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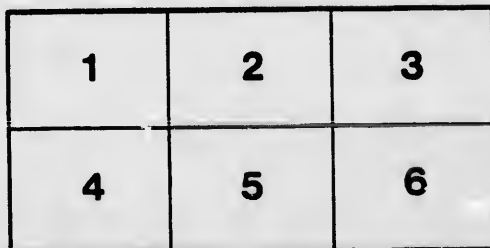
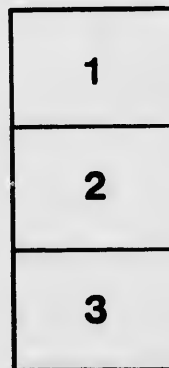
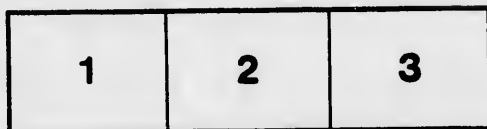
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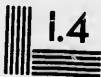
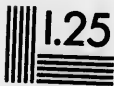
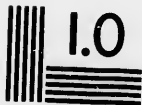
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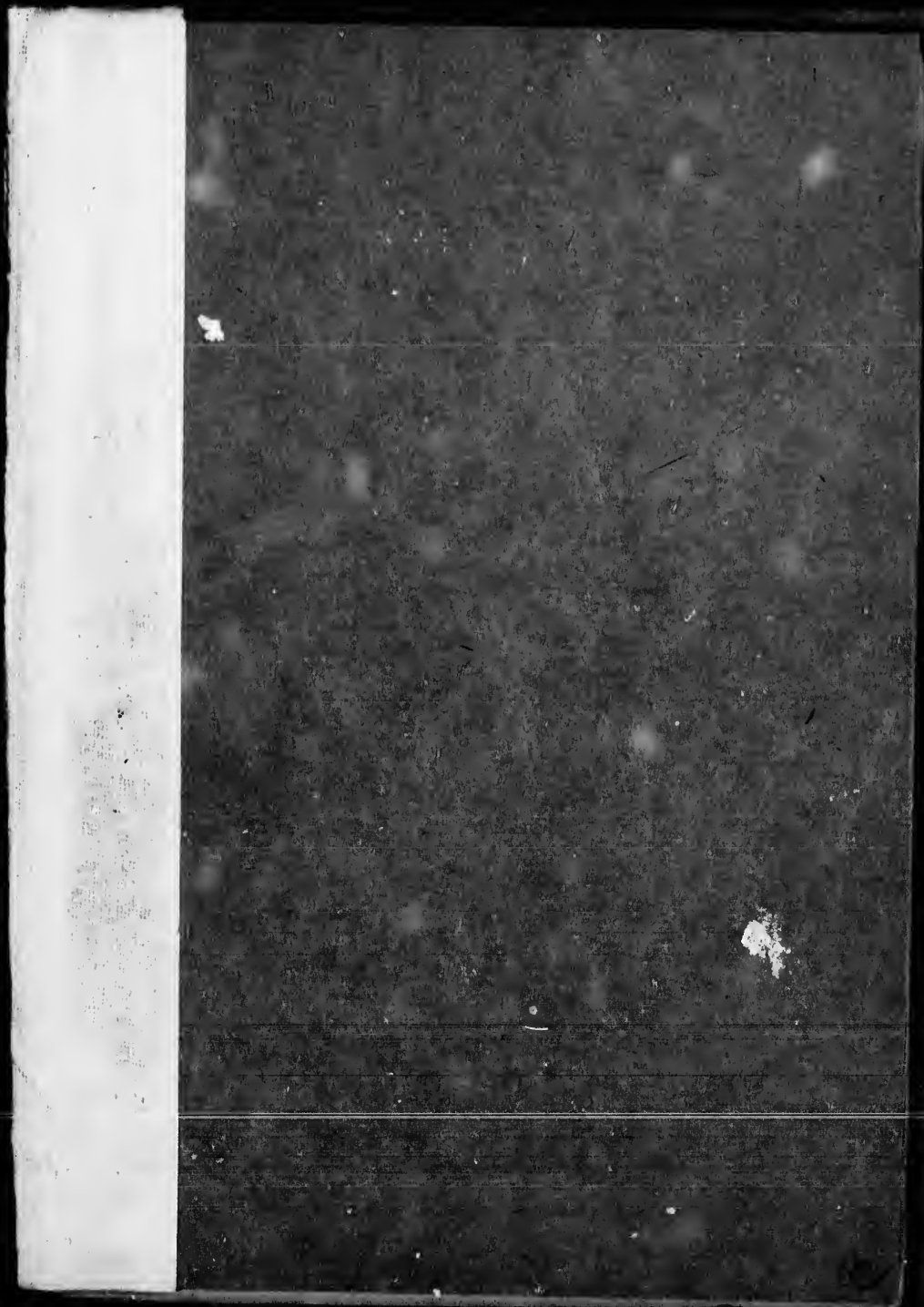
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THE
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OF
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A
CHRISTMAS
OFFERING.

