

God in the midst of men, hearing their blasphemous, beholding their infamous actions, fixing His all-pure and all-holy eyes on their licentiousness, their ambition, their avarice, their dishonesty, their impurity. And so the very presence of those He came to redeem was a constant source of grief to Jesus Christ. Moreover, He knew well that He came into the world to suffer, and only to suffer. Every other being created into this world was created for some joy or other. There is not, even in hell, a creature whom Almighty God intended, in creating, for a life and an eternity of misery: if they are there, they are there by their own act, not by the act of God. Not so with Christ. His sacred Body was formed for the express and sole purpose that it might be the Victim for the sins of men, and the sacrifice for the world's redemption. "Sacrifice and oblation," He said, "Thou wouldst not, O God; but Thou hast prepared a body for Me." "Coming into the world," says St. Paul, "He proclaimed, 'for this I am come, that I may do Thy Will, O Father.'" The Father's will was that He should suffer; and for this He was created. Therefore, as He was made for suffering—as that body was given to Him for no purpose of joy, but of suffering, exulting and of sorrow—therefore it was that God made Him capable of a sorrow equal to the remission He was about to grant. That was infinite sorrow.

And now, dearly beloved, having considered these things, we come to contemplate that which was always before the mind of Christ—that from which He knew there was no escape—that which was before Him really not as the future is before us, when we anticipate it and fear it, but it comes indistinctly and confusedly before the mind; not so with Christ; every single detail of His Passion, every sorrow that was to fall upon Him, every indignity that was to be put upon His body—all, in the full clearness of their details, were before the eyes of the Lord Jesus Christ for the thirty-three years of His life.

As the sun was sloping down towards the western horizon on the evening of the vigil of the Pasch, behold Our Divine Lord with His Apostles around Him; and there, seated in the midst of them, He fulfilled the last precept of the law, in eating the Paschal lamb; and (as we saw last evening) He then changed the bread and wine into His own Body and Blood, and fed His apostles with that of which the Paschal Lamb was but a figure and a promise. Now, they are about to separate in this world. Now, the greatest act of the charity of God has been performed. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ is living and palpating in the heart of each and every one of these twelve. Now—horror of horrors!—He is gone into the heart of Judas! Arising from the table, Our Lord took with Him, Peter and James and John, and He turned calmly and deliberately to enter the Red Sea of His Passion, and to wade through His own Blood, until He landed upon the opposite shore of pardon and mercy and grace, and brought with Him, in His own sacred humanity, the whole world. Calmly, deliberately, taking His three friends with Him, He went out from the supper-table, as the shades of evening were deepening into night, and He walked outside the walls of Jerusalem, where there was a garden full of olive-trees, that was called Gethsemane. The Lord Jesus was accustomed to go there to pray. Many an evening had He knelt within those groves; many a night had He spent under the shade of these trees, filling the silent place with the voice of His cries and prayer before the Lord, His Father, to obtain pardon and mercy for mankind. Now, He goes there, now, for the last time; and as He is approaching—as soon as ever He catches sight of the garden—as soon as the familiar olives present themselves to His eyes, He sees—what Peter and James, and John did not see—He sees there, in that dark garden, the mighty array of the mighty, tremendous array of all the sins that ever were committed in this world, as if they had taken the bodily form of demons of hell. There they were now, waiting silently, fearfully, with eyes glaring with infernal rage; and He saw them. And amongst them was He, the Lord God, to go? Amongst them must He go? No wonder that the moment He caught sight of that garden, He started back, and turning to the three apostles, He said: "Stand by Me now, for My soul is sorrowful unto death." And leaning upon the virgin bosom of John, who was astonished at this sudden and awful trial of his Master, He murmured unto him, "My soul is sorrowful unto death! Stand by Me." He says, "and watch with Me, and pray!" The man—the man, proving His humanity, which belonged to Him as truly as His Divinity; the man, turning to and clinging to His friends—gathered them around Him at that terrible moment when He was about to face His enemies. He cries, "Stand by Me! stand by Me! and support Me, and watch, and pray with Me!" And then, leaving them, alone He enters the gloomy place. Summoning all the courage of God—summoning to His aid all the infinite resources of His love—summoning the great thought that if He was about to be destroyed, mankind was to be saved, He dashes fearlessly into the depths of Gethsemane, and when He was as far from His apostles as a man could throw a stone, there in the dark depths of the forest, the Lord Jesus knelt down and prayed. What was His prayer? Oh, that army of sins was closing around Him! Oh,

