

but cast down his head, and went away. The last "*and then?*" had passed like a flash of lightning into his soul, and he could not get quit of it. Soon after, he forsook the study of the law, and gave himself up to the ministry of Christ, and spent the remainder of his days in godly words and works.

Would that all Christians would put the question frequently to themselves which this holy man put to the young lawyer! When you have done all that you are doing, all that you aim at doing, even supposing that all your dreams are accomplished, that every wish of your heart, as regardeth time, is fulfilled—still cast one thought into Eternity,—and let the question come—*And then?*

*[Slightly altered from Archd. Hare.]*

#### The Dark Ages.—Eligius.

##### II.

Those gloomy times, when men weren't half-so wise  
As now in this our age of light and lies.

GOLDSMITH ELIGIUS, as we have seen, had a quiet way of doing good, and what is more, of doing a vast amount of good. His name was not advertised as chairman of a patent good deed company, nor did his tenth donation and annual subscription ever make him blush in a list of benefactors. Instead of dining royally, as he might have done had he been worldly-wise, on choice wines of France and dainty dishes, he sought out the desolate and the hungry, the sick and the naked, the slave and the prisoner; and was himself a good steward to thousands. Instead of clever music, and trained voices, he turned the cry of distress and the wail of sorrow, into tears of joy; and these were for sweet music to his soul. And wherever the sound of his name was heard, in many a dark abode of misery and vice, it passed on as a ray of light, and carried with it a blessing and a prayer for good from lips and hearts that had been long silent and cold.

How would it be, good reader, if such hands were found to labour, and such a voice to speak, among the dens of infamy and disease and death, that pollute the courts and alleys of London, New York, and the great towns and cities of our day, and make them like to Babels in wickedness and guilt and peril?

Would the mass of iniquity and defilement grow daily greater (as it almost appears to grow

now,) or grow less before Christian hands and Christian words and Christian prayers, as darkness grows less before the rising sun, and what is foul and noxious disappear? To this question the answer is unmistakeably plain. Happy the true soldier of Christ, who, while he answers it, knows in his heart that he is doing, at least, somewhat in the high and holy work. Happy, because he is doing the very work of Christ's Church, and aiding to carry out her divine mission, to rescue the children of the devil, and make them the "sons of God, and heirs of eternal life." He feels and knows that without this spirit, and the firm belief that such is the Church's work, his arm would soon be nerveless, and his greatest efforts futile.

But poor Eligius worked on in what many modern sectaries would call darkness. His good deeds were not written in newspapers, but in the Book of Life. Meanwhile, as years rolled by, he became an old man; so that now he had ignorance, old age, and the darkness of the dark ages to fight against; but he still persevered. We still find him at work among the poor; especially do we find him redeeming slaves from captivity in great numbers. Possibly the pure-minded goldsmith may have remembered the High and Holy One, who once on earth went about doing good, and opening the prison to them who were fast bound in misery and iron. He may have thought that his one small act of good resembled (however remotely) the great work of his Master. His mode of performing "this Christian duty (says a great writer) might now be considered singular and unwise; and, perhaps, as it was not adopted by some of those who have, in modern times, felt most strongly, or at least written most fiercely about the abolition of slavery, it may be liable to serious objections, which I do not perceive.

To me, a very poor judge in such matters, and perhaps somewhat prejudiced, it seems that his plan, whatever faults it might have had, was the most simple, certain and expeditious plan; he put his hand in his pocket, and paid the price of redemption.

Truly it was not the grandest way of doing the thing; but, right or wrong, however, his biographer tells us that when he heard of a sale of slaves, he immediately set off, and bought as many as twenty or thirty, or even fifty or a hundred at a time. When he had got them,