

A VICTIM TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION.

A TRUE STORY BY THE REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S. J. CHAPTER XIX.

After conferring with the judges, the President made a sign to the prosecutor, who forthwith commenced his speech. Mr. Joubert was an able forensic orator, much dreaded as an opponent. He began by speaking of the sympathy which everyone present must feel for the aged lady who had just been interrogated in the court. Even if the prisoner were guilty and she were an accomplice in his crime, every humane heart must feel more or less compassion for her. This natural feeling must however not be indulged, nor allowed to weigh an iota in the balance of even handed justice. They were pledged to exercise judgment and reason, and not permit themselves to be swayed by the impulses of the heart.

When this introduction was ended, he entered upon the cause with calmness and deliberation. The conviction, he said, had forced itself immediately upon those who conducted the inquiry, that the bloody crime was the act of one person, one who was acquainted with the circumstances and familiar with the place. Hence at the outset suspicion fell upon the sacristan Loser, one or two other persons whose innocence was so obvious that their names had not been mentioned in the trail, and the parish priest himself. The behavior of the latter at the judicial examination, at the search made on the premises and on the discovery of the body, had been such as to arouse the strongest suspicion. The blood-stained knife bearing his name, and the other things found in the kitchen, all pointed to him as the perpetrator of the crime. He need not speak of the spots of blood upon the cassock the priest was wearing. Every atom of the evidence tendered spoke so loudly of the prisoner's guilt, that he must needs stop his ears with both hands who would not hear his voice. Now, if ever, the saying of Marcus Tullius was applicable: The fact speaks for itself, and that is in itself always the strongest proof. (Res loquatur, judices, ipsa, quae semper plurimum valet.)

And yet, considering the blameless antecedents of the prisoner, those who examined the case were not satisfied with this evidence. It did in fact only afford the greatest probability. They might go so far as to state the case thus: The murder was committed on the morning of the 20th February between 10 and 10:30 a. m. Now at that hour there was absolutely no one in the house except the priest; therefore the priest is the murderer. The first part of the argument is admitted, both by the prisoner and his counsel; it is also confirmed by evidence. The counsel for the defence has done his utmost to prevent us from delivering the logical conclusion, and he has signally failed. It has been proved that Loser on the evening before took the express train, which does not stop at any intermediate station, to Marseilles, hence it is demonstrated that he could not have been in Ste. Victoire at the time of the murder. The inconsistent and untrustworthy evidence of the barmaid at Croy Rouge therefore bears a lie on the face of it. Consequently the Rev. Mr. Montmoulin was alone with the lady at the time the crime was committed and on the spot where it was committed. "The matter is so self-evident that I need waste no more words on it."

The motive of the deed was not equally apparent, that must be acknowledged, and inquiry failed to throw any light upon it. For his part, he said, he felt persuaded that the pecuniary embarrassments of his relatives led to the deed. The alleged present of money to be expended on the purchase of books, and the liquidation of a small debt, was too imprudent to be believed. But the question why the deed was done was one thing, and another question by whom it was done. The answer to the latter was so transparently clear and so abundantly proved that he did not doubt for a moment that the jury would all say with him: The prisoner at the bar has so far forgotten his sacred calling, as to stain his consecrated hands with the blood of a defenceless woman, his own parishioner, one who was a mother to the poor and a benefactress to himself. And this he did of malice aforethought, as was shown by his having abstracted the knife for the purpose before 7 o'clock in the morning; by his having dismissed the servant; by his having selected the most suitable spot for the execution of this sinister design. The ridiculous alternative, proposed by the counsel, of his inability to urge a more plausible theory, that of temporary insanity was too contemptible to require a refutation. On that plea every criminal might elude justice. "The only tenable conclusion," he said in termination of his speech, "is this: the priest Montmoulin murdered Mrs. Blanchard wilfully and in cold blood. Your verdict, gentlemen of the jury, will consign him to the penalty he deserves."

