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WRITTEN FOR THE "TRUE WITNESS."

SONG OF THE ROBIN.

Hark to the robin singing
In the deep thicket so clearly;
List to the chorus upspringing,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
Sweet, in the balm and the leisure
Of sunset, loved ever and dearly,
Sounds that blithe, musical measure,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
Far, in the beauty and glory
Of eve, as a silver bell clearly
Rings that most beautiful story,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
'Tis a canticle, "Praise the Creator,"
Who loves all His creatures sincerely,
And even takes care of poor robin,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
He sent down on earth's thirsty bosom
Showers refreshing and pearly,
He smiled on the earth, and said "blossom,"
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
'Tis a bright, sparkling hope for to-morrow,
For the long, rosy hours late and early;
A merry defiance to sorrow,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
Come, oh, ye doubting and weary,
No longer doubt, hopeless and drearily,
Cast all your care on the "Father,"
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
Look on this sunset's bright portal,
Heaven's cities are seen thro' it, nearly,
Hark, and be happy, O mortal,
"Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily."
LOWE, P. Q. D. C. DEANE.

THE GOOD GERARD OF COLOGNE.

By RUDOLPH EMS, VASSAL AT MONTFORD (THIRTEENTH CENTURY.)

Compiled after the German of Carl Simrock.

I.

In the new Cathedral at Magdeburg, the bells were ringing for the first time. A large crowd gathered to witness the consecration of the church, founded and endowed by the Emperor Otto the Great. He went up the aisle before all the people, not, as was then the custom, to lay down gifts at the new altar of God, but with erect brow he stood, and thus he spoke: "There is no gift in my hand for Thee, O Lord, but when I lift mine eyes, whatever I behold around me is my gift to Thee! This church I built for the glory of Thy name, and I endowed it and made it so great that the sons of kings think it an honor to bow to its prince bishop, and serve him. The heathen that troubled Thy people, see I conquered them with my strong arm—the Wends, the Sarbs, and the Hungarians, they bow their heads to my sword, and their knees to Thy glory; and I made Thy name great in all the pagan lands, and erected churches and bishoprics to Thy honor. And now show me to-day, O my Lord, that Thou hast seen my foot going in Thy path, Thou, who wilt give glory from heaven to him who spreads Thy glory on earth." Thus the Emperor spoke before all the people. And lo! a voice sounded from heaven as the voice of an angel in anger, and it

