

in the streets of London in the face of day, and only because of the habit they wore,—the badge of no common vocation,—the nun's black dress, the livery of the poor. This parallel is consoling to them, perhaps also to us; for is not Francesca now the cherished saint of Rome, the pride and the love of every Roman heart? And may not the day come when our patient, heroic nuns will be looked upon as one of God's best blessings in a city, where luxury runs riot on the one hand, and starvation and misery reign on the other? Will not the eye follow them with love, and many rise up to call them blessed? Their course is like hers; may their end be the same!

The historians of our saint relate that on one of the occasions above alluded to, when her only resource was to beg for her sick charges, she went to the Basilica of San Loranzo without the walls, where was the station of the day, and seated herself amongst the crowd of beggars who, according to custom, were there assembled. From the rising of the sun to the ringing of the vesper-bell, she sat there side by side with the lame, the deformed, and the blind. She held out her hand as they did, gladly enduring, not the semblance, but the reality of that deep humiliation. When she had received enough wherewith to feed the poor at home, she rose and making a sign to her companions, entered the old basilica, adored the Blessed Sacrament, and then walked back the long and weary way, blessing God all the while, and rejoicing that she was counted worthy to suffer for His dear sake.

Not long ago, for a few short years, in Francesca's city, there was one who bade fair to emulate the virtues of the dear saint of Rome; but as she was rapidly treading in her footsteps, and her name was becoming every day more dear to the people amongst whom she dwelt, death snatched her away. Her memory remains, and the poor bless it even now. May God grant us such in our own land! Saints are sorely needed in these busy, restless, money-loving times of ours; as much as, or more than, in the wild middle ages, or the troubled centuries that followed.

Francesca possessed a small vineyard near the church of St. Paul without the walls; and in that time of scarcity, when every little resource had to be turned to account for the purposes of charity, she used to go there and gather up into parcels and fagots the long grass and the dry branches of the vine. When she had collected a certain number of these packets, she laid them on an ass, and went through the town,