

Until I have reason to believe that the plot of Divine Providence is fully played out; until I am convinced that we have found the whole of truth from the centre to the circumference thereof—that there is no more light to break from God's most blessed word—that there are no more doubts to torment any mind, and no more visions to bewilder—until I am sure that science has made its last discovery, and God's final word has been spoken, I shall hold and teach that men ought to enquire, if haply they may find fresh revelations of truth and juster conceptions of God. And I hold that the preacher should be your truest friend and your best helper in this matter. He should not be the lord of your conscience, nor the tyrant of your intellect, but a teacher and a guide—you should look confidently to him for ripe thoughts and rich experience—he should take you swiftly over ways which he has travelled with labour and care—he should submit groups of conclusions to your reason, and harmonies to your judgment. While in nowise yielding to him your manhood's noblest rights to think and form opinions for yourself—you should be able to find in him a man with strong thought, and strong speech and strong, helpful life withal.

But to get that you must have a profound respect for the teacher—you must regard him as a *teacher*, and not merely the sentimentalist, or dogmatist. You must have respect, not only for his character as a sincere man, but for the soundness and freedom of his reasoning—for the boldness of his mind; you must be sure that he cares more for truth than for dogmas and institutions—you must see that his ideas are not stereotyped, and his thought not fettered—you must see that he has *common* sense as well as a sense of the supernatural. When that is so you will go with gladness to the service, and all of it will help you. Your prayer and praise will rise up as clouds of incense to God; to break and fall back upon your head again in showers of heavenliest blessing; the sermon will not be a signal for sleeping, or wild wanderings of the mind; but for thoughtfulness as the man speaks from his mind into yours, and for rich experience and inspiration as he speaks from his life and hope to your heart; his words will be strong with reason and tender with love—and you will take them home with you, and your family will be doubly impressed, and learn to love Religion and God as they learnt to love you because they saw you treated with respect and heard you praised so much—and you will take the thoughts and feelings of Sunday out into the week day world of toil and care and pain—and you will find inspiration for duty and great work for others—you will have faith in God and Christ planted in you, the power of God unto salvation—you will be upheld by grace and led on by hope. But—when that is not so—when you are out of harmony with the intellectual teachings of the man to whom you lend unwilling ears on Sunday—whose reasoning faculties you cannot respect—whose sincerity you call fanaticism—whose dogmas have nothing to commend them but their age, it means an outrage upon your intelligence—it means moral dishonesty—it means weakness and cowardice, and the sacrifice of the true and real interests of those you ought to guide to a transient and deadly ease. I call upon you to put away this evil. I am not advocating the claims of this church or any other church—but the claims of honesty and truth upon you. The churches are not all alike—make an intelligent choice—not for the social connection—not for business advantage—not to secure a fictitious quiet, but where you can find food for the mind—great swelling sentiments for the heart—quickenings for the conscience—inspiration for all the life—the kingdom of heaven ever nigh.

CARMEN: A SPANISH STORY.

(Translated from the French of PROSPER MÉRIMÉE, of the French Academy.)

CHAPTER III.—(Concluded.)

"We had a furious quarrel on the subject, and I struck her. She turned pale and wept. It was the first time that I had ever seen her weep, and it produced a terrible effect on me. I begged her pardon, but she was sulky an entire day, and when I set out for Montilla she would not kiss me. For three days I had a heavy heart, then she suddenly reappeared with a smiling face and as gay as a lark. All was forgotten, and for a while we were like lovers. At the moment of parting she said to me: 'There is a fête at Cordova. I am going to see it: I shall find out the people who will be there with money, and will make it known to you.' I allowed her to go; but when alone I began to think of this fête and of Carmen's change of humor. She must already have found her revenge, I reasoned, since she was the first to seek reconciliation. A peasant told me that bull fights were taking place at Cordova. My blood began to boil, and like a madman I rushed there and went to the plaza. Escamillo was pointed out to me, and seated on the bench against the barrier I recognized Carmen. It was sufficient to see her only one minute to be certain of the truth. With the first bull Escamillo displayed his mettle, as I had foreseen. He snatched the cocade* from the bull and carried it to Carmen, who immediately fastened it in her hair. The bull played the part of my avenger. Escamillo was thrown headlong to the earth, his horse falling across his breast and the bull upon them both. I looked for Carmen; she was no longer in her place. It was impossible for me to make my way out from the crowd where I stood, and I was compelled to await the end of the spectacle; then I went to the house of which you know, and there I remained quietly all

the evening and a part of the night. Towards two o'clock in the morning Carmen returned, and was a little surprised to see me.

"Come with me," I said to her.

"Very well! Let us go," she replied.

"I brought my horse, placed her on the saddle behind me, and we rode the rest of the night without speaking a single word. At day-dawn we stopped at a lonely little lodging, quite near a small hermitage. There I said to Carmen:

"Listen! I forget everything, I will reproach you with nothing; but swear to me one thing: that you will follow me to America, and there quietly rest under my care."

