

he arrives at the City of David scarce yet recovered from the shock of that earthquake which, shaking the ground beneath the Roman Centurion's feet, had overthrown Rome's multitudinous divinities to make way for the One, Eternal, Immutable; scarce yet emerged from the shadow of that upstart peasant's cross, referring to which Dionysius the Areopagite exclaimed, when the spreading gloom, invading the skies, even of the city of the Sun, fell upon him, "Either the Divinity suffers or sympathizes with some sufferer." The fame of Karshish was doubtless noised abroad throughout Jerusalem and the outlying villages through which he wandered daily, seeking repose at night at Bethany. Many sick folk were, we may be sure, brought to the learned leech from that wonderful "abroad" which has ever sent such a thrill through bodies ravaged by difficult maladies and through grieving hearts of kinsmen and friends,—lepers bearing upon their humble heads the anathema of the law and the curse of sin,—the possessed of devils shrinking from the healing hand of the Stranger, as if he might be that tormenting one come back again to snatch them from the clutch of the demoniac spirit with whom they were, at least, acquainted and at home,—poor little, crippled children, and those, most pitiful of all, the blind. He must have been very patient and gentle with all these; examining every case minutely; going to the root of the trouble; trying to cure, and not seldom succeeding. He helped them, but they aided him not at all; they added no jot to his lore; he had encountered all these diseases in every Bedouin tribe of his native country; or if these maladies were complicated with ailments peculiar to environment, temperament, and manner of life, he unravelled the threads, disappointed not to have found a more intricate knot upon which to exercise his skill, when, lo! one day, having crossed, "A ridge of short, sharp, broken hills" at Bethany, the problem of all problems, the mystery of the past, the question unanswerable by the wise—so easy to the unlearned and to children—confronted him in the face of "one Lazarus, a Jew," "led obedient as a sheep," to him for examination, by some elders of his tribe from whom he gathered that his was "A case of mania subinduced by epilepsy;" that, having lain, some years ago, three days in a trance, and been restored by some treatment which these elders were careful not to mention to Karshish, he had been, since, quite sound in body, but unhinged mentally, mastered by a conceit that he had died, and having lain just three days in the grave, had been raised and given back to life by a "Nazarine physician," who was, in fact,—as the Arab had discovered to his discomfiture—the very man who had been put to death by crucifixion, at the time of the earthquake, because (as Karshish conjectured) he had failed to make good his claim to miraculous power by stopping the earth's upheaval. This freak had "so eaten itself into the life" of the so-called maniac that "flesh, blood and bones" were tinged thereby.

The learned doctor is impressed. He interrupts the course of his narrative to exclaim "Think, could we penetrate by any drug, and bathe the wearied soul and worried flesh, and bring it clear and fair, by three days' sleep!" and to ask "Whence has the man the balm that brightens all?" Whence indeed? Then, in resuming, he speaks of the patient's indifference to the account his friends were giving of the symptoms and history of his case, while he, sitting with folded hands, "watches the flies that buzzed," seeming not to listen at all. "And yet no fool!" "And so his years must go" Here Karshish compares him to a beggar enriched suddenly by a vast treasure, who, "with his straightened habits and starved tastes" cannot use it befittingly. "So this man"—"Heaven opened on the soul while yet on earth, Earth forced on the soul's use while seeing heaven"—has lost his sense of the proportion of things, "whether they be little or much." The assembling of great armies to besiege his city has no more import for him "than the passing of a mule laden with gourds." "His child may sicken unto death" and it affects his cheerfulness not at all. "But a glance, a gesture, a word" from that child, at school or asleep at home "will startle him into an agony of fear," as if the little one "trifled with a match over a Greek-fire." Conscious of the glory of the spiritual life on "either side of the meagre thread" of the earthly where his feet are fixed; knowing the laws which govern both; the "it should be" balked by "here it cannot be;" hearing the "Rise" ever, ever, calling him and the "not now" humbling him, he holds himself "the faultier,"

in the commission of any misdeed or the neglect of any duty, "that he knows God's secret while he holds the thread of life." Knowing so well that he has once passed from death back into this earthly life; so fully assured that he shall one day enter, through the gate of death into the Life eternal, he strives to make "no proselytes as madmen thirst to do." Why? "How can he give his neighbour the real ground of his own convictions," since the neighbour has no faculty whereby to receive it? Here Karshish assures Abib:

"I probed the sore as thy disciple should;
'How beast,' I said, 'this stolid carelessness
Sufficeth thee, when Rome is on the march
To stamp out like a little spark thy town,
Thy tribe, thy crazy tale and thee at once?'
He merely looked with his large eyes on me."

He, seeing beyond the forced severity of the question, looks tenderly with his large, wise eyes on Karshish (Brown-ing), knowing that he also is soon to enter into that limitless love, that peace which passeth understanding—nay, because he knows, of a certainty, that he *has* passed within "that orb of glory"—widening ever as the soul greatens, hemming in only from the world's strifes and debasing self-worship, by which he himself is encompassed. "The man is not 'apathetic,'" Karshish proceeds to say; in effect, "he loves both old and young, able and weak, affects the very brutes and flowers of the field, as a wise workman recognizes tools in a master's workshop, loving what they make." "Harmless as a lamb; impatient only of ignorance and carelessness and sin;" hearing quacks prattle of the cause and cure of these, he holds his peace, knowing beneath whose feet the cause must soon be put, and feeling, through all his blood, the thrill of the healing hand which will effect the cure. This Lazarus, so unlike all others of his countrymen, so wise, so innocent, so steadfast, regarded Him who had, as he averred, raised him from the dead, as, "God forgive me" (Karshish says), "who but God Himself!" Karshish does not add: "Indeed God could do no more; he must, then, have been God;" but, interrupting the recital, just where the implication to be deducted from it could have been none other than the one contained in the reply of our Lord to the messengers of John Baptist who sent to demand of Him: "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" he asks, with an irony more convincing than could be any assertive declaration, or any reasoning however compelling: "Why write of trivial matters, things of price calling at every moment for remark?" and then immediately, perhaps unconsciously, as if the very first "thing of price" which occurred to him, had brought him back to that discarded thing he *knows* to be *beyond* price, or if consciously, then very adroitly, using the lesser miracle to suggest and introduce the greater—he says,

"I noticed on the margin of a pool,
Blue-flowering borage, the Aleppo sort,
Aboundeth, very nitrous,
It is strange!"

And there he leaves it. He does not state, "there is nothing to sustain the plant here; the soil is quite adverse; where does it find nourishment—that alien-flower I crushed beneath my feet, the day I met this man who has 'touched me with such peculiar interest!'" "Awe?" Nothing of all this; but, resuming the strain of satire, mingled now with an undertone of sorrow, he apologizes for having wasted his friend's time and his own, in writing to him, at all, of this trifling incident, and for his feeling regarding it; pleading in excuse, the susceptibility to impressions, natural to one recently arrived in a place altogether new; the weird, wild landscape lying beneath and around him amid the steep, Judean hills enveloped in the gloom of approaching night, his extreme weariness—all these things combined had made him a prey to the Supernatural, of which, indeed, he cannot now divest himself. This madman, so intelligent, so humble, so compassionate, so tender, whom he had come to love, believed that other madman, who had, he affirmed, delivered him from the grave, was God! 'Twas the one thing this scientific Arab yearned to believe, also, but he would not be fooled into the acceptance of unreason because it was sweet and blessed to entertain it. He knew many things, he guessed many more, of which he had never breathed a word to fellow-labourer or friend. Knowledge and speculation had alike brought but fever and unrest—the sands of his native desert! Oh, for rest beside the fresh fountains in