

It was her son John, however, who, in these last hours, was her chief companion. She went down into the dark valley clasping John's hand. And when she really came to it all her fears were gone. One night she talked until the clock struck nine. "Now I will sleep, John," she said, and, as he kissed her, she whispered the last words he had read: "'For Jerusalem, that is above, is free; which is the mother of us all.'" There was a pathetic trouble and tenderness, a little fear, in her lifted eyes then; but when the light of the winter morning fell coldly on her tranquil face there was nothing but a divine peace and a happy smile,

"As if she had grown more joyful
As she clasped the Master's hand;
And had come, or ever she was aware,
Unto the Holy Land;"

for none knew exactly at what moment her angel called for her.

The death of any good mother makes a great blank. John and Cassia mourned her sincerely. Even Raymund missed the changing of life's currents which her daily need of love had made in his own household. Yet these regular visits had been the cause of many domestic jars; madam was sure to send for Raymund just as they were ready to make them, and her different ways of expressing her scorn for his devotion to his mother-in-law seemed to be endless. In fact, her infinity of resource had become a terror to Cassia; no duty, no pleasure, was safe from her interference. If there was a dinner which delay would spoil, madam knew the moment it was ready for the table, and at that moment sent some imperative message for Raymund's attention. Many a cold, silent meal, that ought to have been a pleasant feast, Cassia owed to her interference. If the horses were ready for a drive, it was the same thing. If Cassia was reading or singing to Raymund, madam had a letter that must be written, or she had a headache, and the piano distressed her. She seemed to be ubiquitous, but, in reality, her tactics were arranged from the details so liberally supplied by Souda and Gloria.

For Gloria was one of those women who can be true only when it is in their manifest interest to be true. During Raymund's courtship devotion to Cassia was the profitable side. It was productive of rides and visits, and excuses for dress and opportunities for flirtation. It had made her a bridesmaid, and given her a trip to New York. But Cassia, as a wife, had disappointed her. She had invited no company, had no parties, and she had refused Raymund's offer to take her to the capital when the Legislature was in session. The refusal of this offer—which she was sure would have included her also—had made her Cassia's enemy.