

she loved was dead, her idolized son was far away, engaged in taking an active part in a dangerous war, and the sadness which she felt made her readily susceptible to the influence of that religion which, above all things, brings consolation. In her own religion she found absolutely no comfort whatever. The fabled gods of the national religion, for which she had a sort of formal acknowledgment, were worse than useless to one like her. They not only could not attract the mourner, but repelled. In that creed, if creed it may be called, the future was altogether dark, and as she felt herself approaching the confines of the other world, she saw nothing but gloom.

But this religion of Christ, which Lydia possessed and loved, came to her in that time of darkness, and as she looked forward she saw that it illumined all the future. It promised hope and heaven and immortality. It was one which the softened heart might be loth to reject, and eager to embrace. From the mouth of Lydia, who through all her life had been receiving the teachings of her father, the story of Christ became acceptable to Sulpicia, until at last she, too, believed.

But her great age did not permit a long stay on earth; and the letter which Labeo received summoned him to her side.

All the filial feeling which he had ever known, revived as he stood by the bedside of his mother; but the grief which he felt was alleviated as he heard the words of love and trust in her Redeemer, which Sulpicia murmured with her latest breath.

The sweet influences which Lydia had exerted over Sulpicia were also felt by Carbo. The old man had lost much of his former harshness. He had long since learned to look on Christianity at least with respect; he at length learned to regard it with love. It became his delight, and the object of his life to accompany his son in his labors for the benefit of the Christian community.

The death of his mother loosened the last tie which bound