The impression made by this speech, delivered in a masterly manner, might be seen from the countenances of the jury. The audience in the stranger's gallery exchanged glances, which intimated as plainly as words could have done, that they considered the prisoner's fate to be sealed. Father Montmoulin himself listened with closed eyes, pale, but perfectly composed, his lips occasionally moving in silent prayer. When his counsel rose to answer, he looked up at him almost compassionately, as if to say: my dear sir, you have a difficult, and I fear a thankless task before you.

Mr. Meunier was a conscientious lawyer, but as a speaker he was by no means equal to the prosecutor. His defence was carefully elaborated, but it was dull and tedious, more suited to influence the judges than the jury. He began by portraying at considerable length, the early years of the prisoner, depicting him as a clever plous boy, an

exemplary seminarist, a model priest, from whom even the enemies of the clergy in general could not withhold a tribute of praise. And now they were expected to believe that this gentle, guileless, unselfish man was a thief and a murderer! He, who would share his last crust with the poor, was said to have robbed his benefactress of a sum which was the property of the poor, and for the sake of the money, of which he could easily have obtained possession some other way—for instance, he might have said it had been stolen from his desk in the night—he had assassinated a woman most helpful to him, and moreover done so in such a clumsy manner as to cause suspicion to fall upon himself immediately! Who would be so credulous as to believe this possible? They were not in presence of a psychological problem, but of a psychological impossibility. Such a man could never have done such a deed!

There must then be another answer to the question: Who committed the crime? than that given by the Prosecutor, and any and every solution of the puzzle would appear more probable than his. The Court might perhaps think it ridiculous on his part, but in reality, he would sooner believe the extraordinary suggestion of the old servant, than believe so excellent a priest to be capable of the work of an assassin.

But it was not necessary to have recourse to the preternatural, to find a key to the enigma. The sacristan Loser was just the sort of man to be guilty of such a deed, and the alibi proved by the Prosecutor rested, as a matter of fact, only upon the evidence of one railway guard who might have been mistaken, and who might have been mistaken, as was shown by the evidence given by the barmaid of Croy Rouge, as she confidently asserted that she had seen the sacristan on the morning of the crime, and under very suspicious circumstances. True, the girl wavered somewhat afterwards in her statement, but it did not require very much of the skill as a lawyer, for the possession of which he scarcely carried his learned colleague, to confuse and bewilder an ignorant peasant girl. Then Loser's mysterious disappearance immediately after the crime had been committed seemed a corroboration of his guilt. How was it to be explained? How could it be that every effort to ascertain his whereabouts had failed? A man with a clear conscience would not hide in that manner. Finally, must say that he considered the prosecution had taken matters too much for granted in regard to the alibi, which he thought anything but satisfactory, and justice required more thorough search to be made for the missing man than the time and means at his disposal had permitted him to make.

Had the Counsel closed his speech at this point it might have been better for his client. But in the conscientious desire to leave no argument unargued, he wished to give an explanation of the embarrassment exhibited by the prisoner when first confronted with the Mayor, on which the latter had laid great stress as a proof of guilt. He admitted that it looked as if the priest were at least privy to the crime, and might be accounted for by his having been acquainted with it. He then in a lengthy speech, described the way in which, in consequence of a confession made to him, a priest might acquire the knowledge of a crime, and yet be unable even indirectly to reveal it. His client had of course not given him a hint as to this being so in the present instance, yet he could not help surmising it to be the case, as this supposition alone would explain all that now appeared unintelligible. At any rate it was a possible solution, and he begged the gentlemen of the jury to take into serious consideration the pronouncing their verdict. He related the story of the Polish priest, which bore so singular a resemblance to the case before them, and which was no fiction, but an incident which occurred quite recently, reported in all the public papers. He asked the jury therefore to beware lest they should inadvertently condemn as a common murderer one who was a victim to the sacred duties and solemn obligations of the priesthood.