spoke with a voice like thunder rolling in the mountains: "Otto, king on earth, see, the King in heaven had put a chair by his side for thee to sit on, and thou has despised it in thy vanity; he had prepared for thee a crown of glory, and thou has taken the crown of pride that made angels fall. He has heard with little pleasure the thoughts of thy heart, that asks for the highest place. Know, that place is for him who most serves God in humility and purity of heart; that is for the good Gerard, the merchant in Cologne, whose name is written in the book of life. And now go and learn from him what is agreeable to God, and then confess that thy glory is vain and thy doing but little. But know that not readily will he speak to thee; well would he lay down his life, rather than let the fame of his righteousness sound up to God by words from his own mouth." When Otto had heard this, he bowed his head in shame and was humbled. He mounted his good horse, and with three of his knights rode over to Cologne. Among the citizens who came to greet their Emperor in the vast hall, Otto saw one, a tall man with a long white beard and the step of a youth; and when he asked the Bishop who sat by his side who that man was, he received in answer, "That is the good Gerard, the richest merchant in Cologne." Then the Emperor spoke to all the people assembled: "I came here to seek your advice, as I am in great need of it. But I was counselled and even commanded not to speak but to one of you, and for that one I choose thee, O Gerard! Thou seemest to me rich in wisdom and experience." And Gerard answered, bowing before the Emperor: "Shall I go alone to give my advice, while there are so many worthier ones here? But all the people said, 'O king, thy choice is good; there is no one in this hall his equal in wisdom.' So the Emperor took Gerard by the hand and led him to a chamber near by, and locked the door after him, and they sat down on one couch, Gerard by Otto's side. Then Otto said: "Gerard, it was to see thee that I came here; pray tell me how did it happen that the name 'Good' was given to thee? I would fain like to know." "O great king!" answered Gerard, "I do not know myself what that means; there are so many Gerards here: people only gave me that name to distinguish me from them." "Gerard, thou art deceiving me!" the Emperor called out; but Gerard answered: "Oh, no, great king, I should deceive thee if I spoke otherwise. Never did I merit that name, and it was often a burden to me; because, while the world called me 'the Good,' it reminded me how seldom I did what pleased God. Often do I send the poor man away with a mean gift, whilst God gives me riches: I give him sour beer and black bread, I give him an old gown, whilst many a new one I had, and would not have missed them. I always have liked to go to church where the service was shortest, and when I had once prayed with my whole soul, I thought that would do for half a year. Therefore, O king! do not ask me what I have done to deserve that high name." The emperor said: "Gerard, thou must give me a better answer, for I have sure knowledge that thou hast done a great deed for God's sake, and I came to hear the account of it from thy own mouth; therefore speak!" "Oh! spare me," called out the good man; "spare me, most gracious king!" But Otto replied: "No, no! thou only awakenest my impatience, and I tell thee thou must yield to me at the end, if even much against thy will!" Then prayed the good man in his heart: "O God! look at Thy servant! My king is angry with me, and I cannot resist him any longer. So, if I reckon with Thee, O Lord! and praise myself for the little good I ever did, do not Thou turn away Thy grace from me, for what I say, I do it much against my will." And presently he threw himself at the Emperor's feet, saying: "Ten thousand pounds of silver I have in my cellar, take it and spare me the answer!" "Gerard," said the rich emperor, "I thought thou wert wiser. Such a speech only excites my curiosity. And I will tell thee, thou canst reveal me everything, and it will be no sin to thee—so I swear before God." Then the good Gerard said, arising from his knees, and sitting down: "God knows my heart; He knows that, when I do now as my king commands me to do, my heart is full of grief, and vanity is far from it."

II. THE GOOD GERARD'S STORY.

"When my father died, he left no small fortune to me, his only heir. But as I was a merchant, I thought to double and double again my possessions, and cause my son to be called the rich Gerard, as his fathers had been called before him. So I left him such fortune as would be full enough for him, and took all the rest, fifty thousand pounds of silver, and carried it to my ship, together with food for a three years voyage. Experienced sailors were in my pay, and my clerk was with me, to write my accounts and read my prayers. So I went to Russia, where I found sable in profusion, and to Prussia's rich amber strand, and from there, by the Sea of the Middle, to the East, and there I took in exchange silk and woven goods from Damascus and Ninive; and well I thought a three-fold gain should be mine. Then my heart began to long for wife and child, and with great joy I told the mariners to turn the ship homeward. But a storm arose, and water and wind were fighting for twelve days and twelve nights, and threw my ship to an unknown land, where a bench gave us shelter. When the sun shone again, and the sky looked clear I saw villages and hamlets and fertile fields as far as my eye could reach, and near the sea a large city with pinnacles and high walls. We went to the port, and I found it full of merchandise, a rich and stately place, not unlike the old Cologne. I went on land, for I saw the governor of the city coming to view the goods in the port, and many a knight and vassal rode by his side; I thought to go up to him and ask his protection. But when I came near him, he approached me with a quick step, and greeting me with his hand, he thus spake: 'Welcome, the first one who comes to my market! Thou art my guest, stranger! I see thou comest from afar off, perhaps from the land of Christians who seldom come here, in false fear that I would harm them. Be of good cheer! I do not harm the merchant, nor need I covet his goods, for my land is rich, and all the gold and precious stones that it has in its mountains are mine, and the pearls in