the breath of hell was on His face! There did He see the busy demons marshalling their forces—drawing closer and closer to Him all the iniquities of men. "Oh, Father! He cries—"Oh, Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass away from Me!" But He immediately added—"Not My will but Thine be done!" Then turning—for the Father's will was indicated to Him in the voice from heaven, with the first tone of anger upon it, the first word of anger that Jesus ever heard from His Father's lips, saying: "It is My will to strike Thee! Go!" He turned; He bared His innocent bosom; He put out His sinless hands, and turning to all the powers of hell, allowed the ocean-wave of sin to flow in upon Him and overwhelm Him. The lusts and wickedness of men before the flood, the impurities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the idolatries of the nations, the ingratitude of Israel—all the sins that ever appeared under the eyes of God's anger—all—all—like the waves of the ocean, coming in and falling upon a solitary man who kneels alone on the shore—all fell upon Jesus Christ. He looks upon Himself, and He scarcely recognizes Himself now. Are these the hands of the Son of God, scarcely daring to uplift themselves in prayer, for they are red with ten thousand deeds of blood? Is this the Heart of Jesus, frozen up with unbelief, as if He felt what He could not feel—that He was the personal enemy of God? Is this the sacred soul of Jesus Christ, darkened for the moment with the errors and the adulteries of the whole world? In the halls of His memory nothing but the hideous figures of sin—desolation, broken hearts, weeping eyes, cries of despair, dire blasphemies—these are the things He sees within Himself; that He hears in His ears! It is a world of sin around Him. It is a raging of demons about Him. It is as if sin entered into His Blood. Oh, God! He hears it as long as a suffering man can bear. But, at length, from out the depths of His most sacred Heart—from out the very divinity that was in Him—He moved, and forth came a rush of blood from every pore. His eyes can no longer dwell on the terrible vision. He can no longer look upon these red scenes of blood and impurity. A weakness comes mercifully to His relief. He gazes upon the fate that God has put upon Him; and then He falls to the earth, writhing in His agony; and forth from every pore of His sacred frame streams the Blood. Behold Him! Behold the Blood as it oozes out through His garments, making them red as those of a man who has trodden in the wine-press! Behold Him, as His agonizing face lies prone upon the earth. Behold Him, as in the hour of that terrible agony, His Blood reddens the soil of Gethsemane! Behold Him, as He writhes on the ground—one mass of streaming blood—sweating blood from head to foot—crying out in His agony for the sins of the whole world! A mournful cry of the anger of God is upon Him. Behold Him in Gethsemane, O Christian man! Kneel down by His side! Lie down on that blood-stained earth and for the love of Jesus Christ, whisper one word of consolation to Him! For, remember that you and I were there—were there, and He saw us—even as He sees us in this hour gathered under the roof of this church. He saw us there in our quality of sinners, with every sin that ever we committed—as if it were a stone in our uplifted hand flung down upon His defenceless form! When Acan was convicted of a crime, Joshua gave word that every man of the Jewish nation should take a stone in his hand, and fling it at him, and all the people of Israel came and flung them upon him, and put him to death. So every son of man, from Adam down to the last that was born on this earth, every son of man—every human being that breathed the breath of God's creation in this world, was there, in that hour to fling his sins, and let them fall down upon Jesus Christ. All—all—save one. There was one whose hand was not lifted against Him. There was one who, if she had been there, could be only there to help Him and to console Him. But no help, no consolation in that hour! Therefore, Mary, the only sinless one who was absent. He rises after an hour. No scourge has been yet laid upon that sacred Body. No executioner's hand has profaned Him as yet. No nail had been driven through His hands. And yet the blood covered His body—for His Passion began from that source to which I have alluded—His own divine spirit! His Passion—His pain—began from within. He rises from the earth. What is this which we hear? There is a sound, as of the voice of a rabble. There are hoarse voices filling the night. There are men with clubs in their hands, and lanterns lighted. They come with fire and fury in their eyes, and the universal voice is, "Where is he? Where is he?" Ah, there is one at the head of them! You hear his voice. "Come cautiously! I see Him. I will point Him out to you! There are four of them. There He is, with three of His friends. When you see me take a man in my arms and kiss Him. He is the Man! Lay hold of Him at once, and drag Him away with you—and do what you please!" Who is he that says this? Who are they that come like hell-hounds, thirsting for the Blood of Christ? That come with the rage of hell in their blood, and in their mouths? They are come to take Him and to tear Him to pieces! Who is this that leads them on? Oh, Judas, Oh, friends and men! It is Judas, the

