

## GOD HAS HIDDEN IT.

(From the Norwegian of Jorgen Ingebrigtsen Moe.)

BY NED P. MAH.

I have a child but four years old,  
A maiden small and pretty,  
With deep blue eyes and hair of gold,  
Matchless in all the city.

She stood and watched the sun go down,  
Upon the window settle;  
The sky, far out beyond the town  
Blushed like a red rose petal.

And the blush spread and spread, on high  
Toward heaven its rays upraising,  
Till all the broad expanse of sky  
With red and gold was blazing.

Silent the small one stood, and wrapped  
In reverie and musing,  
As though the flames before it mapped  
The tiny soul were fusing.

She uttered not a word. Intent  
Her earnest gaze stillied her;  
Until she found the glories spent  
Which with amazement filled her.

And awed yet never might appal,  
The little one turned slowly  
"Pity at God has hidden it all!"  
She murmured, soft and lowly.

Ah! Yes, my child. 'Twill happen so  
In life's course very often,  
You think to find God's light, and lo!  
The more your soul to soften.

He will, quite suddenly, in gloom  
The welcome glimmer banish,  
And where a glory should flame  
Will all in darkness vanish.

Yet ever let your mind forestall,  
As you so quietly said it—  
That God has only hidden it all  
And to one side has laid it.

As mother hides your favourite toy  
From time to time, and makes it  
The herald of a double joy  
When from her drawer she takes it;

So, from His loved ones, God will hide  
Himself sometimes, and tender  
A dark but that the light denied  
May shine with double splendour.

## LOVE BONIFACE AND HIS MULE.

Among all the choice sayings with which Provence peasants embellish their discourse, I do not know of a more graphic or curious one than the following:—For fifteen leagues around my mill, when they speak of a spiteful, vindictive man, they say, "He is like the pope's mule that kept her kick for seven years."

He who did not see Avignon in the days of the popes has seen nothing. Never was there such a city for gaiety, animation and *joie de vivre*. See how well the popes of Avignon knew how to govern their people, and why their people have missed them so much.

There was one pope in particular—a good old man, called Boniface, and oh, how many tears were shed at Avignon when he died! He was such an amiable and engaging prince, he smiled at you so sweetly from the back of his mule; and he gave you his benediction so politely, no matter whether you were a poor little madder-packer or a grand city magistrate. He was a true pope of Vvotot—but of an Vvotot in Provence—with something subtle in his smile, a sprig of sweet marguerite in his hat, and not a sign of a sweetheart.

The only sweetheart which this good father had ever known was his vine—a little vine which he himself had planted among the myrtles of Chateaufort, three leagues from Avignon. Every Sunday after vespers he went to pay his court to it. There, seated in the sunshine, with his mule and his cardinals about him, he would have a flagon of native wine—that beautiful ruby wine which has ever since been known as the Chateaufort-des-Papes. This he would consume very leisurely while he looked with tender regard at his vine. Then, when the flagon was empty and the day declining, he would joyously re-enter the town followed by all his chapter; and, as he crossed the bridge of Avignon, in the midst of the tambourines and the farandoles, his mule would be inspired by the music to fall into a little tripping gait, while he himself kept time to the dance with his cap—a proceeding which greatly scandalised his cardinal, but which made all the people exclaim, "Ah! the good prince. Ah! the gallant pope."

Next to his vine the dearest thing in the world to the pope was his mule. The good man was passionately fond of this beast. Every night before retiring he went to see that the stable was securely closed and that there was nothing lacking about the manger; and he never left the table without having prepared a great basin of French wine with plenty of sugar and spices, which he took to her himself, despite the observations of his cardinals. But it must be admitted that the brute was worth the trouble. She was a beautiful black mule with red spots, a glossy coat, large and full hindquarters, and sure of foot; she had a haughty carriage of her little lean head all harnessed with pompons, bows, silver bells and ribbons; she was gentler than an angel, and had a naive eye and two long ears which were always joggling, and which gave her the appearance of a good girl. All Avignon respected her, and when she passed along the streets there was nothing in the way of politeness which was not shown to her, for everybody knew that this was the surest way of standing well at Court, and that she, with her innocent air, had led more than one person to fortune.

