

RECOMPENSE.

Not in the days when to its royal breast
The glory of a purple vestment clings
The thorn-begirded thistle finds its
wings;
But in that later time, when naught doth
rest
Within the shelter of the vengeful
thorn,
But heaps of silver-ashes, seared white,
Then 'tis the bleaching fire through
some strange night
Stir swiftly, and the thistle wings are
born.
Now surely hast thou kinship with the
fields,
O soul! Now in thy purple-vested
days
Shalt thou fare upward from thy thorn-
girt ways.
Still thy hurt cry then, for the pasture
yields
Abundant comfort. Let by fire and
thorn
For thee and for the thistle wings are
born.
—Lucy E. Tilley, in Harper's Weekly.

Selected Serial.

ELVIRA;

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

A Story of the New Awakening in the
Land of the Old

By Mrs. HUNT MORGAN,
Author of "Isaac," "Cuthbert and Bayonet," &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TWO ELVIRAS.

Ascending the stairway, the abadesa
and her two companions traversed the
corridor, until they came to a row of
cells, each closed with an iron door. One
of these appeared to be where their next
visit was to be made, for the abadesa
paused, and produced a key, which she
proceeded to fit into a small keyhole.
They entered. The room was some-
what better, or rather less miserably ap-
pointed than the other; a small iron
bedstead and a stool were all the furni-
ture it contained, but that was not so
wretched as straw on the cold floor. On
the side of the bed sat a nun, of spare
form and watery countenance, but pos-
sessed an exquisite beauty of feature
which struck Elvira at once. No ravages
of time, no suffering, could disguise the
loveliness of that noble brow, that deli-
cately formed mouth and chin; and the
large plaintive eyes only looked darker
and richer for the hollows that shadowed
them.

The nun rose, with the lofty grace of a
hostess welcoming her invited visitors, as
they entered. She failed to distinguish
Elvira's face, for the young novice was
still wrapped in the simple cloak.
"Senorita," began Renaldo, addressing
the prisoner, she started at a form of
speech so singular, as coming from a
priest, and looked inquiringly, half hope-
fully at him from under her heavy lashes.
He read the look instantly, and answered
it.

"Yes, senorita, I dare no longer ad-
dress you by the title of spiritual relation-
ship which God's Word disallows.
"Call no man on earth Father, for none is
your Father, even God. At last I see
the truth of what you have so long, so
bravely held, and I no longer claim to
call you 'daughter.' I come to tell you
that Christ's light has shined into one
more heart, and His infinite mercy has
proved 'mighty to save' even a priest of
Horne."

The nun clasped her hands with an
exclamation of thankfulness.
"Thank God my prayers are heard for
another soul! Don Renaldo, your name
has never been forgotten since first you
came and sought to guide me to what
you believed to be the truth. I knew the
Lord Himself was drawing you even
then! Oh, I knew He could not fail to
perfect His work, so evidently begun in
your soul, and He has done it!"

"And you have prayed for me?" she
said, with an accent of grateful tender-
ness. "Pray for me still!"

"I will—I will," she murmured, softly.
Elvira, in obedience to a sign from the
abadesa, had seated herself on the side
of the narrow bed, and now, with her
cloak thrown back from her face, was
gazing, in a strange fascination, on the
impressed nun, feeling as if somewhere,
in a dream, she must have seen that deli-
cate profile and heard the low, silver-
toned voice, something in her fixed
gaze seemed to attract the nun's glance
to her with a sort of magnetic spell, as
such earnest looks will draw the atten-
tion of her object.

The large, gleaming eyes fixed them
selves on the fair young face, as if spell-
bound; and the pallid countenance as-
sumed a ghastly hue.

"Who is this?" came at length, in al-
most a whisper of terror, from the dry
lips.

Renaldo answered quickly—
"A sister in the faith, senorita; young,
but true to her Lord, as yourself."

"But what was her name in the world?"
asked the nun.

Then, before Renaldo could reply, she
sat down beside the wondering Elvira,
and, taking her hand with a caressing
movement, looked dreamily into the
sweet face.

"Strange!" she murmured. "At one
moment I feel as if I were back in my
old home of long ago, looking into the
mirror which reflected me as a girl; and
then, it is not myself I see, but some
distant, yet glorious, vision. You, senor-
ita, have some vision of a face, so dear, so
long ago vanished for me. May I kiss
you, my child?"

