

Robert Burns.

Great monarch of the minstrel trade,  
How glory glinted on thy blade!  
How pity wept when thou wast laid  
In early grave!

A young Apollo, charged with fire,  
Whose hand beswept the thrilling wire  
Till high resolve and martial ire  
Entranced the brave.

Proud Beauty stood with wondering eyes,  
Forgot her plots, her subtleties,  
And followed with a strong surprise  
Thy gentler stave.

And Mercy found no eye like thine,  
Dropping as evening dew—divine  
Compassions like to those which shine  
In heaven above.

A spirit to caress and shield  
The humblest tenant of the field,  
Appealed—and not in vain appealed—  
To human love.

Ah! Robin lad, thou didn't not win  
Beyond the sorcery of sin,  
Yet kept thy sense of honour keen  
In darkest hour.

Hypocrisy bewailed thy birth,  
Crushed by thine iron heel to earth,  
Hurled like offensive carrion forth,  
With awful pow'r.

But Love read blessing in thy face,  
Found in thy heart a dwelling place,  
Through thee enriched the human race  
With larger dower.

—G. M. Cor.

Glory to God in the Highest.

CHAPTER IV.

(Continued.)

Her tears once more dripped down upon the holly and evergreens, as she twined them, while the rain splashed against the windows, the wind roared, and the river, swollen and turbulent, muttered and murmured like a giant which, if it pleased, could rush out, overwhelm, and make desolate. Evening closed in, still the rain beat against the window-panes, still the wind, still the tempest, while, ever and anon, came gusts of melody from the church bells in the village. They were all sitting around the log fire in the kitchen, Milly, Annie, Fred, and Alfie, with Jacob and Mary. Mr. Owen liked to be quiet of an evening, so the children often came out into the warm old kitchen. The boys were roasting chestnuts, Milly finishing a purse for her grandfather as a present for the morrow, while Annie dressed her doll, sitting between Jacob and Mary, on the fire-lit hearth.

How the rain plashed, how the wind raved! and oh, what was that? A face peering in at the window! Hal's face, with long, dripping, tangled hair—a weird, unearthly face, but Hal's, yes, Hal's. Milly saw it first and uttered a low, affrighted cry. They all looked where her startled eyes rested, and they saw it—then it vanished. Milly was the first to dart down the dark passage to the door, the others following; even Mr. Owen came out of the sitting-room and went with them to join in their search.

"Hal!" cried Milly, "Hal!" while the wind tossed the name about, as if it fain would help the fond little sister. She ran round to the kitchen window, the rest going after, all bareheaded in the stormy night. Ah! there he was, a poor, senseless form, lying in a heap on the sodden ground. A senseless form they carried him in, and laid him on the kitchen hearth, in the golden firelight, a senseless, skeleton form, covered with rags, and they dripping wet. Milly knelt down and gathered him to her craving little breast, while Mary went to prepare a bed for him, and Mr. Owen moistened his lips with brandy. Old Jacob stood looking on, the children huddled near him, scarce knowing whether to laugh or cry. Milly's tears were dripping down on the poor, wan, upturned face; they felt it was but a poor home-coming to return thus, and so grew grave and solemn.

Little was said, but they carried him up to his bed, and there in the warmth and the comfort, he opened his eyes and recognized Milly, feebly drawing her down to him, as she bent over him and chafed his hands.

"'Tis nice to hug the shore again," he whispered with a sickly smile, and swooned again.

But by-and-by he revived, took a little nourishment, and then fell into a broken slumber. Milly could not be parted from him, so they let her sit by him; Mr. Owen likewise taking his place by his bed. Perhaps the boy's bitter going away was troubling him; he sat with his eyes shaded by his hand, saying nothing, only now and then stroking Milly's head, as she wept softly for joy and sorrow too. Hal come back, and come like this! Yet she thanked God for this Christmas home-coming, though she wept so, looking at his poor wasted form; her brother come back to her, two little boats to rock again side by side on the river of life. Ah! were they thus to rock together again? The boy's slumber became more broken and restless, he even began to mutter and rave, so that when the music of the joy-bells came swelling up from the village, Mr. Owen's spoken opinion was:

"Milly, this is not really exhaustion and nothing more; if I mistake not, the poor lad is in a fever, and as soon as day breaks a doctor must be sent for." And at daybreak a doctor came, Mr. Jones, from the village, who pronounced Hal to be in a fever—a fever which would run high, and perhaps not stop there.

So Christmas-day was a day of sorrowful foreboding with the people at the mill-house, with the mystery of the past and the future standing like two shrouded figures by the boy's bed. Milly never left him, only her cool hand laid on his forehead soothed him, only her voice riveted his attention; and Jacob's, when in the evening, sitting with them, he read the old, old story of the shepherds and the wondrous light, just to make it "Christmasish," as he said.

"Is it peace on earth, deary, and good-will towards men with ye?" asked the old man as he closed the book, laying his hand on Milly's head.