the sea, and many a rich vessel that the storm throws on our coast.' Well was I astonished at such a greeting; but I accepted gladly; and the governor, Strannur by name, gave me the best house, and took care of me that nothing might harm me. Again and again did he show me his love, and soon friendship and confidence reigned between us. Presently he wanted me to show him the treasures of my ship, and I let it be done readily. I saw him wonder at their splendor, and with good cheer he said: "Gerard, I tell thee thou hast brought riches to this land so great that nobody can buy them. But I will show thee my treasures now, and then, if it so please thee, we will exchange; for in this land my treasure is of no value, while in the lands of the Christians it might bring thee at least a twenty-fold gain." And I answered: "To seek gain is the merchant's duty. I did show thee my treasure; now let me see thine." Then my host led me by the hand to a hall, and as I entered with a cheerful mind, hoping to behold the riches of India, gold and spices. I found the place all empty of joy and filled with misery. Twelve young knights were lying here in chains so heavy that their weight pulled them down to the low couches, and, though grief and want had disfigured their beauty, I saw they were of noble blood, and sons of high lords, born to govern the world. Then my host beckoned me to the next hall, where I found again twelve knights in chains, but old and pale, with venerable figure, and hair and beard silver-white. Then my host led me away by the hall, and said: "Behold my most precious goods!" Well, I found there goods great in riches and beauty, for fifteen lovely maidens were what he called the precious merchandise. And my heart pained me as I beheld them, for their loveliness and gentle mind shone amid the prison walls like stars in the night; and I saw one like their queen, a moon among the stars. But Strannur led me away and said: "Thou dost behold my goods; shall we exchange? Thou mayest easily get a rich ransom for each of them, more than one hundred thousand pounds of silver. In England they were born; William, their king, sent them over to Norway to bring him home his bride, King Reinemund's daughter, Irene, whom thou hast seen. Coming home, a storm threw them on my coast, and so they were mine by right; for after the custom of this land the strand is mine. And I offer these knights to thee, together with the fifteen maidens, that thou mayest give me the treasures I saw on thy ship." I had good reason to be astonished at such an offer, for I saw clearly it would be giving my goods for mere blanks, and so I asked the governor to let me please consider till the next morning. And when I came to my house I sat down thinking, and though my heart told me to help the prisoners in their misery, there was a voice in my mind saying: "Do not give away the earnings of thy life for a mere idea; and well would I have passed that night without coming to an end, if God in His goodness and grace had not given His advice in my heart. For I feel asleep, and in my sleep I heard a voice of God's angel, who spake to me these words: 'Awake, Gerard, God's anger is calling thee! Did He not say in His mercy, "What thou givest to the poorest of My brethren, thou givest unto Me?" What thou givest to the needy ones, thou ledest to the Lord; and doubt in Him is great sin to thee!' Then I awoke and fell on my knees, and thanked God that He had given me shame and repentance in my heart, and humbled me so as to save me from sin. The next morning my host met me at the gate, and with anxiety he asked what it was my wish to do. And I answered: "I am willing to make exchange with thee, O Strannur! if thou allowest me one thing: give back to the prisoners their ship and all they brought on it, and give them food and mariners and whatever they need to go home." And the Governor answered: "Dost thou think me a thief, O Gerard? I thought, friend, thou knewest me better. Not one penny's worth will I keep from the prisoners, and theirs shall be whatever is needed for a safe and speedy voyage." After that he gave me his hand, and we changed thus mine and thine. Then the prisoners were told of what had happened, and they were clothed as became them, and refreshed, and when they beheld me their thanks and tears were such that my eyes overflowed even against my will. And I saw the women's great beauty, and Irene their queen, and though the earthly crown was taken from her, there was the crown of beauty and loveliness on her brow. Then my clerk read prayers and we went to sea; the right wind blew in our sails, and bore us quickly out ward. When we came near the coast of England, I spoke to the knights: "Tell me, who of you were born in England, that they may go on their way home now." And they answered: "From Norway only came Queen Irene with two of her maidens; all the rest of us were born in England." I said to the knights: "Go home, then, with my blessings, noble lords; and if I did what pleased you, think of me with a friendly heart. Let King William know, and also Reinemund of Norway, that Queen Irene is in my house and under my protection, and that I am ready and willing to give her up whenever they claim her. When I send my messengers to you, pay them back, O knights! what I left for your sake in the strange land of the heathen, if it so is convenient for you." Then they thanked me so that I had to hide from their embraces; and we parted with many tears; and they went their way, I mine.