Father Montmoulin followed the latter portion of this speech with the closest attention. Hope again sprung up within him, and he secretly renewed the vow he had made that, in case of his acquittal, he would, with the permission of his superiors, enter a Missionary Order. But the reply of the Prosecutor lighted all his hopes.

Mr. Joubert rose to his feet almost before his opponent had uttered the last word. Some excitement was visible in his manner as he indignantly repelled the imputation of having neglected to take any step which would in the remotest degree further the interest of justice. No means had been left untried, he said, in order to find and produce the sacristan Loser, for he knew that the defence would require his presence. Only when it became evident beyond a doubt that the man could not have been at Ste. Victoire at the time, was the fruitless attempt to trace him finally abandoned. He then cast bitter scorn on the seal of confession, of which mention had just been made in the theory propounded by the defence, declaring it to be at variance with the canons of equity and the law of the land. The instance adduced by his learned colleague bore the stamp of falsehood, but even granting it to be true, no one could see any analogy between that and the present case as regarded Loser. Loser, who was known not to have been to confession for many years, and whom, for that very reason the clergy had endeavored to oust from his post; could it be credited that so "stubborn a sinner" having committed so heinous a crime, would have crawled with blood on his hands to the foot of the cross? Creditat Judicus Apollo! Rather than admit such a supposition as that, he would believe in the intervention of preternatural agency, and declare with the devout old cook, that the devil had conveyed the sacristan to the spot to commit the

murder, and then hurled him body and soul into hell!

After this rally, which provoked an outburst of laughter, the Prosecutor proceeded gravely to describe Loser whom the clergy abused and persecuted, as an enlightened and most respectable man, a thorough patriot, who had risked his life and shed his blood in the defence of his country. He was one of the little band of heroes who on a bitterly cold January night in 1871, succeeded, in a district occupied by the enemy, in blowing up the bridge of Fontenay—a deed which might have resulted in the destruction of the hostile army, had there been a leader capable of following up this advantage. And this was the man on whom the Counsel for the defence almost at his bidding—or perhaps on the principle: the end justifies the means—was determined to affix the charge of murder! "And as for the argument whereon the defence mainly rests: Such a man could not be guilty of such a crime, it is valueless; for one may reverse it, and draw from it this conclusion: The man who has committed such a crime, who is proved to have committed it, is not the saint which the counsel for the defence would make out the prisoner to be, but an impostor, a hypocrite, from whose countenance the mask has been torn. And as such he stands before us—behold him when I cast this accusation in his teeth, an accusation, which would arouse the indignation of every man of honour. What does he do? He turns up the whites of his eyes, he looks sweetly at his defence, he says: 'Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as these sinners who calluminate Thy servants!—I have done: I have nothing more to add but this: Gentlemen of the jury, do your duty.'"

The prosecutor had spoken fluently and ably; he had carried his hearers with him, especially when he spoke of Loser as one of the heroes of Fontenay, he woke an echo in the heart of every lover of his country. Meunier felt that he was defeated; he replied in a few sentences, reiterating his former arguments, and asserting that with all his rhetoric, and asserting that with all his rhetoric, the prosecutor had actually disproved nothing. Now, as before, there was really nothing to support the charge, except the testimony of one railway guard, who was supposed to be infallible. He emphatically denied the statement that the seal of confession was morally wrong, because it was contrary to the civil law; for the divine law was above the human law. The Prosecutor had scoffed at the example of the Polish priest, but for all his sarcasm he could not show it to be fictitious. And as for the laurels Loser professed to have won on the battle field, for he it must be plain to every Christian, he must be acknowledged that a sharp shooter of the Voges, who boasted of the blood he had shed, was a more likely person to have done the deed in question than a peaceful, law-abiding priest. (Here there was a disturbance in the gallery, quickly silenced by the president.) Finally, his client had been denounced as a hypocrite, and his heroic courage, his truly christian behaviour during the whole of this terrible period of trial, pronounced to be mere deceit. Had matters come to such a pass in France, that a man in deep affliction, whose honor and whose life were at stake, could not breathe a prayer, or look to Heaven for help, without encountering mockery and scorn? Never in the course of his experience, he could confidently assert that he had seen a prisoner who bore so completely the stamp of innocence as the prisoner at the bar. It might be expected of him, in conclusion, to urge some plea which might dispose the jury to clemency. It would be easy to do so; he need but remind them of the aged and heartbroken mother, who, if her son were condemned to death, would lose in him the staff of his declining years. But he would not do this, as he would be acting contrary to the expressed wish of the prisoner. "I do not ask compassion of my judges, but simple justice. Life and liberty would be worthless to me, unless I was fully and freely acquitted of the charge brought against me." Such were the words the accused had addressed to him, and all that remained for him on his part to say was this: Gentlemen of the jury, weigh what you have heard in the scales of justice, and there is no doubt that you will fully and freely acquit the prisoner.

