

the same thing) to conviction;—for who ever seriously reflected and remained obstinate in unbelief? All his hopes are now directed to meeting his child in heaven; and he will never relapse into infidelity while he believes that she is an Angel there!"

Here we parted, as our roads lay in different directions; and I returned home weaving sweet fancies on the name of Mary.

How sweet, I thought, is the name of Mary! How well does St. Bernard speak our thoughts when he says, "Oh, Mary! you cannot be named without inflaming the heart of him, who pronounces your name and loves you." Why is this name ever given to common mortals? It should rather be enshrined in every heart,—it should never be named but with a feeling of reverence,—it should never be heard but with an interior motion of respect and love for her who bore it once, and who has thus made it a name holy to every Christian's ear. How venerable is the name of Mary,—how full of fragrance and of beauty! Truly it is an inspiration to all pious thoughts, sweet as the odours of the cedars of Lebanon, fair as the lily, lovely as the rose, meek and gentle as the lowly violet, bright as the stars that encircle her brow. All virtues, and all memories of virtue are entwined around it. Chastity, poverty, humility, obedience, charity,—these are the bright attributes of Mary, and these are the memories that encircle her name. The name of Mary has also a mystic signification—meaning, 'Star of the Sea.' She was indeed the Sea-star, the star of hope, which rose over the troubled waters of bitterness and crime, and soothed their billows to a sudden calm.

All the nations of the earth were pagans, and the bright days of the religion of Juda had vanished for ever. The days of the patriarchs, of the judges, of the kings, of the prophets, had passed away. The glory was about to depart from Jerusalem, the sceptre of her power had already been wrested from the princes of her people. The Roman cohorts were in her streets, the Roman eagles flew over her towers, a Roman delegate was on her throne, and Roman power controlled her councils. The forms of

religion were still preserved; but the spirit—the spirit was there no longer. The priests still lay prostrate before the holy of holies, the temples still echoed to Jehovah's name; but the heart slept on in cold indifference; the body was bent in prayer, but the spirit was bowed yet lower, and grovelled in the very dust in the sordid interests of human nature debased and fallen. Such was the world when Mary came,—the morning star which was to usher in the true sun of the spiritual world. As the storm-beaten mariners of ancient days hailed, with shouts of delight, the rising of that star which was their only guide over the waste of waters, so may we hail the name of Mary, as the true beacon to our haven of safety at the foot of the Cross. Oh! let it sink deeply into our souls! let it linger in our hearts, and about our lips! let us call upon it when we rejoice, as when we mourn—in the sunshine of security as in the gloom of distress and danger. It will be to us as most sweet refreshment in the hour of need as a light in the darkness of this world, as a certain assurance of safety and rest, as a shield around our hearts, and an armour of proof against the attacks of our foe. We will think on Mary and the virtues amid which that name is enshrined, will crowd to our memories and perhaps bloom in our hearts. We will speak of Mary, and the devil shall fly from before our footsteps. We will pray to Mary, and our prayer shall be heard at the throne of her Son! She, on earth, denied him nothing,—neither, in Heaven, will he refuse her aught. On earth, He called her 'Mother';—his head was pillowed on that sinless heart, his nourishment was derived from that most sinless breast. Will he deny the wish of that heart—the sighs of that bosom? Her tears often fell upon his infant brow, her lips were often pressed upon his infant cheek. Will he refuse the prayer of those lips?—Those lips which belonged to her, who shared in all his thoughts, and wept with more than a mother's love over all his woes. Where is the child who would refuse aught to his parent? Where the son would deny aught to his mother? And Father of Heaven! That mother, Mary,—that Son, the Saviour of the world.