"Soon I was home again. My wife and son welcomed me gladly and with thanksgivings, and after I had told them all, they led Irene to my house. And Queen Irene lived in my house like one of us for many a month, and my wife loved her, and all the women of my household and friendship, and she taught them many a fine art, such as to embroider with gold and thread of silver and pearl. And God gave His blessing to my trade, and I prospered. But every day Irene's loveliness grew more lovely, and when I saw her so gentle and smiling, I forgot my losses, and my joy was greater than seventy-fold gain would have made it. So passed a year, and no message came from Reinemund, nor from William, the King of England, and I beheld with sorrow that my queen's mind was grieved, though she hid her tears from our eyes. That I took to my heart, and said to myself: 'I brought our sweet queen free from great pain, and now I must see her in greater grief.' There is no one here kindred to her, and when I am gone, who is there

to be her friend and protector? King William is dead, and so is Reinemund, the King of Norway, and Irene, their queen, will die of grief for them!" Therefore I spoke to her one day, and asked her to listen graciously, and then I said thus: "Thou must know, O queen! that there is nothing that gives me so much trouble than the thought that one day shall become of thee when I am no more. It is clear now, sorry as I am for it, that thy friends are dead, therefore I think it our duty to counsel wisely what is best for thy future, O queen! And he is considered a wise man who tries to forget what fortune took from him, so I advise thee, O my daughter! to choose for a husband one from among my family, that is, my son, as whose wife honor and ample fortune will not be wanting to thee." At that Irene answered, and spoke to me: "O dear father! I know me no better adviser than thee in this world; so I will do whatever pleases thee. Only let me wait one year longer; if till then no tidings have come from my friends and kindred, thy wish shall be mine!" But the year was soon past, and no tidings had reached us, neither from England nor Norway; and so Irene, the queen, was to be the merchant's wife. I ordered the wedding to be prepared with the greatest splendor, and my mind's only thought was to boast with my riches; and I asked to the feast many a rich merchant, and nobles and dukes, and our prince the Bishop. So when Pentecost came, that was to be the day of the wedding, the Bishop stood up before the altar, and eleven noble squires knelt down before him, and the twelfth one, who was Gerard, my son, and the Bishop blessed their swords, and they arose as noble lords and knights. My eye rested on him, and I saw he was happy; he broke his lance in honor of his bride; he watched for the bell that should call him again to the altar of God, there to receive Irene as his wife; what could there be to make his happiness greater and to hinder him from drinking the cup of bliss? But lo! I beheld one standing far aside, a stranger with a pale face and his eyes full of tears; he gazed at Irene, my daughter, and he shuddered, and his arm was around a column that he might not fall. He was a young man of great beauty, and his skin was fine and white, but his beard gray, and his dress that of a beggar. As I saw him so full of woe and tears, I went up to him, and asked him the cause of his grief, that perhaps I might give help and make joy and happiness come back to his mind. But he would not speak. At last, as I pressed him very much, he said to me these words: "Such as thou dost see me here with my hair gray before the time, I am William, King of England. I went to sea to meet my bride coming from Norway, where I had sent twelve maidens and twenty four knights to escort her over to me. But a storm arose and threw my ship against the rocks while I was already in sight of them, the tempest carried me to the shore and I was thus saved, but not a word I ever heard of the knights, or the maidens, or of Irene, my bride, the King of Norway's daughter. For years and years I have wandered about in search of her, with my heart full of despair and my hair and beard gray, till at last I found here to-day, the bride of another man. What shall I tell thee more? My soul and body are hers whom I love, and for her sake I will now give them up into death!" When I heard these words from my guest, him who destroyed all my joys, I said unto him: "The Lord has done great things; honor and fortune he might still give thee back; wait here awhile and be of good cheer!" And I sent my valet to him, to attend to all his needs and wants, but I went to my prince the Bishop and told him the wonder God had shown to us, and asked him to help me with my son Gerard, and teach him a Christian's duty. So I called my son away from the side of his bride, and after he had heard the tale, so full of marvel, the Bishop asked him: "Wilt thou then separate, Gerard, what before God is united?" Then he answered me and he said, "What do you think of me? Shall I give up my love and happiness and rest and peace?" But the Bishop spoke: "Yes, my son, thou shalt!" And my son began to cry at these words, and I cried with him, and he put his arms around my neck, and said, "My father, then let it be so!" and my heart felt joy at these words. Shall I tell thee what my heart felt when I saw King William greet his bride? I am old as thou art, O Emperor! but I know not without jealousy thou wouldst have beheld it. And I thanked the God of goodness who had given so wise counsel in my mind, that my blessings are now greater than what gold or silver could ever have bought for me. After that I filled my ship and took them over to England, and great was the joy of the four-and-twenty knights on beholding their king and queen and of the whole people, and great were their thanks to me, and only with great pain could I hinder them from bestowing all their riches on me, and making me a prince and a great man among them. But I will not repeat to thee all they meant to do to me, and the praises they gave me; for God knows, in all my life I cannot deserve them. And when I came home the people made much of me, and called me the 'Good,' thou knowest now as well as I do, that I am not good. It was only by the angel's voice that my doubts were taken from me; I was full of fear to lose my goods, and weak. Besides I am a poor sinner and am proud and vain, so that I have been praising myself before thee, O Emperor, while, couldst thou see my heart, many a fault thou wouldst observe within."