The fresh young lips were instantly
pressed to hers.

"It is no dream," she said, as she re-
turned the gentle pressure. "Then, turn-
ing again to Renaldo, she repeated, 'Tell
me, who is this?'"

He hesitated, as if seeking words in
which to give the information she sought,
without too suddenly startling her. She
waited eagerly.

"Senorita," he said, at length, "you
are not the last of your race!"

"Then she is of my family," said the
nun, "and I was not mistaken when I
traced that mirror-vision in her face,
though I was never so fair as that. But
her name?"

K. D. C. is guaranteed

"What is your own, senorita?" asked
the priest, cautiously.

"Elvira de Hernandez y Romera."

The novice started, as the nun uttered
the words—her own name!

"But what of that?" continued the
nun. "Are there two Elvira? I know
of no member of my family bearing my
Christian name."

"It is long since you left the outer
world, senorita," said the priest, gently.
"Yes, a long time!" she sighed. "She
is young, very young!" of course I do
not, I never could have known her! Why
do you not tell me all?"

"You know your cousin, the Conde
Hernandez, Don Fernando?" suggested the
priest.

She caught her breath, as if a sudden
pain had shot through her, and answered
faintly—
"Yes."

"The young senorita is his only child,"
returned Renaldo.

"His?"

"Again that sharp pain, as though some
hidden wound had been touched. She
turned to Elvira, with a long loving look,
in which there were tenderness mingled
with bitter pain, then folding both her
arms round the wondering girl, she
kissed her again and again.

"Are you my cousin?" asked Elvira,
doubtfully, at length, while she clung to
her new-found relative affectionately.

"You must be the cousin, then, that my
father once told me he had named me
for, are you not?"

"I think so, querida, yes," was the
answer, and the dark eyes were dim with
tears.

"I have no mother," said Elvira,
laying her soft cheek against the pale
face of her cousin, "no female relative!
Will you try to love me for my mother?"

A closer pressure of those folding arms,
and another touch of the quivering lips,
answered her with a fuller emphasis
than words could have done.

"The abadesa and Renaldo had drawn
aside as much as the limited extent of
the room permitted, but they now came
forward."

"We must go, Hermana Beatriz," said
the abadesa, addressing the elder Elvira
by her convent name. "Your young
cousin will be in peril of discovery if we
remain. I will bring her again as soon
as I can safely do so; meanwhile, com-
fort yourself with the hope of speedy
freedom."

"Freedom! Freedom for me! Shall
I see the mountains and orange groves
of my beautiful Spain again?" exclaimed
the Senorita de Hernandez, looking bewil-
dered with the sound of liberty.

"If God will," answered Renaldo.
"You shall be free within a week."

"And my child named for me?" she
asked, retaining her hold of Elvira's
hand.

"She goes with you to liberty," was
the reply, and then they parted.

"Lead us back by the way of the
chapel, senorita," requested Renaldo of
the abadesa, as they left the cell. And
on, through the dark corridors they
passed by another way, until a hidden
door admitted them to the convent
chapel behind the altar. No one
there, then, as they issued from that secret
way, but the watchful eyes of the ap-
tly named Juan had seen Elvira enter the
abadesa's apartment hours before, and had
kept up the watch for her exit. She
came not, and when Juan was obliged to
leave her post of observation, she found
Elvira in the refectory. The abadesa,
then, had betrayed some secret
passage!

(To be continued.)

The Deacon's Saint.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

By CHARLES BARNARD.

The deacon's wife came downstairs
and entered the broad, low dining room.
She had been up to take a last look at
the spare room to see that it was pro-
perly warmed for the expected guest. It
was a wintry day without, and Christmas
morning. The good woman looked out
the window upon the snowy road and
dull gray sky with a sigh.

"Must be terrible weather for poor
folks—particularly if their wood-pile's
scanty!"

She looked at the ample fire blazing
on the brick hearth, glanced at the tall
clock that marked nearly noon, and then
turned up the big table already set for
dinner. She touched the white cloth
here and there, as if to straighten it,
glanced over the double row of blue
plates, and then spoke up as if calling
some one—
"Hebbs!"

The door opened, and a young woman,
with sleeves rolled up and hands white
with flour, appeared.

"What is it, mother! Dinner's most
ready!"

