

## A CHRISTMAS ALLEGORY.

Ages and ages ago there lived a King who was wise and good beyond all the kings that the world has ever seen. His kingdom was vast, his power unequalled. He lived in a splendid city surrounded by all the magnificence that became his high estate. In his supremely happy land there was profound peace. Ruling his subjects well, there were no tumults or disorders within, powerful beyond compare, there was no war nor occasion of war without. His country was exempt from famine and want and pestilence; his devoted subjects were peaceful and happy. Within the limits of the King's territory a mild sunlight, a soft radiance, a subdued effulgence, shone on all—there was perpetual spring, balmy and joyous; in that region there was no sickness, no pain, no sorrow; every one who lived in the sun light of the King's presence was blessed beyond all mortal blessedness.

The inhabitants of this happy land were not all of a like estate or in equal honour. There were various orders amongst them, each perfect in its kind and each in harmony with the others and with the great King. They were as the various tones of a chord in music necessary for one grand harmonious effect. Their united chorus was the music of the spheres.

After the lapse of many ages the great King, communing with himself, determined on the establishment of a colony with inhabitants of a different order from any of those already in his dominions. And foreseeing that these inhabitants, who were to be a lower and less intelligent race, would become involved in rebellion against his authority and his kingdom, he proclaimed first of all the future of this new race. A portion of the royal domain—one of its choicest valleys—was to be set apart for the new infant colony. There was a favoured race in many respects; for the King declared he would, if necessary, send his own son to preserve them. The son of the King was to assume the weak and apparently degraded condition of these new subjects, and finally allow himself to be sacrificed by them but for them. That being done, the servile and dishonoured race would become ennobled and be more glorious and resplendent than the King's original subjects whenever he chose to break up the colony and recall them to himself.

The news of all this created a profound impression at the Royal Court. Those who knew the King best rejoiced in the scheme, but not a few murmured. "Here," the latter said, "is a people of the scum of the earth; a race of dishonourable slaves, to be advanced to positions over our heads. We are the subjects and servants of the King, this upstart colony is to be composed of such as he will regard as his children—the brothers of his son." The tumult of these misguided Sons of Light reached the ears of the great King, and sending a vast army he overcame the rebels and drove them out of the happy dwellings to live thereafter in deep dungeons. They became a people of darkness, sworn enemies of the King and of the infant colony as soon as it began to be peopled. One third of the happy land was depopulated, driven into unutterable regions of misery and despair, while the remaining loyal subjects were confirmed in their happy homes.

And now the great King, having restored order and strengthened his dominions, sent out messengers to spy out a beautiful and fair land to be the home of his new subjects. The most beautiful spot ever seen on this globe of ours was selected, and everything in its loveliest guise was added thereto—animals of all kinds, the calm moonlight, the brilliant sun, the music of waters, the comforting hues of earth and sky. When everything was at its best the great King came down to view it, and even he was well pleased. Then he sent out his colonists, who were filled with a portion of the light and learning of the Royal City, telling them to remain for a time to obey the royal laws, and that they should return with him later and take up the posts and positions of the rebels who had fallen.

The royal inhabitants looked on all this with great

interest and great expectations, but the rebels were now exasperated and sought about for means to overthrow the infant colony. The chief rebel, with all the talents of a blessed estate and all the venom of an eternal hatred, procured the first colonists to break a simple law and brought upon them the penalty of death—death, with no prospect of returning to the royal domain—death opening up the exile of the arch rebel. He, successfully completing, as he thought, the ruin of the colony, retired to his lowest dungeon hoping that now the accursed race, whose creation destroyed his happiness, would share a fate worse than his own. When the news of the early fall of the new race reached the great city there was sorrow and pity, but the King was justice itself. Their happy land, said he, shall be cursed, and they shall all die miserably.

Then did the King's son, rising up in all the splendour of his great father, say to him before all the inhabitants, "I pray you spare these poor people and I will give you satisfaction. I will do what they cannot—satisfy the affront you have received from them."

The great King laid aside the decree of justice, putting the tablet of mercy over it, and a messenger took down to the afflicted and disgraced people the promise that the King's son had obtained mercy for them.

In process of time the son of the great King determined that the time was at hand when he might best save the colonists and redeem his promise to his father. And disguising himself as one of the fallen race he set out from his father's kingdom, and with legions of attendants repaired to the land where the fallen race lived. A few shepherds tending their flocks saw the pageant and heard the music of the King's bands, but except the one family that was to receive him the colonists seemed to care little about it. Silently the retinue returned—the King's son, with all the outward appearance of the fallen people, began to live and move as those around him. This was on the first CHRISTMAS MORNING.

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## THE NIGHT AFTER CHRISTMAS.

"I declare," said the turkey, there is nothing to be heard in this house for the last week but 'turkey, turkey, turkey.' I'm sick of it. The nicest and fattest things we've had this year were all cut off in their prime, and my day will likely be next Tuesday."

"You think much of yourself," said the goose, "but I hear nothing but 'roast goose, roast goose' all the time."

"Well!" said the ox, with becoming slowness, "if it comes to that I have more to complain of than either of you. Christmas dinner would be a poor affair without beef. Indeed until you mentioned it I thought roast beef and plum pudding were all that was wanted. Look at that fellow," continued the ox, and he pointed with his left horn over at me, "look at him and see how much man and how much ox are there." (I thought he was going to say how much beast but he was too polite to himself.)

Then the chickens put in their bill and the ducks waddled over to take part, and a fat hog made a lazy remark or two, and I believe that the lambs were crowding in to say something when the old turkey called for silence.

Said he, "This thing has gone far enough. The ox is quite right, and I don't see that we should stand it any longer. If we are united we can easily get the better of a miserable animal like that (and the old rascal pointed at me with his yellow claw)—a poor fat thing that can't fly."

"You are right, there;" said the goose, "he would be just like me if he had wings and feathers."

"However that may be," said the hog, "I despise an animal with only two legs."

"So do I," said the ox, and he shook his big head, and "So do I," said the lamb, quite afraid of having spoken.

"I propose," said the villainous old gobbler, that we make away with him, cook him in his own kitchen and have him served with cranberries."

"With some apple-sauce added," said the goose.