III.

Before Gerard had finished speaking, the Emperor's heart grew large within him, and made his eyes overflow—for tears are a blessing which God sends from heaven. He felt shame and repentance, and these two re-created his heart, and his mind was healed from all false glory. And he said: "Gerard, I tell thee, better a good deal than silence is what thou hast made known to me; for my heart was sick with vain glory, and pride overgrew the good deed. I had built a great house to the Lord, and the thought of that poisoned my heart, so that it asked for reward. But what I asked has turned against me as a punishment, for no heart is pure that seeks for glory only. When I then praised myself at my good deed, God sent me to thee to learn true humility and charity. Truly thou art good; for thy heart was not moved by the praise of this world. Thou hast given thy goods for the poor prisoners, thou hast taken the wife from thy

son, and refused the riches of England in humility and charity, only for the sake of the Lord thy God. Well, my ride to thee has brought me benefit. But thou, O Gerard! pray the Lord to have mercy upon him that prides in vainglory; pray for thy Emperor to our God in heaven."—Catholic World.

BARRIERS AGAINST GOD—A PROTESTANT MINISTER ON THE BARRENNESS OF PROTESTANTISM.

An interesting sermon was recently delivered in New York, by the Rev. Mr. Gunnison, Pastor of All Soul's Universalist church, on the nakedness and coldness of Protestantism as "barriers against God." He chose the 8th verse of the 24th Psalm as his text:—"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." These words were chanted at the gates of Jerusalem when the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of Jehovah's presence to the Israelites, was being carried with solemn rites, to Solomon's temple on the day of its dedication. Commenting on these words of the Royal Psalmist, this eloquent Protestant divine said:—"The temple, rich in its beauty and decorations was admired by the people, but when within its recesses the Ark of God was placed, then it became dear to them, for God dwelt within it, and in this consisted the significance of Israel's temple—a holy significance that will never utterly perish. The temple was but a building grand in structure, but when the King of Glory entered it, the associations of Israel's God and history lodged themselves within it, and it became the holiest and divinest spot on earth."