Apostle! Judas, who spent three years in the society of Jesus Christ! Judas, that was taught by Him every lesson of piety and virtue, by word and by example. Judas, who received the priesthood. Judas, upon whose lips, even now, blushes the sacred Blood received in Holy Communion! Oh! it is Judas! And he has come to give up his Master, Whom he has sold for thirty pieces of silver. He went, after his unworthy Communion, to the Pharisees, and he said: "What will you give me, and I will sell, betray to you?—give Him up?" He put no price upon Jesus. He thought so little of his Master that he was prepared to take anything that he would offer. They offered him thirty small pieces of silver; and he clutched it to the money. He thought it was a great deal, and more than Jesus Christ was worth! Now comes to fulfill his portion of the contract, and he points the Lord out by going up to Him—putting his traitor lips upon the Face of Jesus Christ, and stamping upon that Face the kiss of a false-hearted, wicked and a traitorous follower. Behold him now. The Son of God sees him approach. He opens His arms to him. Judas flings himself in his Master's arms, and he hears the gentle reproach—Oh, last proof of love!—Oh, last opportunity to him to repent—even in this hour!—"Judas, it is with a kiss thou betrayest the Son of Man?"

Now, the multitude rushes in upon Him and seizes Him. We have a supplement to the gospel narrative in the revelations of many of the saints and of holy souls, who, in reward for their extraordinary devotion to the Passion of our Lord, were favored with a closer sight of His sufferings. Now, we are told by one of these, whose revelations, though not yet approved, are tolerated by the Church, that when our divine Lord gave Himself into the hands of His enemies, they bound His sacred arms with a rope, and rushed toward the city, dragging along with them, forcibly and violently, the exhausted Redeemer. Exhausted, I say, for His soul had just passed through the agony of His prayer, and His Body was still dripping with the sweat of blood. Between that spot and Jerusalem flowed the little stream called the Brook of Kedron. When they came to that little stream our Saviour stumbled, and fell over a stone. They, without waiting to give Him time to rise pulled and dragged Him on with all their might. They literally dragged Him through the water, wounding and bruising His Body by contact with the rocks that were in the river's bed. It was night when they brought Him into Jerusalem. That night a cohort of Roman soldiers formed the body-guard of Pilate. They were called archers; men of the most corrupt and terrible vices; men without faith in, God or man; men whose every word was either a blasphemy or an impurity. These men, who were only anxious for amusement, when they found the Prisoner dragged into Jerusalem at that hour, took possession of Him for the night, and they brought Him to their quarters; and there the Redeemer was put, sitting in the midst of them. During the whole of that long night, between Holy Thursday and Good Friday morning, the soldiers remained sleepless, employed in loud revel, in their derision and torture of the Son of God. They struck Him on the head. They spat on Him. They hustled Him with scorn from one to another. They scourged Him. They wounded Him in every conceivable form. Here, silent as a lamb before the shearer, was the Eternal Son of God, looking out, with eyes of infinite knowledge and purity, upon the very vilest of men that all the iniquity of this earth could bring around Him.

He was brought before the high-priest. He was asked to answer. The moment the Son of God opened His lips to speak—the moment He attempted to testify—a branny soldier came out of the ranks, stepped before our divine Lord, and saying to Him: "Answerest Thou the high-priest thus?" drew back his clenched, mailed hand, with the full force of a strong man, flinging himself forward, struck Almighty God in the face! The Saviour reeled, stunned by the blow. The morning came. Now He is led before Pilate, the Roman governor, who alone has power to sentence Him to death, if He be guilty; and who has the obligation to protect Him and to set Him at liberty, if He be innocent. The Scribes and the Pharisees were there, the leaders of the people; and the rabble of Jerusalem was with them; and in the midst of them was the silent, innocent victim, who knew that the sad and terrible hour of His crucifixion was upon Him. Brought before Pilate, He is accused of this crime and that. Witnesses are called; and the moment they come—the moment they look upon the face of God—they are unable to give testimony against Him. They could say nothing that proved Him guilty of any crime; and Pilate, enraged, turned to the Pharisees, and said: "What do you bring this Man here for? Why is He