"No," she said, in a sulky tone, "I do not wish to go to America. I find myself very well content here."

"Is it because you are near Escamillo? But remember, should he recover he will not live to have old bones. However, why should I cast the blame on him? I am tired of killing all your lovers: it is *you* whom I will kill!"

"She gazed steadfastly at me with her untamed look and said:

"I have always thought that you would kill me. The first time I saw you, I had just met a priest at the door of my house; and to-night, on leaving Cordova, did you see nothing? A hare crossed the road between the legs of your horse: it is written!"

"Carmencita, do you no longer love me?"

"She made no reply. She was seated on a rush mat with her legs crossed, tracing lines on the ground with her finger.

"Let us change our way of life, Carmen," I said in a beseeching tone. "Let us live in some place where we shall never be separated. You know that not far from here we have a hundred and twenty gold ounces buried under an oak; then we also have money in the Jew Ben-Joseph's care."

"She began to smile, and answered:

"I first, you afterwards! I well know that so it is to happen."

"Once more reflect," I resumed. "I am at the end of my patience and my faith. Make up your mind, or I shall make up my own."

"I left her, and went towards the hermitage, where I found the hermit praying. I walked up and down until his prayer was ended, and should have been glad to pray myself, but I could not. When he rose from his knees I went to him, and said:

"Father will you pray for some one who is in deadly peril?"

"I pray for all the afflicted, my son."

"Will you say a mass for a soul that is perhaps soon to appear before its Creator?"

"Yes," he replied, looking fixedly at me; and as there was something strange in my manner, he wished to make me talk. "It seems to me that I have seen you."

"When will you say the mass?" I asked, placing a piastre on a bench.

"In half an hour. The son of the tavern-keeper below there is coming to assist. Tell me, young man: have you not something on your conscience that distresses you? Will you listen to the counsels of a Christian?"

"I felt ready to weep. I told him that I would return, and hastened away. I lay down on the grass until I heard the bell ring for mass, then I drew near; but I remained outside of the chapel. When the mass was over, I returned to the inn. I almost hoped that Carmen had fled. She could easily have taken my horse and escaped; but there I still found her. She was not willing to have it said that I could frighten her. During my absence she had unstitched the hem of her dress, from which she took out the lead, and was now seated before a table, looking intently at the lead that she had melted and thrown into an earthen bowl full of water. She was so absorbed in her sorcery as not to be aware at first of my return. Sometimes she took up a bit of the lead, and turned it on every side with a sad air: sometimes with intense accent she sang one of those magic songs in which Maria Padilla is invoked—the mistress of Don Pedro—who was said to be the *Bari Crallisa*, or the great queen of the gypsies.*

"Carmen," I once more said, "will you come with me?"

"She rose, dashed the bowl to the ground, and placed her mantilla over head as if ready to go. My horse was brought, she mounted behind and we rode off. After going some little distance I said: 'You are now willing to follow me, are you not?' 'I am yours until death, yes; but I will live with you no longer,' she replied. We were in a solitary ravine; I stopped my horse. 'Is it here?' she said, and at a bound she was on the ground. She took off her mantilla, threw it at her feet, and stood motionless with one closed hand on her hip, looking steadily in my face.

"You intend to kill me," she said, quietly, "I see it clearly; it is written, but you cannot make me yield."

"I implore you, Carmen, be reasonable. Listen to me! All the past is forgotten. Nevertheless, and you know it, it is you who have brought me to ruin: it is for you that I have become a robber and a murderer. Carmen! my Carmen! Let me save you, and with you save myself!"

"Jose, what you ask me is not possible. I no longer love you, but you still love me, and for this you wish to kill me. I could easily tell you a falsehood, but I will not take the trouble. All is over between us. As my *rom*, you have the right to kill your *romi*; but Carmen must always be free. *Calli* she was born, *calli* she will die."

"You love Escamillo, then?"

"Yes, I loved him as I did yourself, for a moment; less perhaps than I loved you. Now, I no longer love anything, and I hate myself for having ever loved you."

"I flung myself at her feet, I seized her hands and bathed them with tears. I recalled to her all the moments of happiness that we had passed together: I offered to remain a brigand to please her. All, Monsieur, all! I offered her everything provided that she would love me still!"

"José, to love you still is impossible; live with you I will not."

"I was roused to madness; I drew my knife, and could have wished that

* *La divisa*, a knot of ribbons, the colour of which indicates the pasture land whence the bulls come. The knot is fastened to the animal by a little hook, and it is the height of gallantry to pluck it from the infuriated bull and offer it to a woman.

* Maria Padilla was accused of having bewitched the King Don Pedro. A popular tradition relates that she presented Queen Blanche of Bourbon with a golden girdle, that, to the king's eyes, bore the semblance of a living serpent. Thence came the aversion that he always manifested for the unfortunate princess.