

# Northern Messenger

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## A Prisoner of the Khalifa.

An Italian merchant, Cuzzi, who, together with others, was made prisoner by the Khalifa, was kept in captivity fifteen years until the liberation of Omdurman by the Anglo-Egyptian troops. In a book of adventures he says:

'During the fifteen years of my imprisonment I never saw a mirror, so that I gradually lost all interest in my personal appearance and in the features of my face. When

the image of myself, but, on beholding my face, I stepped back horror-stricken.

'When I had last seen myself in a looking-glass, I was young, active, and strong, while the image I now beheld was that of a man withered by disease and hardships. Never before had all my past sufferings come to my mind in such painful reality. I wept, wept like a child, the first tears I shed during those fifteen years.

'The day before I was made a prisoner I saw my wife die; but my grief was too deep

as he hears the booming of cannon, and learns that the English are at the gates of Omdurman. There is revived in his mind a hope of deliverance, and he waits, not knowing what will happen, when, to his surprise, he is face to face with Kitchener, and told he is no longer a prisoner.

Have we not a portrait before us of similar prisoners in many a place to-day? Yes, not only in the dark continent of Africa, where the Khalifa's rule had been a terror for numbers of years, but in England, and in many another spot all the world over. The captivity of Cuzzi was the captivity of the body, but the captivity that I mean is the captivity of the soul. The devil, like the Khalifa, has taken prisoner the souls of many, so that they care not what becomes of them.

The world had been going its way for fifteen years, while poor Cuzzi was a prisoner in Omdurman; and so it is to-day. What does the world care for the prisoner under Satan's grasp?

Hark! A sound is heard which arrests attention. Not the booming of cannon in the ears, but a word from God in the soul. A decisive battle has been fought and won.

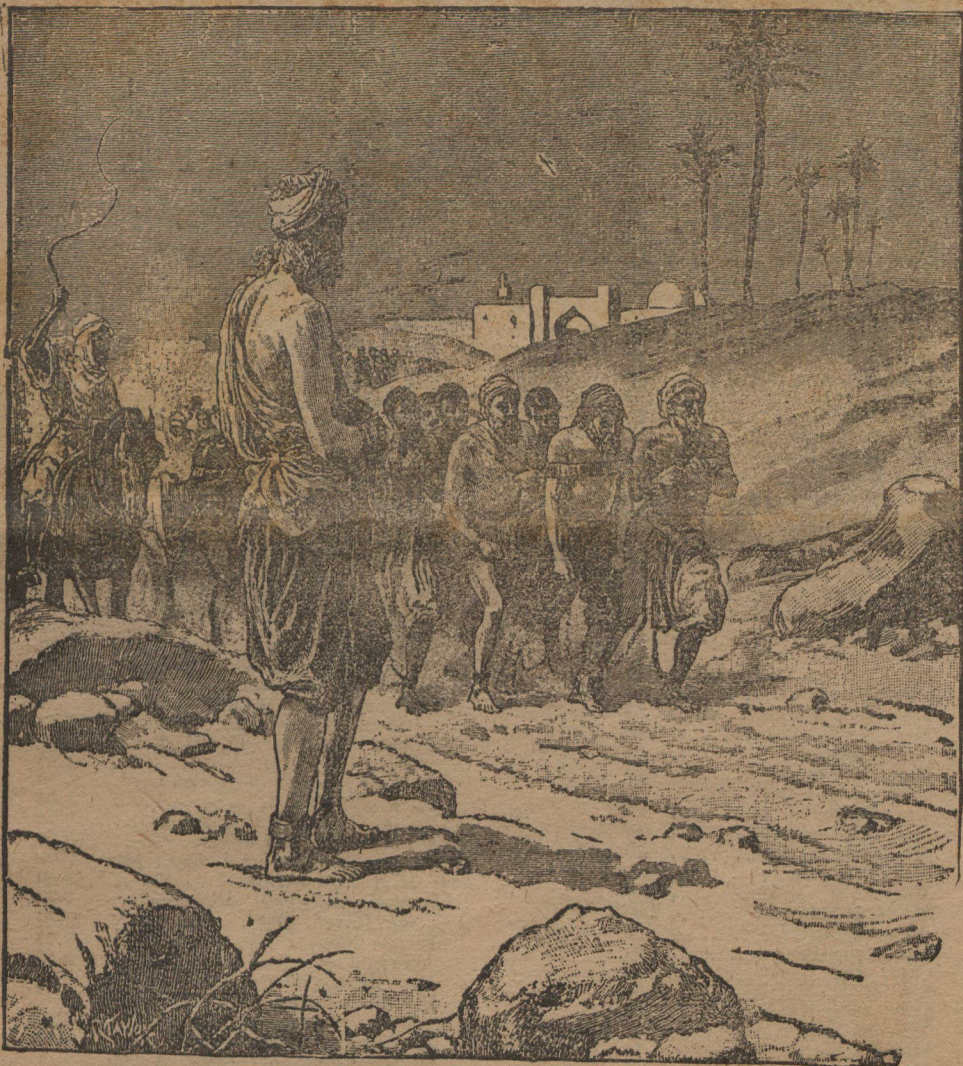
In terrible earnestness the Tempter assailed the Man who came from God, and went to God, and was God, but he never prevailed against Him. Throughout His life on earth the Son of Man was tempted, but never overcome. 'He became obedient unto death,' and, at the last, paid the penalty of man's sins by sacrificing His life for the benefit of all who, being slaves to this cruel tyrant over man, are willing to trust Him to save them from his power. So, Jesus could declare in anticipation of this death, 'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.' He came 'that He might destroy the works of the devil.'

