposes to build a modern house in its place. The last line has Paula summing up her dichotomy of mind between modernity and romantic medievalism, and thus the two men, also emphasising the title a Laodicean (someone indifferent or half-hearted) — I wish my castle wasn't burnt; and I wish you were a De Stancy!

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