bound? Why is He bruised and maltreated? What has He done? I find no crime, or shadow of a crime in Him." He is not only innocent, but the judge declares, before all the people, that the Man has done nothing whatever to deserve any punishment, much less death. How is this sentence received? The Pharisees are busy amongst the people, whispering their calumnies, and prompting them to cry out, and say: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! We want to have Jesus of Nazareth crucified! We want to do it early, because the evening will come and bring the Sabbath with it! We want to have His Blood shed! Quick! Quick! Tell Pilate he must condemn Jesus of Nazareth, or else he is no friend to Caesar! The people cry out: "Let Him be crucified! If you let Him go you are no friend of Caesar! What says Pilate? 'Crucify your King! He calls Himself 'King of the Jews.' You, yourselves, wished to make Him your King, and you honored Him. Am I to crucify Him whom you would have for King? Am I to crucify your King?' And then—in an awful moment, Israel declared solemnly that God was no longer her King; for the people cried out: 'He is not our King! We have no King but Caesar!' We have no King but Caesar! The old cry of the man who, committing sin, says: 'I have no King but my own passions; I have no King but this world; I have no King but the thoughts of money, or of honors, or of indulgence!' So the Jews cried: 'We have no King of ours; we have no King but Caesar!' Pilate, no doubt in a spirit of compromise, said to himself, 'I see this Man cannot escape. I see murder in these people's eyes! They are determined upon the crucifixion of this Man, and, therefore, I must try to find out some way or another of appealing to their mercy.' Then he thought to himself, 'I will make an example of Him. I will tear the flesh off His bones. I will cover Him with blood. I will make Him such a pitiable object that not one in all that crowd will have the heart to demand further punishment, or another blow for Him.' So he called his officers, and said: 'Take this Man, and scourge Him so as to make Him frightful to behold; let Him be so mangled that when I show Him to the people they may be moved to pity and spare His life, for He is an innocent Man.' In the cold, early morning, the Lord is led forth into the court-yard of the Pretorium, where the sixty of the strongest men of the guard are picked out—chosen for their strength; and they are told off into thirty pairs, and every man of the sixty has a new scourge in his hand. Some have chains of iron some, cords knotted, with steel spurs at the end of them; others, the green, supple twig, plucked from the hedge in the early morning—long, and supple, and terrible, armed with thorns. Now these men come and scourge our Lord. They strip Him of His garments; they leave Him perfectly naked, blushing in His infinite modesty and purity, so that He longs for them to begin in order that they may robe Him in His Blood. They tie His hands to a pillar; they tie His feet to another pillar; they tie Him so that He cannot move, nor shrink from a blow, nor turn aside. And then the two first advance; they raise their brawny arms in the air; and then, with a hissing sound, they scourge upon the sacred body of the Lord! Quicker again and quicker these arms rise in the air with these terrible scourges. Each stroke leaves its livid mark. The flesh rises into welts. The Blood is congealed, and purple beneath the skin. Presently, the scourge comes down again, and it is followed by a quick spurt of Blood from the sacred body of our Lord—the blows quickening, and without pause, and without mercy, until those two strong men are fatigued and tired out—until their scourges are sodden, and saturated and dripping with His blood, do they still strike Him—and then, retire, exhausted, from their terrible labor:—in comes another pair—fresh, vigorous, fresh arms and new men—come to rain blows upon the defenceless body of the Lord, upon His sacred limbs upon His sacred shoulders. Every portion of His sacred body is torn: every blow brings the flesh from the bones, and opens a new wound and a new stream of Blood. Now He stands ankle deep in His own Blood—hanging out from that pillar, exhausted, with head drooping, almost insensible. He is still beaten—even when the very men who strike Him think, or suspect, that they may have killed Him. It was written in the Old Law Lord in Deuteronomy, 'let him be beaten, and let the measure of his sin be the measure of his punishment; yet, so that no criminal receive more than forty stripes, lest thy brother go away shamefully torn from before thy face!' These were the words of the law. Well the Pharisees knew it! And there they stood around in the outer circle, with hate in their eyes, fury in their hearts, and even when the very men who were dealing out their revenge thought that they had killed the Victim they were scourging, still came forth from these hardened hearts the words of encouragement: "Strike Him still! Strike Him still!" And there they continued their cruel task until sixty men retired, fatigued and worn out with the work of the scourging of Our Lord.