"You put on too many plates."

"The minister's coming to dinner."

"Yes. There's your father's, and me,
and you, and Tommy, and Mr. Balcom—
five, and there are six plates."

"I must have been thinking of Hitty."

"You know what your father says,
Hitty is dead to us now."

"That don't make her any really dead.
Father won't have her name spoken, and
what's it all for? Just because she
went her own way and wouldn't live at
home?"

The deacon's wife sat wearily down by
the fire, and the daughter proceeded to
rearrange the table.

"Your father's terrible set in his ways,
and I dare say she's suffering for food
and things. Her wood is ten dollars a
cord in the city."

"It's strange how the goodly fruits of
the earth are divided in this vale of tears.
It's white meat to some, and some must
put up with the drumsticks. Luke
Somer had just got back from the city,
and he's seen so much suffering he's
brought back to stop giving to Foreign
Missions and give to the poor."

"You don't suppose Luke happened
to see her?"

"He knows all about it—everybody
does—and just how set father is, yet he
didn't inquire a little at the police station
and the missions."

"Luke is just a little presuming, Heb-
bs."

"I asked him, mother. It was all my
work, and he did it to please me."

"You may be right. It's just possible

if your father was to hear from her he
might feel more kindly disposed to
wards her."

"Luke thinks he may find her yet—
through advertising. I gave him some
of my allowance for a personal in the
papers."

It was a sore subject. The one way-
ward, willful child of the Deacon's first
wife had left the quiet farm when only
eighteen, and when her sister Hebbs
was only nine years of age. The old
farm was very dull. There was in the
girl's veins a dash of wild blood inherited
from a mother whose father had been a
traveling merchant, a wanderer up
and down the earth. The girl had also
inherited from some unknown ancestor
a beautiful voice and an intense longing
for expression in music and for applause
and approval. The farm life had seemed
too narrow, the village too small a stage,
and, with her father's consent, had gone
to Boston to study music—and never re-
turned. Letters personal entreaties,
commands, and threats alike useless. She
had found her work, she said, and re-
fused to go back to the farm. From that
time forth the Deacon refused to speak
of her, and said she was dead to them
all. Happily for the later children and
their mother, the younger brood were
very plain and the home-staying
Hebbs and sober, quiet Tommy, a boy
given much to books.

Hebbs had closed the door, and the
Deacon's wife watched the fire, thinking
much of the absent one and of the day
that should be so glad and so sad.

Just then there were sounds of sleigh
bells without.

"Meeting must be over and folks go-
ing home."

Presently one of the sleighs turned
into the yard.

"Must be father and the minister."

Before she could rise to welcome them,
came a lively tap on the frosty window,
and, looking up, she saw a round, jolly
face pressed against the window, and
heard a muffled voice cry through the
glass—
"Hello!"

"Tell Richard to bring the minister
over to our house after dinner. We are
going to have a treat. Come, all of you.
Great things and Mary wants you to taste
her new cake—it's a receipt she got from
the city. Don't forget. Merry Christ-
mas to Hebbs and Tom."

"Seven o'clock," said the boy under-
stand, and then the face disappeared. A
moment later she saw her husband's young
er brother climb into his big sleigh and
drive away with his brood, while an echo
of shouts and merry laughter seemed to
warm the frosty air.

"If God will," said the baby. Edward's
a queer fellow, though they do seem to
get along comfortably, considering. Sup-
pose father will go, though he does hate
a noise. There! He's coming now, and
the minister, looking half froze."

"Only on grand occasions was the Dea-
con's table set forth with such splendor.
The table was always ample, and now it
was simply gorgeous with two turkeys—
one roast, one boiled—a stately ham,
and two ducks, with a monster plume of
celery in the middle. The new minister
had not dined at the farm before. The
Deacon's wife, with curious observation,
had remarked that "pious folks were
always heavy feeders," hence the liberal
spread of meats and vegetables."

The young minister came, saw the
table, and was conquered. Every dish
having been named and its merits de-
scribed, the conversation drifted from the
good things of life to more personal mat-
ters. Brother Edward's invitation was
delivered, and young Mr. Balcom was
quite in favor of accepting it.

"It's most surprising," remarked the
Deacon, "I didn't know as you cared
for tridlin' like that."