1890.





THE TREASURES OF
HASSAN.

By Isaac Buchanan

"And having nothing, yet hath all."

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

Nothing to him falls early, or too late.

Our acts our angels are, or good or ill

Our fateful shadows that walk by us still.

JOHN FLETCHER.

*Neither shalt thou say, Lo here! or lo there! for behold,
the Kingdom of God is within you.*

Hamilton:

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COPY 1

Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord
from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit that they may
rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.

When His disciples heard this, they were exceeding amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.



FROM SUCH AN ONE AS HASSAN THE AGED,
TO HIS SON, HASSAN, BEN HASSAN, THIS,
WITH BLESSING AND GREETING :—

AT the end of my journey, I, Hassan,
wait at the gate whence I first came forth ;
through it once more I go, poor as I set
out :—I brought nothing with me hence ;
and I take nothing back.

The rays of the setting sun gild the
towers of Beth-berai, whither I go ; the
Golden gate lies open before me, to close
as the sun shall sink into the lap of the
far, low West ; ere that, I must have passed
within.

Ben Hassan, my son, thou knowest how
fair a trader I have been—rated a prince
among my fellows, in all the rich Eastern
land :—My caravan surrounds me here ; my
camels,—mine asses bend under their bur-
dens of precious stuff ; there remaineth no

time now, ere the night falls, to unload my beasts and unpack my stuff; as it is, it cannot pass through the needle's eye; I rest me at the strait gate; therefore said I to thee, I return poor as I set out.

My trading and journeyings, in strange far lands, are over. I am glad to rest. Something whispers in my heart that I, Hassan, poor though I be, shall not be unwelcome to a corner of peace, in some green glade, by the waters of rest, in the land of delights, my day's work done.

The caravan, with all its precious stuff, is still of value in mine eyes, my son; and to thee, Ben Hassan, I bequeath it; I shall trade with it no more. Youth is stronger than age; it should be wiser too;—the sons endowed with the experience of the fathers. Go forth then, double—treble thy talents, in fair and honest trade, as thy father, I, Hassan, have done before thee.

Among my most cherished possessions, thou shalt find a chart to direct thee by

day, a lamp of gold to light thy path by night; these for instruction and guidance; a keen and trusty blade, for protection and defence, against the perils that may beset thy journeyings; I, Hassan, found these many and grievous, but not insurmountable; I thought of them as nothing in view of the excellent glory of the gains. Thou shalt find among my precious treasures, a record and history of lands and peoples; the land from whence thou camest forth, the land whither thou goest, and the inhabitants of these, that thy mind may be stored with knowledge and understanding; and above all shalt thou learn in it, of the loving kindness, the wisdom and the glory of the King thou shalt serve, as I, Hassan, have served Him these many years, and to whom I go to give my account, with thanksgiving for all his dealings by me, in the dark as in the light, in all my long journeyings.

As thou journeyest, neglect not to lighten thy beasts of their burdens, drop here a little and there a little by the way, as thou

seest good may come of it ; thou shalt never lack opportunity,—I, Hassan, have found it so,—mayhap oftener than thou, in thine un-wisdom, wilt avail of. Scattering thou shalt increase, withholding more than is meet, shall tend to thy poverty of heart, if not of purse. O Ben Hassan, my son, lighten thy journeyings, with the happiness and comfort thou mayest have it in thy power to bestow ; and thy lips shall break forth in songs of joy, from the pure, sweet fountain of thy heart.

