

I received the knife in silence, for I had nothing to say; but now Almah spoke, as was fitting for her to do, since with the Kosekin the women must take the precedence; and here it was expected that she should reply in behalf of both of us.

So Almah, holding the sacrificial knife, stood looking at them, full of dignity, and spoke as follows:

"We will take this, oh, Kosekin, and we will reward you all. We will begin our reign over the Kosekin with memorable acts of mercy. These two great victims shall be enough for the *Mista Kosek* of this season. The victims designed for this sacrifice shall have to deny themselves the blessing of death, yet they shall be rewarded in other ways and all the land from the highest to the lowest shall have reason to rejoice in our rule.

"To all you hags and paupers we grant the splendid and unparalleled boon of exile to Magones. There you can have all the suffering which heart can wish, and inevitable death. To all classes and ranks in the whole nation we promise to grant a diminution in their wealth by one quarter. In the abundance of our mercy we are willing ourselves to bear the burden of all the offerings that may be necessary in order to accomplish this. All in the land may at once give up one quarter of their whole wealth to us."

At this the hags and paupers gave a horrible yell of applause.

"As rulers of Light and Darkness, we will henceforth govern the nation in the light as well as in the dark. We will sacrifice ourselves so far to the public good as to live in the light, and in open palaces. We will consent to undergo the pains of light and splendor—to endure all the evils of luxury, magnificence, and boundless wealth for the good of the Kosekin nation. We will consent to forego the right of separation, and agree to