"It is never tidlin' to make young
people happy. I'm sure I'd be very glad
to go and see the tree and help make
the children happy. Why, last Christmas
I dressed up as an old man and played
St. Nicholas before the Sunday-school at
my own parish."

"Always seemed to me a kind o' heathen
business. Don't suppose there
ever really was a saint by that name."

"Perhaps not, as children understand
him. Still, the old fellow stands for a
real Christmas idea, even if his parentage
is a trifle misty."

"The early night had come before
Hebbs and her mother had fairly cleared
away the table. The Deacon and his
guest were seated before the roaring
hickory, deep in the crops, the weather,
and the state of the church, when the
youthful Tommy loudly announced his
wish to go to the Christmas tree."

"Let us go," said the minister. "Every-
thing must give way to the young folks
on Christmas Day."

So it was that the entire family, in-
cluding the big dog, tramped off through
the snow to Uncle Edward's, leaving the
old house shut. The lights were put
out and the fire covered over, lest it go
out and leave the old home with only a
cold air.

About an hour later the clouds moved
away and the stars came out. There was
a cold, belated moon, and every snow-
drift seemed more blank and ghastly
against the black stone walls. A bitter
wind began to stir, and the tall spruces
before the house, already deep greenish-
black in the cold, seemed to sigh fitfully.
Up from the mill-pool, where the ice
glittered like a silver lake, came unearthly
moans, dreadful rendings, as if the
heart of the ice had snapped. Beyond the
unhappy cries from the frozen water,
shrinking in the cold and the shivering
signs in the sleeping trees, there was not
a sound. All nature seemed dumb or
dead.

Then through the wintry silence there
came the faint sound of sleigh bells.
Nearer and nearer, and then the panting
of fast-driven horses and the swift
crunch of heavy runners on icy snow
grew loud, and abruptly stopped in a
sort of *sfianza* of bells and shouting
driver.

A covered sleigh from the nearest rail-
road, six miles away. He benumbed
driver got down and hastily covered his
panting horses, and then assisted a well-
wrapped figure down from the back seat.

"Guess the folks ain't to hum. House
seems kinder shut up."

"Oh! I hope not. Wait a moment,
Luke, till I and I can get in."

The figure seemed to know the way,
for it crept carefully over the icy walk,
confidently opened the gate, and walked
straight up the path under the dark and
sombre spruces.

No light. No sound. All dark and
dead.

But before he had gone two bars with
the melody he dropped into the base,
for a glorious soprano had caught the
strain and carried it grand and high over
all the happy chorus.

Money Refunded.

Not even the bark of a dog. The
visitor knocked three times, looked up
at all the windows, and even tried to
peer in between the closed blinds. The
thickly robed figure seemed suddenly
to drop, and stood staring at a dis-
ciple in silence on the big stone by the
closed door. The family were gone.
Even the house was dead.

Not far away the fun was at young
flood, and seemed likely to rise to a
spring tide of merriment. The new
minister was a perfect treasure. He told
the wildest stories, and set even the se-
date grown-up children in a roar. And
the tree! Ah! the tree! It was a sight
to behold. The entire company, with
the baby in Hebbs's arms at the head,
marched in procession into the big
kitchen, while the minister actually
played the bridal march from "Lohen-
grin" on the tinkling old piano. Every-
body said it sounded beautifully, though
the treble B flats were dead. Nobody
noticed it, for the minister always ex-
pected a grand *fornitino* can *amore*
double octave with both hands on the
living B flats that was quite inspiring.

When the entire procession had
marched three times round the tree the
company sat down—the little folks in
front and the grown-ups behind. The
Deacon was given the honor of giving
the presents with the most amusing and
entrancing remarks concerning every
gift, when a most singular thing hap-
pened. The worthy Deacon, who had been
beaming upon the company from his big
chair, suddenly gave a cry, and threw up
his hands, and actually fainted away, big
strong man that he was.

Nobody could tell what was the mat-
ter. Some said he was too near the
stove, others thought the room too close,
and everybody wanted to help. Happily,
it seemed to be only a slight fainting
spell," as his wife expressed it, and, un-
der the genial influence of a dash of icy
water from the well, he soon recovered.

It was the minister who had seized a tin
dipper and rushed into the cold with-
out his hat. He was not very quick in
judging the weather. The truth was, he had
found something else, and he came in
out of the darkness with the tin dipper
of freezing water, and a new idea in his
head.

