

there is One to guard them, Jesus, whom they have guarded—Jesus, at whose feet their lives have passed in silent prayer for themselves, for the world, for Assisi. In sublime faith Clare takes in her trembling hands the golden vessel, and, standing above the doomed city, calls upon the God who stilled the waves of the sea. And at sight of the Sacred Host, surrounded with light, at the vision of the seraphic face of her who stood alone before them all in the might of her courage, terror fell upon the infidels, and they fled away as shadows before the sun.

But who is Clare, and what is her story?

The "Little Flowers of St. Francis" lend to it poetic beauty. She is a daughter of the nobility, fair and young, surrounded by all that wealth and affection can give to human desire. We meet her first at dead of night kneeling before the altar of St. Mary of the Angels, "where her locks were shorn off, and she became the bride of Jesus-Christ." She has thrown aside the pleasure heaped up with its most brilliant gems—to choose poverty and penance. She has scarcely tasted of the cup of happiness before she has dashed it aside for the chalice of the Lord. While life was fairest in its promise, she has chosen the bitterness of the Cross, the Master's choice,—so sweet to those who love the Master,—because she has measured time with eternity. She has studied earthly joys from the side of heaven, as we look at a fine silken fabric through a glass, and see its texture grow coarse and common.

And so the picture fades into the convent shadows. But while the rest of her family, whose future was so full of



SAINT CLARE