Tistet Vedene was an impudent rascal whom his father, a gold engraver, had been obliged to drive from his house because he refused to work and debauched the other apprentices. For six months he was seen dragging his jacket through all the gutters of Avignon, but chiefly alongside of the papal palace; for the rogue had for some time been directing his mind towards the pope's mule, and there was mischief in it, as you shall see.

One day when his holiness was walking with his beast under the ramparts, behold Tistet thus accosting him, with hands clasped in an attitude of admiration:

"Ah! *mon Dieu*! what a noble mule you have there, holy father! Stop a moment while I look at her. Ah! my pope, what a beautiful mule! The Emperor of Germany has not one equal to her!" and he carressed her and said to her, as sweetly as if she were a young lady, "Come here, my jewel, my treasure, my cunning pearl."

The good pope, greatly moved, said to himself: "What a nice little boy; how polite he is to my mule!"

And do you know what happened the next day? Tistet Vedene changed his old yellow jacket for a beautiful lace alb, a camail of violet silk and buckled shoes, and he entered into the service of the pope, where hitherto nobody had ever been received except the sons of noblemen and the nephews of cardinals.

Nor did he stop there. Once in the palace, the rogue continued the game which had proved so profitable to him. He was insolent to everybody except the mule, upon whom he bestowed all his attentions. He was always to be seen about the courts of the palace with a handful of oats or a bunch of French grass, which he would shake gracefully, looking all the while at the holy father's balcony, as if to say, "Hey! Who is this for?"

So well did this trick work that the good pope, who felt himself growing old, finally allowed him to watch over his stable and to take the mule her basin of French wine—all of which did not please the cardinals very much, nor did the mule enjoy it. At the times for serving her wine she now saw five or six little clerks, with their camails and their laces, thrusting themselves into their stable, and then, in a moment, there was a delicious odour of caramel and spices, and Tistet Vedene appeared bearing the basin of French wine.

From that instant the poor beast's martyrdom began. These cruel profligates brought the perfumed wine which she so much loved to her manger and made her fill her nostrils with its odour; then snatched it away from her and poured it down their own gullets. Nor were they satisfied with stealing her wine, for all these little clerks became like so many devils after they had drunk it. One would pull her ears, another her tail. Quiquet would mount upon her back, Beluguet would try his cap upon her, and not one of the rogues imagined that with a single kick the poor beast could send them all into the polar star. But, no! one is not a pope's mule, a mule of benedictions and indulgences, for nothing. The boys had done their part well, and she was not angry with them. It was only to Tistet Vedene that she wished any harm. When she felt him behind her, her foot itched for him; and naturally enough, such wicked tricks did he play upon her and such cruelty did he concoct for her after his drinking.

Did he not one day conceive the plan of making her ascend with him in the bell-tower to the very summit of the palace? I am not telling you an idle tale; 200,000 people of Provence saw the occurrence. You can imagine the terror of this unhappy mule, when, after having revolved for an hour in a spiral staircase, and climbed I know not how many steps, she suddenly found herself upon the platform—dazzled with light and looking down 1,000 feet upon a fantastic Avignon, with its market-sheds no bigger than hazel nuts, its papal soldiers like red ants, and stretching across a thread of silver, a little microscopic bridge upon which the people danced and danced.

Ah! poor beast, what a panic she was in. The cry which she uttered shook all the window panes in the palace.

"What is that? What has happened?" cried the good pope, rushing out upon his balcony.

Tistet Vedene was already in the court making a pretence of weeping and tearing his hair.

"Ah! holy father, it is your mule. *Mon Dieu*! what will become of us! Your mule has ascended into the bell-tower."

"All alone?"

"Yes, holy father, all alone. Hold! look up there. Do you not see the ends of her ears moving about like a couple of swallows?"

"Mercy on me," said the poor pope, raising his eyes; "but she has become insane. She is going to commit suicide. Will you not yet come down, unhappy creature?"

Alas! she would have asked nothing better than to come down; but how?

The staircase was not to be thought of, she might mount it, but to descend it would break her legs a hundred times. And so the poor animal was roving disconsolately about the platform with her big eyes full of vertigo and her mind full of Tistet Vedene.

"Ah! you ruffian," she thought, "if I escape from here what a kick you shall have to-morrow morning!"

