

ning wool—a beautiful lady yet, although worn and emaciated, and the Count exclaimed: “Was it ever seen to this day, that a king’s daughter should spin wool?” But no entreaty could persuade Elizabeth to break from her awful vows to her “spiritual director.”

The last days were dreadful. Her money and her jewels were exhausted in her benefactions. She spun wool and caught and sold fish to gain a bare subsistence for herself and to help her pensioners. Her health rapidly declined. But all this was not enough for Conrad. He redoubled his cruel impositions; made her scrub floors and wash dishes; added to her penances of fasting and scourging; himself beat her with his fist, with a stick, with a knotted rope; dismissed the devoted ladies who until now had comforted her, and put about her hard, harsh creatures who acted the spy and continually denounced her to her tyrant, because she had given to the poor contrary to his orders.

Without a loving face about her, left of husband, children, and her faithful Isentrude and Guta, forbidden to give money or even bread to the poor, severely punished for every breach of this harsh command, deprived of all opportunity of that beneficence which was the one outlet for her affectionate nature, thus was she trained by Conrad for sainthood. To be perfect, she must be dead to all earthly affections and desires, even those of doing good. She must be absolutely, blindly obedient. Pope Gregory wrote her to submit to Conrad, and to Conrad to keep hold of her. And so they killed her.

To the last she worked and prayed. While her hands retained sufficient strength, she spun. When that became impossible, she lay in bed and pulled hemp. At last she could do no more. For-

tunately Conrad was absent when the end came, and she died in peace, without pain or struggle. At midnight she sang very softly; and at cock-crowing said, “Now comes the hour when Mary the Mother-Maid brought the child Jesus into the world, and laid Him in the manger; and the star appeared to guide the wise men to His cradle. He came to redeem the world, and He will redeem me. And now is the time that He rose from the grave and broke the prison-doors of hell, to release the imprisoned souls; and He will now release me.” At last, with the words, “I am very weak, but I have no pain,” she composed herself as if to sleep, and so passed to the dear Lord Jesus whom she had so loved and served.

It was the 19th of November, 1231, when she died. She was buried in the church attached to her hospital; but in 1236 the remains were removed to the church specially built in her honour at Marburg. In the meantime, Conrad’s representation of her life and character and the reports of miracles wrought at her tomb, transmitted to Rome, secured her admission to the canon of “saints,” in the year 1235. Her shrine was much frequented by pilgrims throughout the Middle Ages, until the Protestant Philip of Hesse removed her remains to some unknown place of sepulture, that the superstitious reverence of them might cease.

But nothing can deprive Elizabeth of the right to be revered as indeed a notable saint of God, simple-hearted, honest, sincere in faith, noble in patience and endurance and good works, shining out in the beauty of a spotless character amid all the barbarity of her age and the false religious ideals and influences which so embittered her existence.

When we think of her blind