Mr. Meunier then bowed to the President of the Court, to intimate that his task was ended; and the President forthwith proposed to the jury the question to which they had to reply: Is the prisoner at the bar guilty of the crime of murder laid to his charge? He then addressed a brief exhortation to the jury, and they retired to consider their verdict. The judges also withdrew, and the prisoner was removed to a place of solitary confinement.

A hot discussion immediately commenced in the stranger's gallery concerning the prospects of the accused. Some considered his guilt as proved, others reluctantly admitted it, because of the absence of any one else who could have committed the murder. The reference to the incident at Fontenay during the Franco-German war, was a happy hit on the part of the Prosecutor, as it gave Loser a place amongst the military heroes of that unfortunate period. Joubert was universally acknowledged to have pleaded his cause with far more ability than Meunier; yet the victory of the former was, as a man who had some acquaintance with legal matters in former days, Lenoir, not yet certain for the (Code d'Instruction Criminelle, Art. 352) law provided that if all the judges present were of opinion that the decision of the jury was erroneous, the prisoner might be tried again at the next assizes before another jury. Or, if the jury gave the verdict of acquittal, and the judges were of opinion that the verdict was a mistake, and reconvened the jury with those of the jury, whence it might happen that the prisoner whom the jury had condemned on the major

ity of one vote might be acquitted.

Half an hour had passed, when the bell was heard which announced that the jury had come to a decision. Instantly the hum of voices ceased; the judges resumed their seats, the jury entered their box. The President addressed to the jury the customary question, to which the foreman replied: "We find the prisoner guilty of wilful murder, with robbery."

"How did the votes stand?" "Eight for the verdict and four against it."

A murmur ran through the Court. All doubt was now at an end. Had the votes been seven against five, the votes of the judges might have turned the scale in the prisoner's favor. One of the judges voted with the majority, and consequently no alternative was left to the Presiding judge but to pass sentence on the prisoner. Father Montmoulin was conducted back into the Court, and the clerk announced to him the verdict of the jury. The President then asked him whether he had anything to allege wherefore the sentence of death should not be passed on him. He replied with the same composure and resignation that had characterized him from the outset: "I have nothing to say against the verdict. I forgive all who have taken part in passing it. I die innocent."

The President then read aloud article 302 of the Penal Code, and declared Francis Montmoulin here present, parish priest of Ste. Victoire, to be guilty of murder with robbery, and in accordance with the enactments of the law of the land, he was condemned to die by beheading. The time and place for the execution of the sentence would be fixed later on.

The prisoner listened to the sentence on a countenance untroubled serenity, and almost with gladness of heart. He raised his eyes to heaven, and in a low tone uttered the ejaculation *Deo gratias!* In the stillness that prevailed, some persons who were near caught the words, and a voice shouted: Hypocrite, assassin that you are! The President instantly called for silence, and severely censured the utterer of these few words of warning to all present, and exhorted the prisoner to accept the verdict submissively and tranquilly, and prepare himself for death. He then declared the trial to be at an end, and the court rose.