This thought of the kick put a little heart into her legs, and without it she would have dropped. At length the people arrived to bring her down, but it proved a serious affair. It was necessary to lower her with ropes, a jackscrew, and a hand-

barrow. And think what a humiliation it was for a pope's mule to find herself dangling from such a height and working her feet like a May-bug on the end of a thread, and all Avignon looking at her. The unhappy beast could not sleep that night on account of it. It seemed to her all the time as if she were still whirling round on that cursed platform, with the city laughing at her from below. Then, too, she kept thinking of that infamous Tistet Vedene, and of the fine kick which she proposed to send after him the next morning. Ah! my friends, what a kick that was to be! The smoke of it would be visible from Pampeluna.

But while this beautiful reception was being prepared for Tistet in the stable, do you know what he was doing? He was sailing and singing down the Rhone upon a papal galley, on his way to the Court of Naples with a troop of young nobles, whom the city sent every year to Queen Joan to perfect themselves in diplomacy and good manners. Tistet was not of noble birth, but the pope wished to reward him for the care which he had given to his beast, and especially for the activity which he had displayed on the day of her rescue from the tower. So the mule was disappointed the next morning.

"Ah! the ruffian, he suspected something," she thought, as she shook her bells with rage. "But no matter, go along, you wicked fellow; you will find your kick upon your return. I will keep it for you!"

And she did keep it for him. After the departure of Tistet the mule recovered her former tranquil life. No more Quiquet and no more Beluguet about her stable. The good old days of French wine returned again, and with them came good humour, long siestas, and the little dancing gait when she crossed the bridge of Avignon.

Nevertheless, a slight coolness was observable in the town since her adventure. There were ominous whisperings along her route: the old men shook their heads, and the children looked at the bell-tower and laughed. Even the good pope himself had less confidence in his friend than formerly, and when he took his little nap upon her back, while returning from his vine on Sundays, he was always haunted by the thought:

"Suppose I should awake and find myself upon the top of that platform!"

The mule saw all this and endured it without a word; only when the name of Tistet Vedene was mentioned in her presence, she smiled and whetted the iron of her hoofs upon the pavement.

Seven years passed in this way, and then Tistet Vedene returned from the Court of Naples. He had not served his full time there, but he had heard that the first mustard-maker to the pope had just died suddenly at Avignon, and, as the position seemed a good one to him, he had hurried back to apply for it.

When this intriguer entered the hall of the palace the holy father had trouble in recognising him, so large had he grown. But on the other hand the good pope had grown old and could no longer see well without his glasses.

But Tistet, not at all intimidated, said:

"What, holy father, do you not know me? It is I, Tistet Vedene."

"Vedene?"

"Yes; you know me well—he who used to carry the French wine to your mule."

"Ah! yes, yes! I remember. A good little boy that Tistet Vedene. And what is it that he now desires of us?"

"Oh! holy father, it is only a little thing that I have come to ask of you. By the way, have you your mule still? And she is well? Ah! so much the better. I came to ask you for the position of the first mustard-maker, who has just died."

"First mustard-maker! You! But you are too young. How old are you?"

"Twenty years and two months, illustrious pontiff; just five years older than your mule. Ah, *Dieu*! the gallant beast. If you only knew how I loved that mule! How I languished for her in Italy! Would you not let me see her?"

"Yes, my child, you shall see her," said the Pope, greatly overcome; "and since you love her so much I no longer wish you to live far away from her. From this day I make you my first mustard-maker. My cardinals will cry out about it, but so much the worse for them. I am used to it. Come to us to-morrow, at the close of vespers, and we will bestow upon you the insignia of your rank in the presence of our chapter, and then—I will take you to see the mule, and you shall go with us to visit the vine. Ha! ha!"

I need not tell you with what impatience Tistet awaited the morrow. And yet there was some one in the palace still happier and still more impatient than he, and this was the mule. From the moment of Vedene's return, until vespers the next day, the terrible beast did not cease cramming herself with oats and shooting at the wall behind her with her hoofs. She was also preparing herself for the ceremony.

When vespers were over on the following day, Tistet made his entry into the court of the palace. All the clergy, high and low, were there—the cardinals in red robes, the devil's advocate in black velvet, the abbots of the convent with their little white mitres, the churchwardens of St. Agricola, the papal soldiers in grand uniforms, the brotherhoods of penitents, the hermits of Mt. Ventoux, the scourging brothers, the sacristans in judges' gowns, all, all were there, even to those who lighted and extinguished the candles. Ah! it was a fine ordi-

nation, with the bells, the petards, the sunshine, the music, and always those mad tambourines which led the dance down on the bridge of Avignon.

