

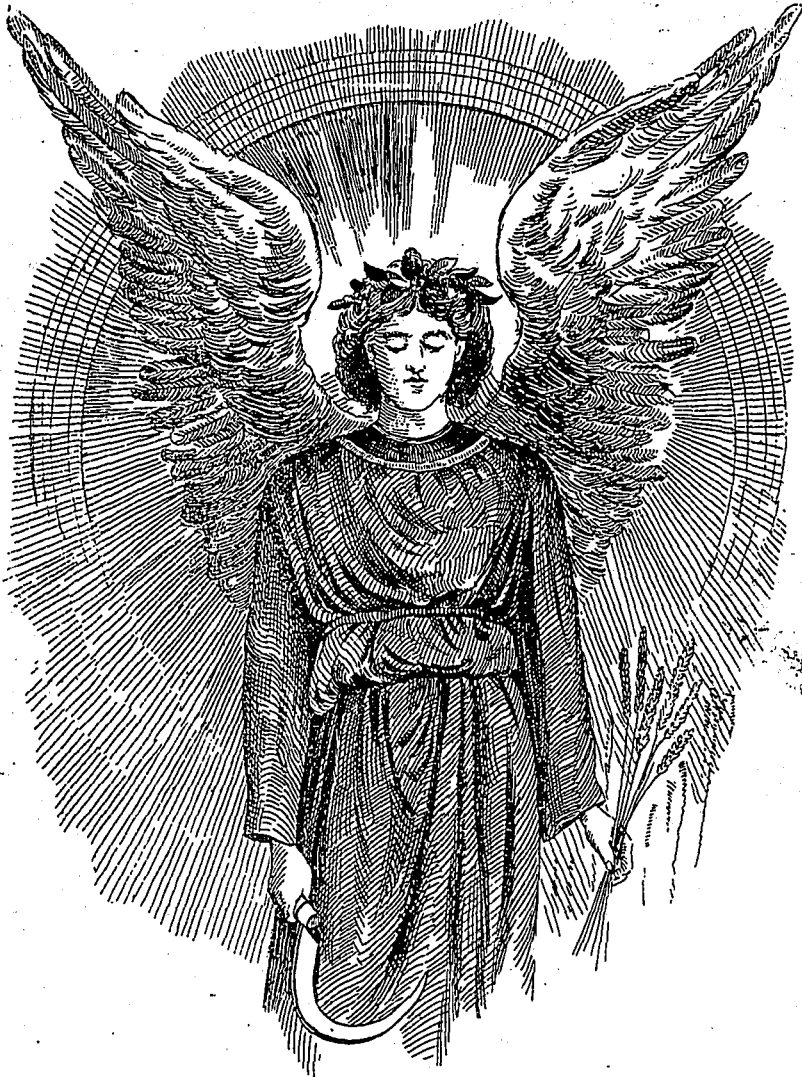
NORTHERN MESSENGER

DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE,

VOL. XXXI., No. 7.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, MARCH 27, 1896.

30 Cts. Per. An. Post-Paid.



ISRAFIL.

ISRAFIL.

By Frances L. Mace.

I.

Israfil!
Stay thy sickle on vale and hill.
Come from the woods whose gorgeous leaves
Pale and wither beneath thy tread.
Come from blinding among thy sheaves
Dearer blossoms of beauty dead,
Of grandeur and of worth
Wrested away from earth.
Bend thy sorrowful eyes on me,
Angel of death! and while nature breathes
One hour from thy sad dominion free,
Tell me the mystery of thy woe,
The legend I only have heard in dreams.
Over my heart shall flow
In fuller measures the solemn strain,
Up from depths of tears and pain
Rising to patience—rising again
To a paean of triumph.

Hush! be still!
Whence this odor of amaranth wreaths?
Whence these faint and star-like beams
Shed from feet which make no sound?
A touch of fire
Is on my lyre,
And its strings, with a sudden, rapturous
bound,
Thrill beneath the angel fingers.
Thou art come! Thou art gone!
Yet in all my being lingers
A breath celestial, a voiceless tone.
I shall not utter my song alone,
Israfil.

II.

On Paradise
A softer hue of glory lies,

The hush of evening, for the night
Comes slowly o'er young Eden's skies,
Reluctant to conceal from sight
One blossom's radiant dyes.
A thousand birds amide the shade
To sleep their shining plumage fold;
A thousand flowers that cannot fade
Perfume afresh their leaves of gold.
Far off, rising stars illumine
The gentle yet half fearful gloom
Which folds in deeper shades yon myrtle
bower.
There, lost in slumbers pure and deep,
Wrapt in the stillness of the hour,
Unconscious yet of tempter's power,
The first-born, guiltless mortals sleep.

III.

Lo! down the airy waste
Four shining angels haste.
Their eager wings make music as they
come.
Flashing along the night,
All redolent of light,
As if the splendors of their upper home,
Reflected still, illumed their earthward
flight.
On, swiftly on, past star by star,
Leaving a path of glory far
Behind their luminous wings at last
The measureless expanse is past,
And at their feet in beauty lies
The new-made earthly Paradise.
As when from envious shadow breaks
Sweet Hesperus and walks the isles
Of heaven's blue temple, nature smiles
And added grace and beauty takes,
So Eden, conscious in its dreams

Of a diviner atmosphere,
Breathes richer fragrance far and near,
And in the angelic presence beams.