As the President, accompanied by two of his inferior judges was descending the flight of steps leading to the street, he said in a grave, almost reverential tone: "I am sorely afraid that we have condemned an innocent man to death."

"So am I," answered one of those with him. "At any rate the evidence of his guilt appeared to me anything but conclusive. These trials by jury have their weak side, when the jurymen are harangued as was the case with them to day."

"Human justice is not infallible," said the other. "One must be content if one has done one's duty, and observed all the legal forms."

Meanwhile the prison van drove back to the prison followed by a rabble shouting, Hypocrite, Murderer! The mother of the condemned man heard this outburst of vulgar spits in her cell in the house of detention. She listened, and caught these words, uttered by a passer-by: "They have sentenced him to death; he will be guillotined, I dare say not later than next week."

It was what she had expected. But yet what a terrible blow! What a sword of sorrow pierced her maternal heart at that moment!

ANNETTIE'S INVESTIGATION.

It was just an American village such as you see in pictures. A background of superb bold mountain, all clothed in blue-green cedars, with a torrent thundering down a deep gorge and falling in billows of foam; a river reflecting the azure of the sky, and a knot of houses, with a church spire at one end and a thicket of factory chimneys at the other, whose black smoke wrote ever-changing hieroglyphics against the brilliancy of the sky. This was Dapplevale. And in the rosy sunset of this blossomy June day, the girls were all pouring out of the broad doorway, while Gerald Blake, the foreman, sat behind his desk, a pen behind his ear and his small, bead black eyes drawn back, as it were, in the shelter of a precipice of shaggy eyebrows.

One by one the girls stopped and received their pay for one week's work, for this was Saturday night. One by one they filed out, with fretful, discontented faces, until the last one passed in front of the high-railed desk.

She was slight and tall, with large, veiny-blue eyes, a complexion as delicately grained and transparent as rose-colored wax, and an abundance of wavy, hair so dark a brown that the casual observer would have pronounced it black; and there was something in the way the ribbon at her throat was tied and the manner in which the simple details of her dress were arranged that bespoke her of foreign birth.

"Well, Mlle. Annette," said Mr. Blake, "it is not agreeable to you like factory life?" "It is not agreeable," she answered, a slight accent clinging to her notes, like fragrance to a flower, as she extended her hand for the money the foreman was counting out.

"You do you mean," hesitated Annette, "that if I don't pay you this money—"

"You can't expect to stay in the works," said Mr. Blake, hitching up his collar.

"But the other \$2?" "Oh," said Mr. Blake, "that's a percentage the girls all pay."

"But what is it for?" Mr. Blake laughed.

"Well, it helps out my salary. Of course, you know, the girls all expect to pay something every week for keeping their situations in a place where there's so many anxious to get in."

"And Mr. Elderslie?" "Oh, Mr. Elderslie," repeated Blake, "he hasn't much to do with it. I am master of the Dapplevale Calico Works."

"Mr. Elderslie owns it, I believe?" "Well, yes, he owns it. But I manage everything. Mr. Elderslie reposes the utmost confidence in my capacity, ability and—responsibility. Mr. Elderslie is a good business man. And now if you've any more questions to ask—"

"I have none," said Annette quietly. "But—I want this money myself. I work hard for it. I earn it righteously. How can I afford, and how can the others among these poor laboring girls, to pay it to your greed?"

"Eh?" ejaculated Mr. Blake, jumping from his seat as if some insect had stung him.

"I will not pay it," calmly concluded Mlle. Annette.

"Very well—very well. Just as you like, mademoiselle," cried the foreman, turning round in the face. "Only if you won't conform to the rules of the Dapplevale works—"

"Are these the rules?" scornfully demanded Annette.

"Pray consider your name crossed out of the books," went on Mr. Blake.

"You are no longer in my employ. Good evening, Mademoiselle. Whatever you may call yourself."