Now, behold Him, as senseless He hangs from that pillar, one mass of bruised and torn flesh—one open wound, from the crown of His head to the soles of His feet—all bathed in the crimson of His own Blood, and

brings Him out, and looking round on the multitude, says: *Eccce Homo!* Behold the Man! You said I was not friend to Caesar. You said I was afraid to punish Him! Behold Him now! Is there a man amongst you who would have the heart to demand more punishment? Oh, heaven and earth! Oh heaven and earth! The cry from out every lip, from out every heart, is: "We are not yet satisfied! Give Him to us! Give Him to us! We will crucify Him!" "But," says Pilate, "I am innocent of His blood!" And then came a word—and this word has brought a curse upon the Jews from that day to this. Then came the word that brought the consequences of their crime on their hard hearts and blinded intellects. They cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children! Crucify Him!" "But," says Pilate, "here is a man in prison; he is a robber and a murderer! And here is Jesus of Nazareth whom I declare to be innocent. One of these I must release, which will you have—Jesus or Barabbas?" And they cried out: "Barabbas! give us Barabbas! But let Jesus be crucified!" Here is compared the Son of God to the robber and the murderer. And the robber and murderer is declared fit to live, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is declared only fit to die! The vilest man in Jerusalem declared in that hour that he would not associate with our Lord, and that the Son of God was not worthy to breathe the air polluted by this man! So Barabbas came forth, rejoicing in his escape; and, as he mingled in the crowd, he, too, threw up his hands and cried out: "Oh, let Him be crucified!" Let Him be crucified! He is led forth from the tribunal of Pilate. And, now, just outside of the Prefect's door, there are men holding up a long, weighty, rude cross, that they had made rapidly; for they took two large beams, put one across the other, fastened them with great nails, and made it strong enough to uphold a full-grown man. There is the cross! There is the man with the nails! And there are all the accompaniments of the execution. And He who is scarcely able to stand—He, bruised and afflicted—the Man of Sorrows, fainting with infirmity, is told to take that cross upon His bleeding, wounded shoulders, and to go forward to the mountain of Calvary. Taking to Him that cross, holding it to His wounded breast, putting to it in tender kisses the lips that were distilling blood, the Son of God, with the cross upon His shoulders, turns His faint and tottering footsteps toward the steep and painful way that led to Calvary. Behold Him as He goes forth! That cross is a weight almost more than a man can carry; and it is upon the shoulders of One from whom all strength and manliness are gone. Behold the Redeemer, as He toils painfully along, amid the shouts and shrieks of the enraged people. Behold Him as He toils along the flinty way, the soldiers driving Him on, the people inciting them every one rushing and hastening to Calvary, to witness the execution. John, the beloved, follows Him. A few of His faithful followers toil along. But there is one who traces each of His blood-stained foot-steps there is one who follows Him with a breaking heart; there is one whose very soul within her is pierced and torn with the sword of sorrow. Oh, need I name the Mother, the Queen of Martyrs! In that hour of His martyrdom, Mary, the mother of Jesus, followed immediately in His footsteps,

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terrible to behold! If you saw Him here, as He stood there; if you saw Him now, standing upon that altar—there is not a man or woman amongst you that could bear to look upon the terrible sight. They cut the cords that bound Him to the pillar; and the Redeemer fell down, bathed in His own Blood, and senseless upon the ground. Behold Him again, as at Gethsemane; now, no longer the pain from within, but the pain from the terrible hand of man—the instrument of God's vengeance. Oh, behold Him! Mary heard those stripes and yet she could not save her Son. Mary's heart went down with Him to the ground, as He fell from that pillar of His scourging! Oh, behold Him, you mothers! You fathers, behold the Virgin's Child, your God—Jesus Christ! The soldiers amused themselves at the sight of His sufferings, and scoffed at Him as He lay prostrate. Recovering somewhat, after a time He opened His languid eyes and rose from that ground—rose, all torn and bleeding. They throw an old purple rag around His shoulders, and they set Him upon a stone. One of them has been in the meantime, busily engaged in twisting and twining a crown made of some of those thorns which they had prepared for the scourging—a crown in which seventy-two long thorns were put, so that they entered into the sacred head of Our Lord. This crown was set upon His brow. Then a man came with a reed in his hand and struck those thorns deep into the tender forehead. They are fastened deeply in the most sensitive organ, where pain becomes maddening in its agony. He strikes the thorns in till even the sacred humanity of Our Lord forces from Him the cry of agony! He strikes them in still deeper!—deeper! Oh, my God! Oh, Father of Mercy! And all this opens up new streams of Blood!—new fountains of love! The Blood streams down, and the face of the Most High is hidden under its crimson veil. Now, now, indeed, Oh Pilate,—Oh wise and compromising Pilate—now, indeed, you have gained your end! You have proved yourself the friend of Caesar. Now, there is no fear but that the Jews, when they see Him, will be moved by compassion! They bring Him back and they put Him standing before the Roman governor. His rugged Pagan heart is moved within him with horror when he sees the fearful example they have made of Him. Frightened when he beheld Him, he turned away his eyes; the spectacle was too terrible. He called for water and washed his hands. "I declare before God," he says, "I am innocent of this Man's Blood!" He leads Him out on the balcony of his house. There was the raging multitude, swaying to and fro, and some were crying to crucify Him; some are preparing the Cross, others getting ready the hammer and nails, some thinking of the spot where they would crucify Him! There they were, arguing with diabolical rage. Pilate came forth in his robes of office. Soldiers stand on either side of him. Two soldiers bring in Our Lord. His hands are tied. A reed is put in His hand in derision. Thorns are on His brow. Blood is flowing from every member of His sacred Body. An old, tattered purple rag is flung over Him. Pilate

