

"They know, who thus oppress me,  
 'Tis hard to be alone;  
 But know not One can bless me  
 Who comes through bars and stone:  
 He makes my dungeon's darkness bright,  
 And fills my bosom with delight.

"Thy love, O God, restores me  
 From sighs and tears to praise;  
 And deep my soul adores Thee,  
 Nor thinks of time or place:  
 I ask no more, in good or ill,  
 But union with Thy holy will.

"'Tis that which makes my treasure,  
 'Tis that which brings my gain;  
 Converting woe to pleasure,  
 And reaping joy from pain.  
 Oh! 'tis enough, what'er befall,  
 To know that God is all in all."

In 1696 Bossuet published a very learned and able treatise on the questions of spiritual life which were agitating the religious world, entitled, "Instructions on the States of Prayer." In this work, while his own teaching was very similar to Madame Guyon's, he impugned her character and opinions. Fenelon, asked to approve the book, demurred to the personal attack, and in 1697 chivalrously defended her, without, indeed, naming her in his celebrated "Maxims of the Saints," an admirable exposition of the doctrine of the inner or higher life, the life of divine union or perfect love.

Thereupon ensued a long and painful controversy. Bossuet was determined at all hazards to vindicate his position as leader of the Church of France by crushing Fenelon. Fenelon would sacrifice neither the truth of God, as he saw it, nor the good woman who had so long incarnated it. He declared, when Bossuet charged him with introducing a "new spirituality," that he was defending not a new spirituality, but the old, that of the apostles, the fathers, and the best writers throughout the ages. Nobly did he reply to Bossuet's taunt that Fenelon would be vanquished:

"In respect to the controversy between

us, there is nothing which I wish more than to be vanquished by you, if the positions which I take are wrong. Two things only do I desire—truth and peace;—truth which may enlighten, and peace which may unite us."

Very notable is it that both Fenelon and Madame Guyon were preserved by the peace of God within them from all violence and bitterness and controversy and under persecution.

The affair was referred to the Pope. The investigation and discussion dragged on from 1697 to 1699. King Louis did not wait for the action of Rome, but, in 1697, dismissed Fenelon from the court of which he had been such a distinguished ornament, and confined him to his humbler duties in the diocese of Cambrai. At the urgent solicitation of Louis, the Pope finally condemned Fenelon's views, but as understood by others, not as explained by himself. Fenelon, with majestic patience, resignation, and love of his enemies, desisted from all controversy, devoted himself to his practical duties, and continued to quietly teach and exemplify the doctrine of perfect love, until his death in 1715, with the words, "Thy will be done," on his lips.

While controversy thus raged in high places, poor Madame Guyon lay in prison, deprived of the society of friends, and keenly suffering from atrocious attempts to blacken her character. From the castle of Vincennes she was removed to Vangirard, and from Vangirard to the infamous Bastille. She was kept in one of the dungeons of that horrible prison from 1698 to 1702, probably in solitary confinement, and probably not far from the cell in which the Man in the Iron Mask had been secluded for thirty-seven years, when she entered those portals of despair. A mantle of absolute silence falls upon those four terrible years, for