And Mr. Blake slammed down the cover of his desk as if it were a patent guillotine and poor Annette Duvelle's neck were under it.

Two or three of the factory girls, who had hovered around the open door to hear the discussion, looked with awestricken faces at Annette as she came out with the \$4 which she had received from the cashier in her hand.

"You've lost your place, ma'am-selle," whispered Jenny Parton, a pale, dark-eyed little thing who supported a crippled mother and two little sisters out of her muddled earnings.

"And he'll never let you in again," added Mary Rice. "He's as vindictive as possible!"

"It matters not," said Annette. "He is a rogue, and rogues sometimes out-general themselves."

"But you can't starve," said Jenny.

"Look here, ma'am-selle, come home with me. It's a poor place, but we'll make you welcome till—till you can write to your friends."

Annette turned and impulsively kissed Jenny on her lips.

"I thank you," she said, "but I do not need your kindness. My friends are nearer than you think."

And Annette Duvelle went back to the little red brick cottage, all the while with the groan of the wood-biase, whose she lodged with the wife of the man who tended the engines in the Dapplevale works.

"Does he cheat you, too, of your money?" she asked, when Simon Pettengill came home, smoke-stained and grimy, to eat his supper.

"One-sixth I have to pay him," said Simon, with an involuntary groan, as he looked at the five little ones around his board. "Yes, miss, he's a villain; but the world is full of such. And I find it a pretty hard world to get on with. Mr. Elderslie never comes here, or maybe things would be a bit different. Mr. Elderslie lives abroad; in Paris, they say."

"He is in this country now," said Annette. "I intend to write to him."

"'Twon't do no good, miss."

"Yes it will," said Annette, quietly.

The petals of the June roses had fallen, a pink carpet all along the edge of the woods, and the Dapplevale works wore their holiday guise, even down to the carriage drove up to the entrance, and Mr. Elderslie and his bride were to visit the works on their wedding 'oars.

"It's a pity, Ma'am-selle Annette went away so soon," said Simon to his assistant, "cause they say the master's kind-hearted in the main, and she might have spoken up for herself."

Mr. Gerald Blake, in his best broad cloth suit, and mustache newly dyed, stood smiling in the broad doorway as the carriage drove up to the entrance, and Mr. Elderslie, a handsome, blonde-haired man, sprang out and assisted a young lady, in a dove colored traveling suit, to alight.

"Blake, how are you?" he said, with the carelessness of conscious superiority. Annette, my love, this is Blake, my foreman.

"Mademoiselle Annette!"

And Mr. Gerald Blake found himself bringing before the slight French girl whom he had turned from the factory door a month before.

"I must beg to look at the books, Blake," said Elderslie, authoritatively. "My wife tells me some strange stories about the way things are managed here. It became so notorious that the rumors reached her even at Blythesdale for herself. Annette, my darling, the best wedding gift we can make to these poor working girls is a new foreman. Blake, you may consider yourself dismissed."

"But, sir—"

"Not another word," cried Mr. Elderslie, with a lowering brow, and Mr. Gerald Blake crept away with an uncomfortable consciousness of Annette's scornful blue eyes following him.

Elderslie turned to his wife.

"You were right, my love," said he. "The man's face is sufficient evidence against him."

And a new reign began for poor Jenny Parton and the working girls, as

well as for Simon Pettengill. Annette never regretted her week's apprenticeship at the Dapplevale Calico Works.—E.K.

THE NATURE AND MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

"He hath given His angels charge over thee, that they may keep thee in all thy ways." (Ps. xc. v. 2.)

Of all the handiworks of God, as displayed in the works of creation, we see that all things center in man as the last term of material development upon this earth.

