

PLEASANT HOURS

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The Crucifixion.

BY FREDERIC HENRY HEDGE.

'Twas the day when God's anointed,
Died for us the death appointed,
Bleeding on the guilty cross;
Day of darkness, day of terror,
Deadly fruit of ancient error,
Nature's fall and Eden's loss.

Haste, prepare the bitter chalice!
Gentle hate and Jewish malice,
Lift the royal Victim high,—
Like the serpent, wonder-gifted,
Which the prophet once up-
lifted,—
For a sinful world to die!

Conscious of the deed unholy,
Nature's pulses beat more slowly,
And the sun his light denied;
Darkness wrapped the sacred
city,
And the earth with fear and pity
Trembled when the Just One
died.

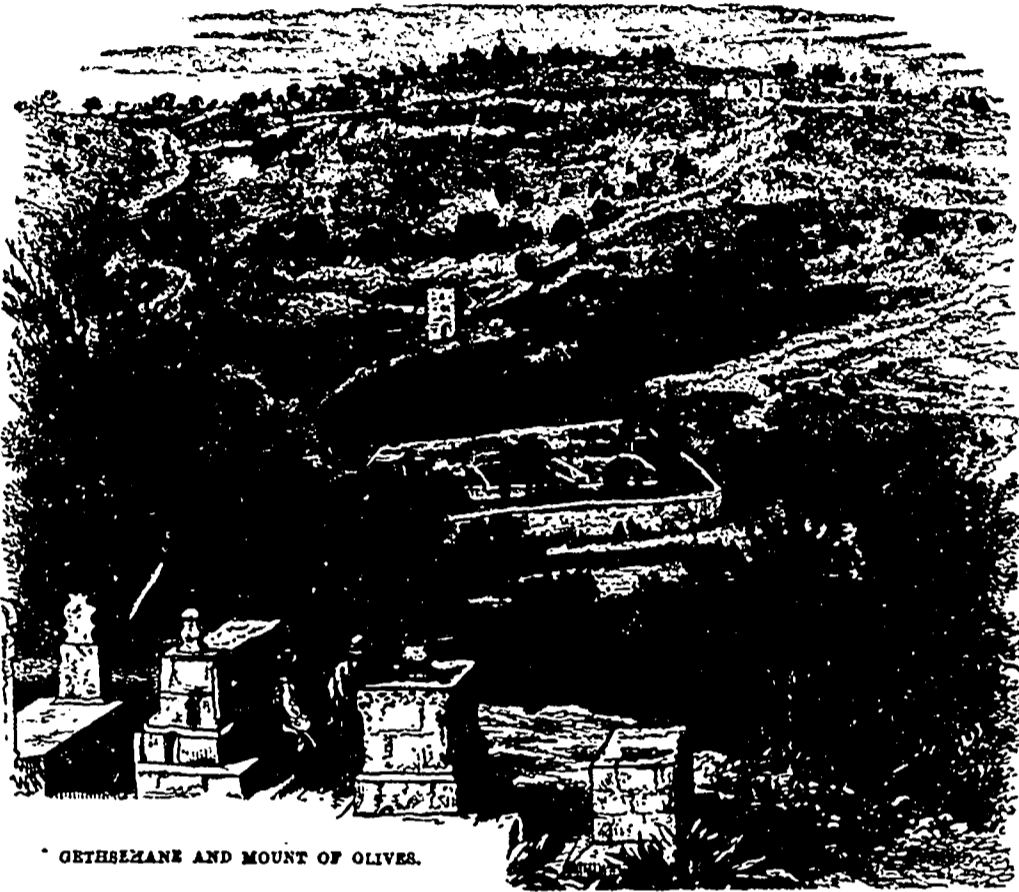
It is finished, Man of sorrows!
From thy cross our nature bor-
rows,
Strength to bear and conquer
thus;
While exalted there we view thee,
Mighty Sufferer, draw us to thee,
Sufferer victorious!

Not in vain for us uplifted,
Man of sorrows, wonder-gifted,
May the sacred symbol be,
Eminent amid the ages,
Guide of heroes and of sages,
May it guide us still to thee.

Still to thee, whose love unbounded
Sorrows deep for us hath sounded,
Perfecting by conflicts sore,
Glory to thy cross forever!
Star that points our high endeavour,
Whither thou hast gone before.

JESUS CRUCIFIED.

Our lesson brings before us the solemn theme of the sufferings and death of our blessed Lord. It is the thought of Christ's great love to our race that gives its intense and imperishable power to the Gospel of his grace. It is this also that lends an impassioned interest to a visit to the spot made sacred evermore



GETHSEMANE AND MOUNT OF OLIVES.

by the life and labours of Jesus of Nazareth.

Just outside the walls of Jerusalem, and across the narrow brook of Kedron, is a small enclosure of a few old gnarled and venerable olive trees. This uniform tradition identifies as the Garden of Gethsemane. It was beneath the progenitors of these old olives, there is little reason to doubt, that our Lord spent the hours of his agony on the night that he was betrayed. It is impossible to describe the emotions with which one muses and ponders these solemn thoughts as he walks beneath these olive trees. Lifting his eyes, one beholds on the one hand the long, low walls of Jerusalem, and on the other the sloping hillside of Olivet on which

our Saviour often walked to the hamlet of Bethany to the house of Mary and Martha, and from whose crest he ascended into heaven. This garden and its mountain, memorable throughout all the world, are shown in the upper cut on this page.

The lower cut shows the scene of the following day, when our Saviour was crucified on Calvary. This wonderful picture is a bas-relief by George Tinworth. The three Roman soldiers, who have made a gaming table of a shield, are casting lots therein for the seamless robe of our Lord. The crucifixion itself we do not see. It is merely suggested by the feet of our Lord and of the two thieves, shown in the upper part of the picture. The crowded figures of the

Martha, of the disciples, the soldiers the chief priests and spectators give a solemn significance to this impressive picture.

Let the great lesson of this scene sink deep into our hearts.

"I suffered this for thee,
What hast thou done for me?"

Shall we forsake him and flee in the day of persecution, or shall we confess with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

Thank God for the growing influence year by year of that sacrificial death on Calvary nearly nineteen centuries ago. The words of our Saviour are more true to-day than they ever were before. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." In all parts of Christian lands and in all heathen lands, countless multitudes are turning their eyes to the cross and the Crucified, and are being lifted from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

IF WATER NEVER FROZE.

It is interesting to think of the remarkable things that would happen if one simple rule of nature were reversed, and water did not crystallize into ice at thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit. Pearson's Weekly gives us just a few of the results:

The whole economy of nature would undergo a startling change if water never froze. The world's climates would be revolutionized. The ice-bound polar seas would cease to exercise their chilling influences, and consequently the currents of the ocean might either cease or be turned aside in different directions.

Thus the Gulf Stream would seek other shores than those of Britain, and the climates there might be subject to the extremes of heat and cold noticeable in other countries of the same latitude. The ice-bound rivers of the north, notably those of Russia and Siberia, would be open for navigation, and Russia's activity as a sea power and a commercial nation might alter the whole world of commerce.

Canada would become another country altogether. An immense tract of land would be available for cultivating hardy



AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.—SEE 2. S. LESSON FOR JUNE 12.