There was no doubt in Cuzzi's mind when he saw Kitchener that he was no longer a prisoner, but was free. And there will be no doubt in your mind, dear friend, when the Holy Spirit shows you what Jesus has done for you.

By the help of the mirror Cuzzi made discovery of the condition to which he had been brought. And thus it often is with the soul in Satan's grasp. It is by a message from God by the help of the Holy Spirit that the soul discovers the Saviour's love. It has presented to its view the finished work of its Redeemer, and because it believes the message which it learns in a moment of time, it passes from bondage to liberty. But now it has learned its terrible condition and the havoc that sin has made. And what is the mirror by which this discovery is made? It is God's Word. By it man discovers that he is guilty before God. And God has brought in 'all the world guilty before Him' (Rom. iii., 19).

What distress this discovery brings! Then, and not till then, are the fountains of the great deep of the soul broken up, and it looks upon Him whom it has pierced by its many sins, and mourns.

Dear friend, when you have looked into the perfect law of God and beheld your state, cease from looking to this to save you, and look to the Person who died to save you.—  
'Light in the Home.'



'KEPT IN CAPTIVITY FIFTEEN YEARS.'

I knew for certain that an expedition was directed towards Omdurman, I once more felt some interest in life. When at last I heard the cannon roar, and when the wild shouts of battle penetrated into the city, I snatched up a sword and held myself in readiness, with the firm resolution of putting an end to my life should this last hope vanish. When the noise of the cannon at length subsided, and I beheld Kitchener before me, congratulating me on my newly-acquired liberty, I thought I should die, so overwhelming was my emotion.

Next day I repaired to the tent of one of the officers, with the intention of modifying my dishevelled appearance, and then, for the first time in fifteen years, I had a mirror in my hands. I was curious and anxious to see

to allow the relief of tears. My child was torn from me and died, owing to ill-treatment; but still I was unable to weep. I had gone through many a trial and hardship without ever showing any weakness, but then, in front of that little mirror, I completely broke down. The grief for all that I had lost seemed concentrated in the sorrowful image which the mirror reflected, and one look alone told me the story of all my sufferings.'

We are not surprised that he wept at the sight of himself. Fifteen years of confinement had made him careless and indifferent as to his person, and it was not till he was brought to see himself, as he really was, that he was shocked and moved to tears.

We can enter into the feelings of this man