"Protestantism can never know how much it has lost in the surrender of the grand architecture, the poetic rites and imposing symbolism of the Catholic Church, which inspires in the worshippers a spiritual emotion that makes the Church the house of God."

The Rev. Mr. Gunnison, calling attention to the defects of the Protestant system of public worship limited in its nature to a partial use of the ear and an almost entire disuse of the eye, as channels of instruction and edification to the human soul, shows the contrast between this and the Catholic Church; he says: "Catholicism aims at devotion and quickens, not by the ear but by the eye; the grand architecture and services giving a majesty and brilliancy that charms the mind through the sight; so that in one of their Cathedrals it is almost impossible not to worship, and if their ceremonies and worship exert such an influence on one out of their creed, what influence must they exert upon those whose fathers have worshipped within them for a thousand years!"

"But what would Solomon's temple have been had the gates not been opened to let the King of Glory in? The gates had been built by the hands of Jews but being opened to the Lord, He made Jerusalem the city of cities."

"Our hands are continually building up gates against the Lord, and while we consider that we are safe, He is on the outside clamoring for admission. The first of these is irreverence."

The distinguished minister then goes on to show from his standpoint, that Protestantism, by its spirit of restlessness and criticism, "has left uninvited the religious and spiritual element which is chief in the soul of man—its cold when the soul needs fervency, its ministrations tending to intellectual development rather than spiritual growth. The disciples of Catholicism, on the other hand, are men of feeling, because by memory, music, art, and association they cultivate feeling. The Catholic regards his church as the house of God, the Protestant as his place of meeting, and to this must be attributed the atmosphere of contention among its denominations which builds up against the King of Glory a seeming everlasting barrier."

After an exposure of the contradictions and turmoil of the innumerable sects which distract Protestant Christendom, the Rev. Mr. Gunnison thus frankly but sadly admits the failure of Protestantism to meet the wants of the human soul:—"Selfishness in another church, how sad its story—sect arrayed against sect, church against church, creed against creed; jealousy, envy, all uncharitableness with evil speaking and malice—these come and dwell within the 'house of God.' The strong refuse to bear the burdens of the weak, and the weak will bear no burden at all; whose houses are of brass and timbers of impenetrable oak. Within the Church there ought to be no room for personal selfishness; bigotry, self-conceit, carping criticisms of men and methods, sensitiveness, a constant crying out of neglect, lack of earnestness—these are the bolts in the door which keep the King of Glory out."

"There are other gates, as those of pride, folly, and unconsecrated service, all of which we are building up against the King, while within, because of them, our churches, our sects, yes, our own hearts are desolate; because the King stands without knocking, the gates preventing His entrance." The want of a more consoling and expressive system of public worship among our separate brethren is to be seen in the remarkable growth of what is styled the High Church and Ritualistic party in the Protestant denomination in the United States, and in Great Britain and her dependencies. This "Romanizing" element has succeeded in gradually introducing altars, crosses, pictures and statuary, processions and recessions, altar cloths, choral services, Gregorian music, floral decorations, and other customs peculiar to the Catholic Church. In architecture this approximation to Catholic art is seen everywhere in the revival of Gothic architecture, with all its beautiful symbolism, which has almost superseded the old orthodox Protestant square windowed, galleried, and white-washed house of worship of forty years ago.—Pittsburgh Catholic.

Pious old party—"And now, Mrs. Stubbins, I've one important question to ask. Does not Satan oftentimes tell you that you are not a Christian?" Mrs. Stubbins—"Yes, 'ee do so." P. O. P.—"And what say you to him on these occasions?" Mrs. S.—"Well, I say, whether I be or no, it can't possible be none of 'is business."—London Fun.