Goodness and mercy have followed me—Hassan—all the days of my life ; and I shall dwell in my Lord's house for ever. Hassan Ben Hassan, I charge thee to join me there, when the Master's work is done. These are the last words to thee of Hassan, the aged.

Farewell, my son ; the light fades from mine eyes ; the glory blinds me ; the Gates, through which I, Hassan, pass,—close :—Farewell !

As the golden gate swung to, the last note of Hassan's farewell, fainter and fainter, as if from far distance overhead, was borne to the ear of one who listened; and ere the last vibration ceased, the whole air was filled with music, sweet and penetrating, as from a perfect chime of silver bells, calling fancy to follow Hassan on his further way, into the land of sights and sounds beyond the tongue to describe, or the heart of man to conceive.

Hassan, known as the aged, endowed with perennial youth, and the strength of youth—immortal, is filled with amaze.

A great multitude, whom he had met in his desert journeyings, welcome him; around him, the patter of children's feet; parents and children; young men and maidens; all in the vigor of youth and health,—there is no breach through which old age can steal, creeping, into that land of delights. Some faces are known to Hassan,—long pictured on his heart, and well remembered;

many unknown or forgotten; all full of joy and gladness to greet their friend. And One, dearest of all to the loyal heart of Hassan,—the King whom he had served these many years—years seeming but as a day to Hassan. And thus His greeting:—

“I sent for thee, Hassan, that thou mightest be with me where I am, to behold my glory. Welcome home, my rich friend, to the place I have prepared for thee in everlasting habitations!”

“Nay, my Lord, O King, mock not the poverty of thy servant! Hassan returns to Thee as he set out,—poor—a child—simple, knowing nothing; drawn home again by his love to Thee,—constrained by Thine ineffable love to him.”

“Hassan, my humble, loving friend, just such as thou art, are all the inhabitants of my kingdom,—poor, yet rich. My friend, what was impossible to thee, is possible to me. Thou couldest not fetch thy possessions, with thee, through the needle’s eye—

a stumbling-block to many,—thou hadst the wisdom to know it; but lo! thy treasures are here before thee. Art thou in amaze, Hassan? Come, enter into thine inheritance! Come, see the place prepared for thee, and the treasures that are verily thine own, safely kept for thee against this day! Where thy treasures are, let thy heart continue to be!”

And Hassan was led on, in great wonderment, to the treasure house, where the record of his wealth was spread out before his eyes; and one read to him out of it, thus:—

“At such and such a time, Hassan, journeying across the desert, came upon a lovely glade, into which many wandered; wide and green it was, beautiful with flowers of every hue, and overhead, rich, luscious fruits to tempt the eye and the taste; birds of song were there, to charm the ear; the sound of joy and mirth was in

“ all the pleasant glade. Hassan, weary and
“ foot-sore, would fain have rested there,—
“ changing the burning sands for the green,
“ cool sward. But not knowing whither it
“ might lead, he bethought him of the chart
“ his king had provided, to guide him through
“ the wilderness; and there he read: ‘ Turn
“ not to the right hand nor to the left. This
“ glade is dangerous, and no exit from it
“ save at the peril of life. The flowers and
“ the fruits are poisonous; the song of the
“ birds lure to destruction; its wells are the
“ waters of Marah. Courage! a little way
“ on, at Elim, are wells of sweetest water,
“ and palm trees; there may my servants
“ rest.’ In the pitifulness of his loving
“ heart, Hassan, forgetting his own weariness,
“ moved with compassion for the
“ thoughtless ones, hurrying into the poison
“ glade, waited on his way, that he might
“ try to turn some heedless steps, into the
“ path his chart pointed out; if only some
“ little feet unused to seek out paths for
“ themselves; and to warn all, that his voice

“could reach, of the danger. Some turned
“to listen; some took heed to their way,—
“mostly the little ones; many still sped on,
“with glee and laughter, many, with scorn
“and contempt.”