But did the power and wisdom of God spend itself in humanity, as the summit of all creation? Does not man's very existence, his intellectual and moral development assure us of boundless possibilities beyond; of the existence of other classes of beings more perfect in mental and spiritual qualities, between God and man? Or, looking at the abundance of life which adorns this material world, can we deny to that immaterial world beyond, a less variety and wealth of life? Do not the attributes of God require a greater field for their manifestations, than our little world affords? Thus reason itself points to the existence of other beings such as the angels. But revelation confirms our reason, and permits us to glance, as it were, into that heavenly abode and see a celestial order of beings, in truth, altogether removed from human research.

Faith, then, teaches us that God peopled heaven with an innumerable multitude of angels, who, ever in adoration before Him, are the princes of His house, the assistants of His throne. Having now before our minds the existence of the angels as faith teaches, a brief view of their nature, the offices of the holy angels, their relation to God and man, will afford many a salutary lesson; for the mind once grasping the dignity and the beauty of these celestial spirits, the heart's affections will not be slow in following; and, thus, if we be already so fortunate as to possess devotion to the angels, our devotion will receive an increase, if not, may the fruit of what faith and piety teach concerning them, which is obscure and the tribute of our praise and gratitude be bestowed upon these faithful ministers of God's own household.

The holy angels then, were God's first creation; before them, alone in His Divine majesty, the infinitely perfect God, did not require the world or any creature. But God is Love, as St. John says; true love, however, wishes to communicate itself—to have others share its happiness, and so God's infinite love prompted Him to create these sublime spirits to share His happiness and glory. He made the angels in His own image, and lavished upon them gifts befitting their glorious destiny. In the creation of man, moved by that same love that fatherly Hand has bestowed upon him a like destiny with the angels; in humble acknowledgment of how he should reverence the Hand that brought him forth from the abyss of his nothingness.

Although infinitely inferior, the holy angels approach in their nature most nearly to God Himself. Man is not a pure spirit, but a compound of the spiritual with the material; but the angels have no corruptible bodies to drag them down; they are free from all those influences which obscure and, alas, too often submerge the finer elements in man, and drag it from its proper level. Yet, one day, by God's mercy, these material frames having run their course, the soul, escaping from the bondage of corruption and united to a spiritualized body, is to enjoy this spiritual life of angels.

The angels, so much superior to man by nature, have a much more intimate knowledge of created things than man. We gather our knowledge of things through the senses; the angels see at a glance—intuitively—all things which we wish to know; seeing all things ever in their cause, in God, and thus ever glorifying Him; whilst man's knowledge—how often it blinds itself to the dependence of things upon God.

Oh, if we would but read with the eye of faith and religion, a new significance would unfold itself in all created things, leading us back to their true source—the Lord God Creator of all things. God must have revealed much to the angels as regards their supernatural knowledge, and their knowledge of human affairs is proportionate to all that is necessary in the exercise of their guardianships of us. By their will place limits to the depth of their understanding of the mysteries of our creation! Yet their purity of heart enables them to it—this is what makes them shine with the fullness of light. But man, engrossed in earthly cares, dulled by earthly passions, loses appreciation of things divine. To the pure of heart alone God unfolds His hidden treasures. Yet a little while, and all these privileges may be mine. Sin alone can destroy the spiritual life which God has destined to enjoy these angelic prerogatives.

What shall we say of the marvelous control over the natural world, possessed by the angels. Angels slew the first born in Egypt; and how often in the name of an angry God, they destroyed armies and scourged cities. And truly, "in the name of God"—for the angels never forget their dependence upon God, ever referring their actions to Him as their primary cause.

We often speak of the fallen angels. And as these play an important part in respect to man's salvation, let us for a moment retrace our steps. The holy angels when first created were not in their present blissful state. Near God, yet not beholding Him face to face, final perseverance was not assured them from the beginning. The slight touch of possession of God with its infinite delights in the proper due neither of angels nor of men. Therefore it has pleased the All Wise to offer this transcendent gift as a reward to be earned by fidelity under trial. The service of free beings must be free—the choice must be given them to serve or not to serve. This was the test that was not