brings Him out, and looking round on the multitude, says: *Eccce Homo!* Behold the Man! You said I was not friend to Caesar. You said I was afraid to punish Him! Behold Him now! Is there a man amongst you who would have the heart to demand more punishment? Oh, heaven and earth! Oh heaven and earth! The cry from out every lip, from out every heart, is: "We are not yet satisfied! Give Him to us! Give Him to us! We will crucify Him!" "But," says Pilate, "I am innocent of His blood!" And then came a word—and this word has brought a curse upon the Jews from that day to this. Then came the word that brought the consequences of their crime on their hard hearts and blinded intellects. They cried out, "His blood be upon us and upon our children! Crucify Him!" "But," says Pilate, "here is a man in prison; he is a robber and a murderer! And here is Jesus of Nazareth whom I declare to be innocent. One of these I must release, which will you have—Jesus or Barabbas?" And they cried out: "Barabbas! give us Barabbas! But let Jesus be crucified!" Here is compared the Son of God to the robber and the murderer. And the robber and murderer is declared fit to live, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is declared only fit to die! The vilest man in Jerusalem declared in that hour that he would not associate with our Lord, and that the Son of God was not worthy to breathe the air polluted by this man! So Barabbas came forth, rejoicing in his escape; and, as he mingled in the crowd, he, too, threw up his hands and cried out: "Oh, let Him be crucified!" Let Him be crucified! He is led forth from the tribunal of Pilate. And, now, just outside of the Prefect's door, there are men holding up a long, weighty, rude cross, that they had made rapidly; for they took two large beams, put one across the other, fastened them with great nails, and made it strong enough to uphold a full-grown man. There is the cross! There is the man with the nails! And there are all the accompaniments of the execution. And He who is scarcely able to stand—He, bruised and afflicted—the Man of Sorrows, fainting with infirmity, is told to take that cross upon His bleeding, wounded shoulders, and to go forward to the mountain of Calvary. Taking to Him that cross, holding it to His wounded breast, putting to it in tender kisses the lips that were distilling blood, the Son of God, with the cross upon His shoulders, turns His faint and tottering footsteps toward the steep and painful way that led to Calvary. Behold Him as He goes forth! That cross is a weight almost more than a man can carry; and it is upon the shoulders of One from whom all strength and manliness are gone. Behold the Redeemer, as He toils painfully along, amid the shouts and shrieks of the enraged people. Behold Him as He toils along the flinty way, the soldiers driving Him on, the people inciting them every one rushing and hastening to Calvary, to witness the execution. John, the beloved, follows Him. A few of His faithful followers toil along. But there is one who traces each of His blood-stained foot-steps there is one who follows Him with a breaking heart; there is one whose very soul within her is pierced and torn with the sword of sorrow. Oh, need I name the Mother, the Queen of Martyrs! In that hour of His martyrdom, Mary, the mother of Jesus, followed immediately in His footsteps,

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and her whole soul went forth in prayer for an opportunity to approach Him, to wipe the blood from His sacred face. Oh, if they would only let her come to Him, and say, "My child! I am with You!" If they would only let her take in her womanly arms, from off the shoulders of her dear Son, that heavy cross that He cannot bear! But, no! She must witness His misery; she must witness His pain. He toils along; He takes the first few steps up the rugged side of Calvary. Suddenly His heart ceases to beat; the light leaves His eyes; He sways, for a moment, to and fro; the weakness and the sorrow

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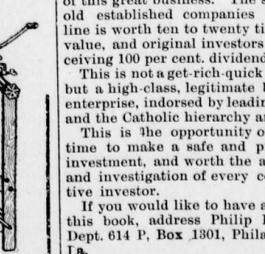
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