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THE TRIALS OF ST. EUSTACE.

When Trajan was Emperor of Rome, Sir Placidus, a knight of great prowess, and a most skilful commander, was chief of the armies of the Empire.

It was a fair soft day, the southerly wind blew lightly over the meadows, and the fleecy clouds ever anon obscuring the sun, proclaimed the hunter's day.

Swift and long was the chase. Sir Placidus rode after the stag, ever gaining just near enough to the noble animal to inspire him with hopes of its ultimate capture, yet never so near as to strike it with his hunting spear.

Placidus swooned at these words, and fell from his horse. How long he lay on the ground he knew not. When his senses returned, he cried in anguish:—

Then replied the voice, 'I am Christ the Son of the living God. I created heaven and earth, caused the light to arise, and divided it from the darkness.'

Placidus returned to his wife and told her all that had happened unto him: then did they believe, and were baptised, and their children with them.

Then the voice was heard, saying, 'Blessed art thou, Eustace, in that thou hast been washed with the laver of my grace, and thereby overcome the devil.'

But a few days had elapsed, ere the trials of Job came upon Eustace and his family; pestilence carried off his flocks and his herds, and his servants fled away, or died with their charges.

nakedness. It was in vain that the Emperor sought everywhere for the knight, for not the slightest trace of him could be found.

'Very well,' replied the captain, 'thy wife will do as well; I will take her as my slave, she will sell for the passage money.'

A few hours' travelling brought Eustace and his children to the bank of a broad and rapid river, the waters of which ran so deep that he was afraid to cross its stream with both his boys at one time; placing one therefore on the bank, under the shade of a bush, he clasped the eldest in his arms, and plunged into the river.

'Alas, alas!' exclaimed Eustace, as soon as he had reached the further bank of the river, 'once I was flourishing like a luxuriant tree, but now I am altogether blighted.'

His heart relieved by these passionate expressions, the knight continued his travel; after many days of want and fatigue he reached a far off village, where he took up his abode with one of the villagers, as his hired servant.

Eustace was working in his fields about this time, little thinking of Trajan, or of Rome, when two men drew near, and after observing him for some time, and communing with each other, accosted the knight.

'There is no one about here, good sirs, of the name you ask after.'

'Fifteen years and more; but come, comrade, we must go onwards.'

The emissaries of Trajan gladly acceded to the request of Eustace. The homely repast was soon placed on the board, and the men sat down to refresh themselves, whilst Eustace waited upon them.

As soon as Eustace returned the soldiers examined his head, and finding the wished for mark which he received during the passage of the Danube, embraced their old General; the neighbors, too, came in, and the exploits of Eustace were soon in the mouths of the villagers.

The return of Eustace inspired the people with confidence; thousands hurried from every village to volunteer as soldiers, and his only difficulty was to select who should be rejected.

Pitching his camp within sight of that of the enemy, he billeted the best of his troops in a small village that formed the rear of his position.

'Of what I was when a child,' said the elder, 'I know only this, that my father carried me over a broad river, and laid me under a bush, while he returned to fetch my brother; but while he was gone, a lion came, seized me by the clothes, and bore me into a wood hard by.'

The widow had listened to the wonderful story of the two young men. She marvelled much at their preservation; on the morrow she sought the commander of the Imperial forces; she found him in his tent, his officers were around him, and the two young men stood within the circle.

'Sir,' she said, 'I am a stranger in these parts; fifteen years have passed since I left Rome with my husband, once high in power, and rich, but then poor and in misery; we reached your sea; our two sons were with us, we crossed in a shipman's boat, but when we arrived on this side, he demanded money of my husband for our passage, and when he had it not to give him, he seized on me and carried me into slavery.'

'Theosbyta,' said the General in a low voice, raising his helmet as he spoke.

'Eustace! my husband!' The General raised his fainting wife, and kissed her gently on the forehead.

The Emperor Trajan did not live to welcome home his honored General; his successor, however, spared no expense in order to receive Eustace with the honors which his achievements deserved.

'To-morrow,' said the Emperor, 'we will sacrifice to the great God of War, and offer our thanks for this thy victory.'

'Absence, sir!' exclaimed the Emperor, 'I command your attendance; see that you and yours are before the altar of Mars, at noon to-morrow; thou shalt offer sacrifice with thy own hands.'

The party soon arrived at the amphitheatre, which was crowded with spectators. Rumor had rapidly spread abroad the tidings that the triumphant General was to die by the lion's mouth, for his Christianity.

Eustace stood in the arena; his wife knelt by his side, and his sons stood before him to meet the lion's first bound.

A fire was lighted beneath the animal, a vast hot-ow frame that represented an ox, and into the belly of which the victims were introduced through a door in the right side.

So died they all: the husband, the wife, and the children. The people buried them with honor, and remembered with sorrow the martyrdom of the Christian General.

THE OLD BUREAU.

CHAPTER I.

As we were passing down Exchange street, several years ago, we stopped in front of an auction room to examine the various articles that were exposed to be sold under the hammer.

'I should like bureau if it goes low enough,' she said, pointing to an old fashioned article that was standing among the other furniture; 'but I never bought anything at auction in my life, and I see no woman here. I do not know if it would be proper for me to bid.'

So saying the lady went away, leaving us to wonder who she was, and of what use the old bureau could be to her.

'What did you give?' 'Ten dollars and a half.' 'You astonish me. What can I do? I had no idea that it would bring over three or four dollars, and I am not prepared to pay for it tonight.'

'I suppose it was foolish in me to give so much for it, but I presumed you wanted it very much.' 'I did, sir, and would not value paying double that amount for the bureau, if I were able, rather than not have it.'

'So I apprehended. Perhaps it may have belonged to some friend of yours?' 'Yes, sir; that bureau was once my mother's, and I noticed a tear come in her eye, which she endeavored to conceal—but she is dead now, and I want to keep it in remembrance of her.'

'I am greatly obliged to you for your kindness, but would rather you should keep it, until it is paid for.'

In a day or two the young lady called upon us, and with tears in her eyes, remarked, 'I do not

THE END.