

of Great Price"; and no secular writer of fiction, ancient or modern, has achieved a Short Story as simple, concise and as dramatic and allegorically powerful over the heart and the imagination as Christ's tale of "The Prodigal Son"—the shortest and yet greatest short story in world literature.

Again: if I were asked to select the most humanly tender, and yet most poignantly pathetic, apostrophe, under the most simple and familiar similitude, in all literature, I should quote Christ's heart-broken apostrophe and lament over the Fate of the Holy City—

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing—and *you* would not!

I need no more than remark the vividness and tenderness in the homely, familiar similitude, "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings", and the folorn sorrow in the phrase, "and you would not", made more moving in the Greek text by the use of the plural person, conveying thus the idea that the whole people of Jerusalem were hardened in their hearts to reject Christ—His very own people, small and great, poor and rich, all against Him who came to them with the gospel of the Way of Life and the New Kingdom of God on earth. Rather, however, note the moving power of the pathetic *reiteration*, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem", if poignancy of heart-broken emotion is to be felt by the reader in Christ's apostrophe. It is a "cry" *de profundis*; and Christ once again turns to reiteration to utter a "cry" *de profundis*, as He did in utter loneliness and desolateness of soul and spirit, when he died, calling, in His last words from the Cross on Calvary, to an unanswering universe—

Eli, Eli, lema Sabacthani—My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

It is to be noted, in this connection, that the word "sabaethani" is an Aramaic form, and, to the understanding reader, adds special poignancy to the tragic pathos of Christ's dying agony of spirit; for Aramaic was Christ's childhood speech, his mother-tongue; and now, dying, not the Hellenistic Greek of the day, but the speech that He learned, as a child, from His mother, the Blessed Virgin, comes to His tongue from the hidden, deep wells of His sub-conscious mind. Reverting, however, to the apostrophe to Jerusalem, it is plain that in poetic expression of humanly tender, poignantly moving emotion, Christ was a master of genuine pathos.

It is hardly necessary for me to elaborate what must be obvious and familiar to any one who knows the text of the Matthaean and the other gospels—namely, Christ's tender regard for children and His respect for and high sense of the beauty and nobility of the spirit of woman. But I must observe that the innate sense of the value of the Imperfect, the respect for weak and growing things, such as children, and the sensitive appreciation of the loveliness of the soul and spirit of woman, is a distinct mark of poetic faculty. It is a ready but valid induction that all poets have been inspired by these three—the winsome beauty of field flowers, the innocence and faith of childhood, and the spiritual graces of woman. Christ was inspired, as we saw, by the beauty of the lilies of the field; He gave beautiful and impressive expression of His love of children when He rebuked His disciples because they could not appreciate the spiritual meaning of the innocence and faith of the young, and uttered, for their salvation, this immortal poetic maxim—

Suffer little children to come unto me,
For of such is the Kingdom of
Heaven.

As to Christ's attitude to the heart and spirit of woman, I observe that it was poetic, ideally beautiful and tender.