

FOR THE "TRUE WITNESS."

BE KIND.

A kindly word, it costs the speaker little,
Will often cheer a sorrow-stricken heart,
Will give fresh strength to weakened dying courage,
And to fast-fading hopes, new life impart.

A sympathetic look was never yet regretted,
The tear in pity shed was never shed in vain:
The giver may forget a glance in sorrow given,
But he, who felt its charm, its memory will retain.

Then give a cheerful smile, whenever one is called for,
A ready, willing hand, to help a brother rise,
For he who now will succour, in time may be your savior,
Lay stores of mercy by for darker hours, Be Wise.

MARIE.

FAMINE IN INDIA.

The awful cry of famine is spreading like wild fire, and the Empress of India is confronted at the outset of her Imperial regime by this gaunt and dreaded spectre. Eight hundred and forty thousand persons are already employed on the relief works in Madras; and 50,000 in Bombay. The Government estimates show that the famine in Bombay will gradually increase reaching the maximum in April, when a million persons will require relief, after which it will gradually decrease. In Madras the prospect is proportionately worse. The districts affected in Madras cover 50,000 sq miles and contain a population of 18,000,000. In Bombay the famine stricken territory covers 6,400 square miles, and has a population of 8,000,000, five millions of which are in districts more immediately affected.

MONKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

Mrs. Jameson thus speaks of the monks: "But for the monks of the Middle Ages, the light of liberty, and literature, and science, had been forever extinguished: and for six centuries, there existed for the thoughtful, the gentle, the inquiring, the devout spirit, no peace, no security, no home but the cloister. There, learning trimmed her lamp; there, contemplation 'preened her wings'; there, the traditions of art, preserved from age to age by lonely studious men, kept alive, in form and color, the idea of a beauty beyond that of earth—a might beyond that of the spear and the shield—of a Divine sympathy with suffering humanity. To this we may add another and a stronger claim to our respect and moral sympathies. The protection and the better education given to women in these early communities; the venerable and distinguished rank assigned to them when, as governess of their order, they became in a manner dignitaries of the Church; the introduction of their beautiful and saintly effigies, clothed with all the insignia of sanctity and authority, into the decoration of places of worship and books of devotion—did more, perhaps, for the general cause of womanhood than all the boasted institutions of chivalry."

WHY PRIESTS DO NOT MARRY.

Non-Catholics profess to find in the Sacred Scriptures arguments against the celibacy of the clergy. They never tire of quoting St. Paul's words to the Corinthians: "Have we not power to carry about a woman, a sister, as well as the rest of the Apostles?" They are careful to mistranslate *gune* (woman) for *wife*. We have the Apostle's own words for saying that he was unmarried: "I say to the unmarried, and to the widows, it is good for them if they so continue, even as I." As Marshall, in the "Comedy of Convocation," observes: "Perhaps the most ardent admirer of hymeneal rites would admit that he could not conceive St. Paul or St. John starting on a nuptial tour, accompanied by the latest fashions from Athens or Ephesus, and the graceful brides whom they were destined to adorn. They would feel that Christianity itself could not survive such a vision as that. Nor could the imagination picture in its wildest moods the majestic adversary of the Arian emperor attended in his flight up the Nile by Mrs. Athanasius; nor St. John Chrysostom escorted in his wanderings through Phrygia by the wife of his bosom arrayed in orange blossoms."

There is another text of Holy Writ also used by Protestants in their arguments against the vow of continence. It is taken from the First Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, in which he warns him: "In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits in error—*forbidding to marry*." The Apostle there alludes to the Ebionites, Gnostics and Manicheans, who taught the foolish and false doctrine that marriage was sinful. The divine wisdom of the Church is nowhere more apparent than in the law of ecclesiastical celibacy. Without it the evangelizing of pagan nations would be impossible, and if priests were permitted to marry the Gospel of Christ would indeed be preached in vain.

THE PENAL DAYS.

This was the age that gave to Irish topography the "Corrig-an-Afrion" found so thickly marked on every barony map in Ireland. "The Mass Rock" What memories cling around each hallowed moss-clad stone or rocky ledge on the mountain side, or in the deep recess of some desolate glen, whereon for years and years, the Holy Sacrifice was offered up in stealth and secrecy, the death penalty hanging over priest and worshipper! Not unfrequently mass was interrupted by the approach of the bandogs of the law; for, quickened by the rewards to be earned, there sprang up in those days the infamous trade of priest-hunting, "five pounds" being equally the government price for the head of a priest as for the head of a wolf. The utmost care was necessary in divulging intelligence of the night on which mass would next be celebrated, and when the congregation had furtively stolen to the spot, sentries were posted all around before the mass began. Yet in instances not a few, the worshippers were taken by surprise, and the blood of the murdered priest wetted the altar stone.

Well might our Protestant national poet, Davis, exclaim, contemplating this deep night-time of suffering and sorrow:

"Oh! weep those days—the penal days,
When Ireland hopelessly complained;
Oh! weep those days—the penal days,
When godless persecution reigned."

"They bribed the flock, they bribed the son.
To sell the priest and rob the sire;
Their dogs were taught alike to run
Upon the scent of wolf and friar.

Among the poor,
Or on the moor,
Where hid the pious and the true;
While traitor knave
And recreant slave
Had riches, rank and retinue;
And, exiled in those penal days,
Our banners over Europe blaze."

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