When Vedene appeared in the midst of the assemblage, his noble carriage and beautiful mien sent a thrill of admiration through it. He was a magnificent Provençal, with long fair hair, curled at the end, and a little soft beard, which looked as if it had been taken from the golden shavings which fell from the burin of his father the engraver. There was a story that the fingers of Queen Joan had sometimes played in this blonde beard, and Sir Vedene had, in truth, the proud bearing and heedless look of men whom queens have loved. This day, in honour of his country, he had changed his Neapolitan vestments for a jacket bordered with rose of Provence, and a great stork's feather of Camarque which trembled upon his hood.

As soon as he entered, the first mustard-maker made a gallant salute, then started toward the high steps where the Pope was waiting to bestow upon him the insignia of his rank—a spoon of yellow boxwood and a saffron coat. At the bottom of the stairway stood the mule, all harnessed and ready to set out for the vine. As he passed near her Tistet smiled, and stopped to give her two or three friendly pats on the back, looking all the while out of the corner of his eye to see whether the Pope was watching him.

The position was auspicious. The mule gave a spring.

"Take it! catch it! reprobate! Seven years have I kept it for you!"—and she sent after him a kick so terrible that they saw the smoke of it from Pampeluna—a whirlwind of golden smoke in which fluttered a stork's feather, all that was left of the unlucky Tistet Vedene.

The kicks of mules are not ordinarily so dreadful, but this was a Papal mule, and only think how she had kept her kick for seven years. There is not on record a finer example of ecclesiastical spite.

## A PROBLEM.

That the standard public morals would be greatly elevated if no one drank to excess on any occasion is a proposition that no one cares to combat. The evils of intemperance have been discarded upon since the day Lot yielded to temptation. The "frightful example" has never been wanting, and the crimes and casualties resulting from excessive drinking, have stood out as danger warnings along the pathway of time for hundreds and thousands of years. Yet people drink, and unfortunately, not a few will drink too much. No one ever saw an advocate of intemperance. No man, no matter what his occupation or profession, delights in the debasement of his fellowmen. No man derives pleasure from seeing other men drunk. The manufacturers and dealers in spirituous liquors are not those who wish to see men in the gutter. Every man deprecates intemperance. There are none who do not detest drunkenness. The problem—and it is a difficult one to solve—is how shall we prevent those who cannot drink in reason from putting an enemy in their mouths that they well know will steal away their brains. Will legislation reach the much desired end? Experience has not demonstrated that it will. It seems as difficult to legislate the passion for drink out of a man as it is to force religion into him by due process of law. The most stringent anti-liquor law fails to prevent the inordinate use of intoxicating beverage. The most enthusiastic advocates of prohibition admit that so far the experiment has not proved a success. It is a contest. One side seeks to remove temptation and the other side insists on being tempted.

Liquor dealers can aid in the solution of this problem, by firmly refusing to sell to any one already under the influence of liquor to excess—by so doing they will accomplish more than all the prohibition laws that have been passed since Adam was a yearling.—*Saturday Review*.

## VARIETIES.

MISS BENSON learned that Randall, who was wooing her at Mount Vernon, Ohio, already had a wife. She waited until he made a formal proposal of marriage, and then applied to a justice for his arrest on a charge of bigamy. Being told that a crime of bigamy required a double marriage, she kept her secret, let the engagement result in a wedding, and then triumphantly sent him to jail immediately after the ceremony.

THE BONNET LAIRD'S CAUTION.—In a Scotch country parish church a young and very energetic preacher was officiating for the parish minister. As he warmed with his subject in the sermon, he used liberties with the old pulpit not quite consistent with its rather crazy condition, sometimes throwing the weight of his body on it, as he threw out his arms toward the congregation; at other times, bringing his hand down with a heavy thump. An old laird, sitting in a square table-seat below, had been anxiously watching all this with visions of an assessment for maintenance of the fabric. At last, things seemed to be approaching a crisis, as the preacher, piling his periods, had wrought himself into a state of intense fervour, which would inevitably have vented itself on the rickety pulpit. Just as he was gathering himself for the final burst, he was snuffed out by the warning voice of the laird—"Noo, ma man! mind, giv ye break that, ye'll pay't."