*Behold! the diadem of Hassan, it shineth
as the stars in heaven for beauty—he hath turned
many to righteousness!*

“In the time of the great famine, Hassan
“came to the city. Fathers and mothers
“were famishing; the hungry children weep-
“ing for bread; the sick and dying lay about
“the streets, the strength clean gone out of
“them; pestilence walked at noon-tide; the
“people cried for help, and no help came;
“the heavens brass, the earth iron; death
“and desolation possessed the land. Hassan
“dealt out, to the stricken city, bread
“and the finest of his wheat, while a crust
“or a grain remained, making no note of
“it; he poured out his oil without mea-
“sure, his wine without stint; he knelt by

“the wasted and wan, unheeded by glazing eyes; he pressed the life-giving portions, bit by bit, drop by drop, between hunger-blackened lips, upon famine-parched tongues; he heeded not the pestilence, nor the taint of decay; he drove the fever from fire-wracked bones; he warmed the death-chilled pulses into motion and life. The blessing of the perishing came upon him; he had freely cast his bread on the waters, shall he find it after many days?”

Behold it now restored to him, a thousand-fold, in goods laid up for many days, that his soul may feast, and be satisfied, on heavenly manna!”

“Under the blazing noon-day sun, Hassan pursued his way, well-nigh spent with consuming thirst. Far from home and fresh supply, for many a mile, he had fought bravely against the almost unconquerable impulse to quench desire in one last refreshing draught. The moment

“had come when he might dare to do so;
“with eager, trembling hand he raised the
“cup to quaff. But lying prone on the
“burning sand, lo! one, in even greater strait
“than he, waiting the cool finger of death to
“extinguish the life-consuming fire. Hassan
“staid his hand, even at his lip, to put
“the cup to the stranger’s lips—poor dumb
“lips, that could not thank—to moisten
“them with the pure crystal, so unspeakably
“precious. A voice in the ear of Hassan,
“whispered, ‘The stranger’s spirit has
“all but fled. From happy life to living-
“death, why call him back? Hassan, thine
“own need is great; slake thine own in-
“satiabable thirst, with a few drops, at least;
“thou hast many a weary mile of the desert
“before thee still; the sound of falling water,
“like sweetest music, is in thine ear; but
“when, O when shalt thou drink again?’
“Hassan, his compassionate eyes bent on
“the stranger, not yet fully refreshed, with-
“drew not the cup for a moment, while a
“drop remained; while thus to the temp-

“ter he answered: ‘If He, whose servant
“I am, hath yet further need of me, and I
“must drink, He can cause showers to fall
“on me from the cloudless sky; bring
“streams of water from the flinty rock;
“open wells of water in the arid, trackless
“waste. He that watcheth over my way,
“hath placed this stranger in my path, that
“we may share, the good things He provides
“for us, according to our ~~own~~ needs. The
“stranger’s need is the greater,—the water
“is his. My King bringeth me to my jour-
“ney’s end when, where, and how,—He
“knoweth; Hassan lacks nothing.’”

*Behold! Hassan, the cup, thy touch of pity
turned to purest gold, brimful of precious gems,
each fit for a royal crown; a gem for every drop
thou sparedest from thine own sore need, when
no eye saw thee, no ear heard, save the closing
eye and the dulling ear of death—death but
for thee; save the eye and ear of Him who
forgetteth never, and restoreth to thee thine own
with usury!*

“ A gang of slaves crossed the desert as
“ Hassan journeyed. Some lay down to die ;
“ the thong of the cruel drivers, cut into
“ the quivering flesh of parents and children,
“ separated from one another ; thirsty and
“ hungry were they, — food and water too
“ precious to waste on captives, more than
“ enough to keep the dreary spark of life
“ alive, in such as were still precious enough
“ to their captors to save ; the sick, the
“ weak, the dying, left to perish where they
“ fell, — time more precious than human lives.
“ On, on across the dreary, trackless desert,
“ to the prison house, or the slave mart,
“ whichever came first ! Joy forgotten, com-
“ fort dead ; no ray of hope to point to some-
“ thing better ; no anchor of the soul to lay
“ hold on ! Hassan’s mighty heart of love
“ melted within him ; he parted with his
“ treasures to buy the shackles off captive
“ limbs ; where his wealth failed to purchase
“ the freedom his heart would fain have be-
“ stowed, he, gave of his time, — his most
“ precious possession, — that he might go to

