

THE CAVE OF PAN.

A TALE OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

CHAP XIII.—RESCUED.

At the moment the priest set hands on Miriam, Lucius advanced,

"It is unlawful for you to mishandle the Christians," he cried; wot ye not that they are under the Emperor's protection?"

"The Emperor has not refused to allow our sacrifice to Pan," said the priest angrily, without loosing his hold on Miriam.

"As for this Pan, know ye not that he is dead these many years?

Have ye never heard that as some persons were sailing from Italy to Cyprus, in that year that the Christ was crucified, the ship's pilot did hear a voice crying, 'Thamus! Thamus! lo, the great god Pan is dead!' And forthwith there was a great calm, so that the ship stood still in the midst of the sea, till the pilot had proclaimed that Pan was dead; and on all sides there rose up shrieks, and sobs, and sighs from the spirits who had lost their god: for your Pan, who is none other than a demon, was overthrown by the Blessed One."

The speaker was Astyrius, who seeing what was happening as he was about to cross the bridge, had leapt from his horse and rushed into the midst of the excited group.

"And who art thou who darest to slander the gods of Rome, and to repeat fables which cannot be believed?" asked the priest.

"I am the Roman senator Astyrius," answered the Roman; and in the name of the Emperor I command you to forbear."

"We do not acknowledge your authority," answered the priest, as, beckoning to another they seized Miriam, and without waiting to bind her, flung her into the deep dark water.

Astyrius fell on his knees. "O Thou Christ, who canst save those who trust in Thee, I beseech Thee, save this Thy servant, and deliver her from her persecutors!" As he spoke, the sun blazed up for a moment ere setting, and shining in the mouth of the cave, showed Marcus, who had worked his way to the edge of the cave, that the body of Miriam had risen to the surface, and so close to the edge that, though with difficulty, he drew the senseless form to shore.

The priests would have withdrawn him and have cast their victim in again, but the secret friend of the Christians, who had tried to save Miriam from suffering, by suggesting that she need only sacrifice to Cæsar, came again to her help.

"Nay, see you not that the spirit has rejected his sacrifice? When was it ever known that the victim did not sink? Truly the noble senator is right, the great Pan is dead!"

Then Astyrius, seizing the happy moment, whilst some were compassionately trying to revive the helpless woman, and others

opinion changes. Whether then the temple was thrown down, or whether it only fell from want of care and repair, we know not; but it is said by one who was a bishop in this place a hundred years later, that this day ended the service of Pan and the sacrifice in his grotto.

And what of those whom this day had converted from followers of devils to followers of Christ, who after a long preparation were admitted into His church by baptism?

Many of them sealed their faith with their blood in the later persecutions. Of none of them has

tween. None of the people can tell anything about the sylvan god Pan, yet toward nightfall none of the country people pass the groves he was supposed to frequent without hanging up shreds of their garments to gain favor with the spirits which they suppose still haunt them. And still in its modern name of Baneas is preserved the ancient Pania, or city of Pan. FRANCES H. WOOD.

A STORY OF THE WALDEN-SES.

During the persecution of the Waldensian Church in the year 1655, Joshua Gianavello, a native of the valley of Rora, with six of his peasant neighbors, put to flight an army of five hundred Piedmontese.

The approach of the enemy had been so swift and stealthy, that the soldiers were already descending upon the town of Rora when Gianavello first caught sight of them. It was too late to give the alarm, and the brave man, seeing no alternative, set forth alone to meet the advancing army, hoping to gather a handful of friends around him on the way. Six men, whose hearts like his own were filled with faith in God and love for their country, joined him, and having made their way up the hill unperceived by the enemy, they concealed themselves amongst the bushes near the path. Taking careful aim as the Piedmontese marched past, Gianavello and his companions each shot down a man. Quickly changing their position, they repeated the attack, and seven more of the Piedmontese fell dead. The soldiers, unable to see their assailants, whose knowledge of the ground enabled them to move from point to point with wonderful rapidity, sup-

posed themselves to be surrounded by a large troop of peasants, and began a hasty retreat, followed by their invisible enemies. They made good their escape, but fifty-four dead bodies left upon the mountain side testified to the bravery and skill of Gianavello and his little band of peasants.

Surely the inhabitants of the Waldensian valleys might say as did Jonathan of old,— "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few."

—Ex.



I COMMAND YOU TO FORBEAR.

were wavering, spoke to them of Him at whose coming the powers of darkness had dispersed, who was the God of love, not of fear. So warmly, so nobly did he speak of Him whose holy feet had trodden that sacred soil, that those who had wavered, wavered no longer; from all who were present and who had seen Miriam's rescue, came the cry which Lucius began,— "Blessed be the Christ who hath overthrown the demon Pan!"

Abashed at the cry, the priests of Pan fled away, knowing but too well how rapidly popular

earth preserved any records; but all who suffered as they did shall be known when the secrets of all hearts are revealed.

Ruined and desolate lies the centurion's garden, undistinguished from other spots in the luxuriant wilderness. Fallen is the splendor of the city, but still above its picturesque ruins towers the mighty Hermon, "The Holy Mountain."

Modern research has proved that the Cave of Pan is not supplied in any mysterious manner from the stagnant pool at Phiala, and that a deep valley lies be-