The Deacon was quite vexed with him-
self for making such a disturbance on
such a happy occasion, and the company
again took their places beside the poor
neglected tree. The Deacon did not
want to come back to the kitchen, but
the minister insisted that the fun could
not go on without him, and so he con-
sented to resume his chair opposite the
big window.

"Now," said the minister, when all
were ready, "I have a great surprise for
you all. I have received a telegram
from our worthy Saint Nicholas, in which
he says that, unless his reindeer express
breaks down, he shall—hark! What's
that? Sleigh bells! Don't stir, boys,
you'll frighten Donner and Blitzen, and
they may shy and upset the Saint—Ha,
ha! There is a knock."

There was an undeniable knock at the
kitchen door, and the entire company
rose filled with unusual excitement.
This was so, because nobody said a word,
and the minister had to say—
"Come in, please."

The door slowly opened and then
closed, and there stood the real original
Saint Nicholas, wrapped in a long fur
cloak, with a fur cap on his head, and a
blue silk scarf wrapped around his face
to keep out the cold. It was certainly
the beloved Saint, for his hands were
full of bundles. He looked about on the
company and then bowed slowly to them
all, while his eyes twinkled merrily.

Some thought that his eyes were very
clear and bright for one of his age, but
this was soon forgotten in the events that
followed.

"Come right in, dear Saint," said the
minister. "You need not be afraid. We
all love you, and wish you could stay
with us all the time and make the whole
year a Christmas Day. Have you any
presents for these good children?"

The worthy Saint bowed solemnly, and
offered the minister one of the bundles.
He took it, and read the name—
"FOR SISTER HEBS!"

"The saint seemed to be affected by the
heat of the room, and steadied himself
against the wall. No words could ex-
press the astonishment of the entire
company. Hebbs with trembling fingers
opened the package. Wonder of won-
ders! A dozen kid gloves, a silk scarf,
and a little box. The poor girl was
overwhelmed with surprise and delight.
Oh! the box! Only a pink cotton!
Ah! a diamond pin! Never all the
country side had such splendor been
seen. Everybody jumped up and tried
to get a look at the presents. This was
indeed a truly remarkable Santa Claus.

"Sit down! Sit down, everybody!"
The Saint must go soon, and she—
"I mean he—has more presents."

"This quieted the good folks, and when
the Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

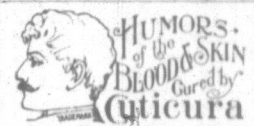
The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.

"For mother." Why, that's strange!
There are two good mothers here. Who
is it for, Mister Saint?"

The Saint held out another package
nearly all were seated.



HUMORS OF THE BLOOD AND SKIN.

Scaly, itching, burning, bleeding,
sealy, crusty, pimply, blotchy, or copper-
colored, with loss of hair, either simple, heredi-
tary, or contagious, are speedily, permanently,
economically, and infallibly cured by the CUTICURA.
The great skin cure, CUTICURA, is an exquisite skin
purifier and beautifier, and CUTICURA RESOLVENT,
the new Blood Purifier and greatest of all Humors
Remedies, when the best physicians and all
other remedies fail. This is strong language,
but true. CUTICURA REMEDIES are the only
infallible blood purifiers.

Sold everywhere. Price, CUTICURA, 75c.;
SOAP, 50c.; RESOLVENT, \$1.00. Prepared by
POTTER DRUG & CHEMICAL CORPORATION, Boston.
Send for "How to Cure Skin Diseases."

Scalp itching, blackheads, chapped and oily skin,
eczema, pimples, eruptions, and all other skin
diseases prevented by CUTICURA SOAP. 75c.

Backache, kidney pains, weakness, and
neuritis relieved in one minute by
the CUTICURA ANTI-PAIN PLASTER. 50c.

SCOTT'S EMULSION.

Of Pure Cod Liver Oil and
HYPOPHOSPHITES
of Lime and Soda

Scott's Emulsion is a perfect
Food for the Weak. It is the
most powerful and reliable
remedy for all cases of
Scrophulous, Bronchitis, Wasting
Diseases, Chronic Coughs, and Colds.
PREPARED IN A MILK.

It is the most powerful and reliable
remedy for all cases of
Scrophulous, Bronchitis, Wasting
Diseases, Chronic Coughs,