“the prison-house, to tell the poor captive,
“that captivity and death were not all; he told
“of Him who had led captivity captive, and
“purchased gifts for the slave,—eternal life
“for death. He told them of the far off,
“beauteous land—far, and yet so near to all,
“where the shackles fall from the captive,
“and the slave goes free. In the dungeon-
“darkness, he cheered them with words of
“joy and gladness, till songs rose in the
“night, and the cloud of sorrow broke with
“blessing over desolate hearts; he told of
“Him who died to purchase freedom, and
“the veil that hid the Holiest from them,
“was rent in twain. His words to them were
“words of his Master’s love, as water to the
“thirsty ground; and the desert of weary,
“desolate hearts blossomed as the rose, and
“endurance was born of hope—the hope that
“maketh not ashamed.”

*Behold! Hassan, the ingots of precious gold,
once the shackles of slaves! Behold! the trea-
sures, which the winged hours, spared from self,
and thoughts of self, have borne hither—innumera-*

ble—ineestimable—beyond reckoning, save to the All-seeing eye of the All-knowing One. He alone can tell their number and count their price! All placed to the credit of Hassan, albeit, mayhap, forgotten by him.

“By the edge of a noisome slough, close
“by a thicket of thorns, sat one all soiled and
“and torn, wounded and desolate. Hassan,
“as his wont, where trouble was, approached
“to help, ‘Bithiah, why sittest thou here in
“such sad plight, weeping and hiding thy fair
“face from the light of day?’

“‘Call me no more the daughter of the
“King! Call me exiled, forsaken!’

“‘How camest thou here?’

“‘I came by the poison glade; I heard thy
“warning, but heeded not; the place was
“beautiful in mine eyes, the fruit most pleas-
“ant to my taste, the birds charmed me with
“their song; we were many in that broad
“glade; the companionships of the place
“were most pleasant to me,—we laughed, we

“sang, we danced, the live-long day, time—
“one ceaseless play; no cares troubled us,
“save as one and another vanished from our
“sight,—we knew not whither, and our
“mourning for them was short, and we soon
“ceased to care. On, on we went in our
“folly! Caught in the thicket of thorns,
“torn, and all but dead, I struggled through,
“drawn and held, by unseen hands, stronger
“than I; oft would I have turned back into
“that poison glade, its mirthful companion-
“ships, its pleasant dreams. Now I sit in
“rags, the soil of the slough is on me; I
“have barely escaped with life,—life that is
“not life, but living death! Leave me to
“my wretchedness. What am I that Hassan
“should pity me!’

“Hassan took from his possessions a most
“precious robe,—the most excellent in all the
“East,—to put around her; covering her
“from head to foot; hiding her rags and her
“wretchedness from the gaze and scorn of
“passing eyes; he wiped the tears from
“her face, leading and supporting her, to a

“place of shelter and protection, that she
“might rest till her grievous wounds were
“healed; he gave charge to robe her in fit-
“ting raiment, and to deal gently with her,
“as was becoming unto the daughter of a
“King, and to lead her lovingly home to her
“father’s house; and he told them her name
“was Hephzibah.”

*Hassan, behold! the jewelled robe, thou didst
wrap around the desolate one, in the day of her
misery, laid by for thee, where neither moth nor
rust doth corrupt! Behold! the tears thou didst
wipe from the eyes of Bithiah in the day of her
trouble,—each tear a priceless pearl, worth more
than a prince’s ransom!*

“And to sum up all; Hassan, hearing of
“the Pearl of great price, sold all his posses-
“sions, counting them but as dross, forgetting
“all else for the glory that excelleth, that he
“might acquire it.

“HERE IS THY TREASURE — THINE OWN,
“O HASSAN, MY BELOVED!”

Hassan, in great amaze, fell at His feet,
crying:—"O chiefest among ten thousand!
"Thou only perfect! Thou altogether lovely
"One! my All-in-all! my Lord and my God!
"All, all is mine, for I am thine and thou art
"God! Hassan is poor no more!"