IV.

A moment stay their steps, to view
Charms to angel vision new;
Roses burdened with the dew
By the tender night distilled;
Birds whose last good-night is trilled,
Sleeping on the tremulous bough;
Fountains white in moon-lit glow—
But a moment; for the night
Deepens, and without the gate
Evil spirits hide and wait.
Each bright angel seeks his post,
Armed, and mightier than a host
Of the envious, gulfed band
That in outer darkness stand.
Northward, southward, westward go,
One by one, the heavenly guard,
Clothed about with garments white
That diffuse a silvery glow,
Bearing each a sword of light
With celestial jewels starred.
Last, with clinging steps that seem
Loath to seek his nightly stand
On the utmost eastern hill,
Youngest of the angel band,
Lovelier than a poet's dream,
Comes the angel Israfil!

V.

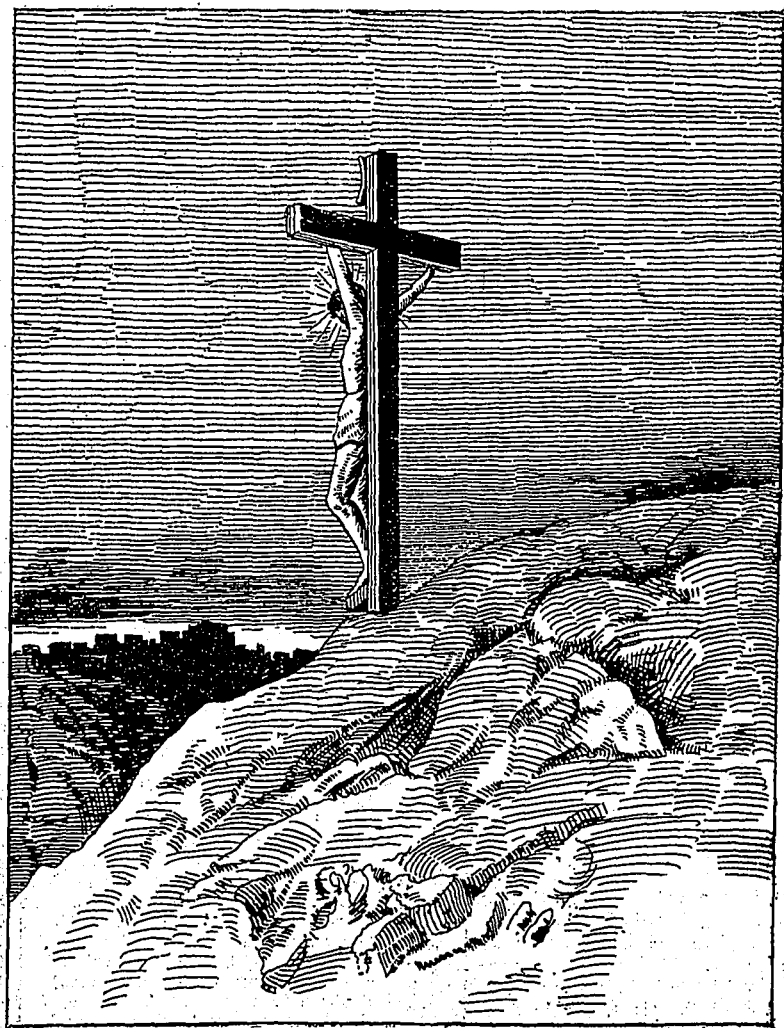
Now quicker is his noiseless tread,
His silvery wings expanding spread,
Half floats he in the air with deep delight,
As scenes of new enchantment meet his
sight.
His eyes of liquid azure, touched with fire,
More beautiful than can be sung or told,

Shine, 'neath the aureole of his locks of
gold,
With a soft restlessness, a fond desire.
Adoring beauty with a love
Too passionate for one of angel birth,
Even at this hour he pants to rove
Amid the green bowers of the fragrant
earth,
To hear once more the nightingale's refrain,
To touch the humid, sleeping rose again;
But most of all to see
The latest miracle of Deity
The revelation, unto angels new,
Of loveliness they scarcely yet conceive
As real, substantial, true:
The first of human womanhood,
The breathing form, the spirit pure and
good,
The garden's royal flower, the new-created
Eve.

VI.

O Israfil!
Bid thy impulsive soul be still;
Until the morning wait.
Leave not the haunted gate,
Where even now, by evil sense aware
Of thy untried and hasty mood,
The serpent king with envious hate
Whispers to tempt thy angelhood,
Of her, the wondrously fair,
Whom but to look upon would be
A rapture and an ecstasy.
O Israfil!
Keep thou thy watch upon the star-lit hill;
Until the morning wait.
Then, when the summons from on high
Recalls thy comrades to the sky,
She shall come forth, and with sweet con-
verse greet

(Continued on Last Page.)



TO CALVARY'S CROSS WHICH I MUST BEAR ALONE.