"Yes, Jacob, yes," and somehow a quiet peace was her's, and good-will to everybody, for she felt that God was good to her in giving her back her brother to nurse and tend, even though death should end all.

"And 'Glory to God in the highest,' too, Miss Milly, will come out of this, if ye only take it rightly. Earth's bearing and doing this and that minds me of the jarring strings of the great musicians when they're tuning; 'tis a poor tweak, tweak they make, but by-and-by 'tis all sweet music. And so 'tis with us, 'tisn't so much 'Glory to God in the highest' we shall give to God here, even the best of us, because of the discords in our half-tuned lives; turning from this and from that, because 'tain't great and grand work. But up yonder, when our tuning time is over, we shall, maybe, tell out in the new song all we've done, and borne, and suffered here, what little things we've done for the Master, because nothing great was given us to do; and, maybe, that'll be our 'Glory to God in the highest,' and eternity our great Christmas-keeping.

(To be Continued.)

—The metropolitan police district contains 440,891 acres, or 690 square miles, and includes all the parishes within a radius of fifteen miles from Charing Cross. As an illustration of the manner in which the urban population has filled up what were once rural neighbourhoods, it is interesting to note the fact that within this metropolitan police district, besides the city proper, there are 53 parishes of the county of Middlesex, 35 of Surrey, 18 of Kent, 14 of Essex and 10 of Hertfordshire. This district is now called "Greater London," in distinction from the metropolis, in the weekly returns of the Registrar-General. The multiplicity of boundaries is somewhat confusing. But henceforth London, or the metropolis, will be commonly regarded as the county area, and Greater London will designate in a general way the whole urban population, most of which is included in the metropolitan police district. The

census of 1881 gave the city of London 50,652 people, found 3,831,351 within the area now known as the metropolis, or the county of London, and enumerated a total of 4,776,661 in the Greater London of the metropolitan police district. The census of 1891 showed that the county then included 4,232,118 people, and that there were within the police circumscription 5,633,000. The estimate of 6,500,000 or 7,000,000 people now living within 20 miles of Charing Cross may not be regarded as extravagant. And, popularly speaking, these people are all Londoners. Ultimately the official bounds of the municipality will very possibly include them. This larger area is not as yet densely peopled and it will be made to accommodate several millions more.

## A Divine Biography.

Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God—a divine biography marked out which it enters into life to live. This life, rightly unfolded, will be a complete and beautiful whole, an experience led on by God and unfolded by His secret nurture of the world. We live in the Divine thought. We fill a place in the great, everlasting plan of God's intelligence. We never sink below His care, never drop out of His counsel.

## Hints to House-keepers.

To serve water cresses pick and rinse them two or three hours before meal time. Shake them dry and squeeze the juice of half a lemon over a quart of them. Add one tablespoonful of oil and a small onion minced fine. No vinegar. Mix well and let stand in a cool place until served. These directions are given by a famous firm of gardeners who make the culture of cresses one of their specialties.

COMPOTE OF ORANGES.—Peel the rind from half a dozen oranges as thinly as possible, then divide into halves and remove all the white pith. Boil eight ounces of sugar with half a pint of water for five minutes, then put in the oranges very gently, and boil for another five minutes. Remove the oranges to a compote dish, add a glass of liqueur (curacao for preference), strain over the fruit and serve. This compote is delicious either hot or cold. In either case it can be served with the addition of whipped cream, sweetened, and flavoured with either vanilla or orange-flower water.

A simple and dainty breakfast is one of the most delightful things in the world, and the woman who can serve it in an acceptable manner ought to be considered a better housewife than she who serves rich feasts unattractively. A chop set forth on glittering china on a cloth of shining damask is better than the rarest bird in the market brought on in slovenly style. Toast and tea may make a feast with white linen and glistening silver, when all the delicacies of the season would be but a poor meal if carelessly served. Always have the tablecloth spotless and fresh, even if you have to convert every day into wash day to compass it. Always have a silence cloth, though there is no dessert for a week in order that it may be paid for. Always have a bit of green in the centre of the table. Let the silver, even if it is plated, be shining, and the glass, though it be pressed and not cut, be glistening.

BEEF LOAF.—To a pint of finely chopped cold meat add a pint of bread-crumbs, two beaten eggs, a very little finely chopped salt pork, one wine-glassful of milk, salt and pepper. Butter may be substituted for pork, but the flavour is not so fine, though a teaspoonful of mixed powdered kitchen herbs will improve it. Bake in a buttered dish, basting often with a stock gravy. Serve cold in slices, garnished with parsley or lettuce. Lettuce salad is a good accompaniment.

PINEAPPLE PUDDING.—Beat the yolks of six eggs, grate half-a-pound of pineapple, add to it a cupful of sugar and one of hot cream; mix, set in a kettle of boiling water, and stir until it thickens; remove from the fire and set on ice. When cold add a pint of whipped cream, mix through the pudding, beat the whites of the eggs, and stir in. Pour in a mold and set to cool. When solid, turn out, and serve with cream sauce, flavoured with extract of pineapple.