

was mingling itself with the Christian faith almost imperceptibly, and she was becoming a dangerous though quiet opponent of Christianity. She was the prop and pillar of paganism, for from her lips it lost all that rendered it gross and repulsive. Cyril, bishop of Antioch, had been particularly distressed by Hypatia's obstinate adherence to her faith; he had tried again and again to engage her in polemical discussions, but her subtle wit her keen perceptions, always gave her the advantage over him; she would evade his strongest arguments, and he gained no ground with her.

He was an ardent, enthusiastic man; his feelings ran away with his judgment, and when he found himself repulsed in every way, when no appeal he made to her could produce any change, when she rejected his nephew, who was to him as his own son, his passion found vent, and he burst forth into the most passionate expressions of indignation against her; both in public and in private, he inveighed against her as the one stumbling block in the way of truth. He was most beloved by the Christians, and his words had great effect upon them. He persuaded them not to go to the Academy to hear her lectures, and by degrees, he excited a deep and rancorous feeling against her. She, absorbed in her studies, heeded it not. She did not miss the warm greeting that formerly welcomed her wherever she went. She heard not the taunting words that were uttered as she passed through the streets: "Hypatia the heathen! Hypatia the Atheist!" troubled not her, for her mind introverted, was working out the great soul problem, as she had found it presented in the works of her master.

One day as she was preparing to attend her school, where she was to deliver a lecture on immortality, one of the young priests of the Serapian hastily entered her presence, and reverently bowing before her, prayed her not to go forth that day, for if she did danger awaited her.

"What danger," she calmly replied, "can come to Hypatia, which she should shrink from? She can fear nought; Minerva's shield is ever over her."

"Nay, Hypatia, trust not, I pray thee, to the protection of the gods, or anything else,—protect thyself. The people, stirred up by the wild, half crazy, frantic Peter, are infuriate against thee. They say the restrictions Orestes has lately put upon the people are thy suggestion, and they threaten thee with loud and bitter imprecations; groups are talking in the streets, and thy name mingles with curses loud and deep. Oh! go not forth, Hypatia, or the people will have the ain of thy blood to answer for. Thou knowest not what fiendish power lies in a mob, led on by such a man as Peter the wild."

"I cannot fear, Myron. The daughter of Theon can have nought to dread in the city of her fathers. I thank thee for thy kindness; thy motive is good, but I must not yield to thy persuasions. It is my duty to go to the school, and why should I fear the people? It is scarcely three moons since, as I passed along the streets, my chariot was filled with garlands, and my name was uttered with blessings and prayers; and surely I have done nought to lose the respect of the people. No, I must go forth, trusting in my innocence, and the generosity of my fellow citizens."

"Since you are determined so to do," replied Myron, I will to Orestes, and pray him for his guard to attend and protect thee."

"Nay, Myron, I cannot consent to that; my trust is not in the spear of the strong arm, but in the favor of the gods, and the kindness of man; I go alone, and if it is my fate to perish by the hands of my own people, they but do me a kindness, in sending me sooner to listen, in the gardens of Elysium, to the teachings of my great master."

Saying this, Hypatia threw over her the long thick veil worn by the Egyptian ladies, and which shrouded her whole head and form, and making a gesture of silence to Myron, whom she saw about to expostulate still further with her, she passed out, and entered the chariot which stood waiting for her at the door. Her cheek was deadly pale, but not from fear; she was pained that her efforts for the improvement of her own people should be so little appreciated—she regretted that so little of the true spirit animated them; but she was calm; the storm had no power to shake her, she clung with the deeper attachment to the opinions which she believed rendered her obnoxious.

Around her palace, almost ominous silence reigned; no person was seen; no word fell upon her ear; no greeting met her eye. On she rode, undisturbed, and deeming all she had heard from Myron, a fiction of his excited fancy, till she entered the street, where were some of the Christian churches, "where men most did love to congregate. Here were groups of men, with sullen looks, and the deep toned words of discontent on their lips; on passed Hypatia, and all who saw her followed the chariot. Before the church of St. Simon was a crowd so dense, her slave was obliged to rein up his horses, finding it impossible to drive through, without crushing some of them. They were listening to a harangue from a tall, gaunt-looking person, robed in a dress of goat skin, with long shaggy hair, falling to his waist, his wild eye gleaming with unearthly fire; and the shrill, sharp voice of insanity, fell upon the ear with startling power.