

The remains of Balthasar were carried to the guest-chamber. All the servants hastened weeping to see him ; for he had the love of every living thing with which he had in anywise to do ; but when they beheld his face, and the smile upon it, they dried their tears, saying, "It is well. He is happier this evening than when he went out in the morning."

Ben-Hur would not trust a servant to inform Iras what had befallen her father. He went himself to see her and bring her to the body. He imagined her grief ; she would now be alone in the world ; it was a time to forgive and pity her. He remembered he had not asked why she was not of the party in the morning, or where she was ; he remembered he had not thought of her ; and, from shame, he was ready to make any amends, the more so as he was about to plunge her into such acute grief.

He shook the curtains of her door ; and though he heard the ringing of the little bells echoing within, he had no response ; he called her name, and again he called—still no answer. He drew the curtain aside and went into the room ; she was not there. He ascended hastily to the roof in search of her ; nor was she there. He questioned the servants ; none of them had seen her during the day. After a long quest everywhere through the house, Ben-Hur returned to the guest-chamber, and took the place by the dead which should have been hers ; and he bethought him there how merciful the Christ had been to His aged servant. At the gate of the kingdom of Paradise happily the afflictions of this life, even its desertions, are left behind and forgotten by those who go in and rest.

When the gloom of the burial was nigh gone, on the ninth day after the healing, the law being fulfilled, Ben-Hur brought his mother and Tirzah home ; and from that day, in that house, the most sacred names possible of utterance by men were always coupled worshipfully together ;

GOD THE FATHER AND CHRIST THE SON.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CATABOMB.

ABOUT five years after the crucifixion, Esther, the wife of Ben-Hur, sat in her room in the beautiful villa by Misenum. It was noon, with a warm Italian sun making summer for the roses and vines outside. Everything in the apartment was Roman, except that Esther wore the garments of a Jewish matron. Tirzah, and two children at play upon a lion's skin on the floor, were her compan-