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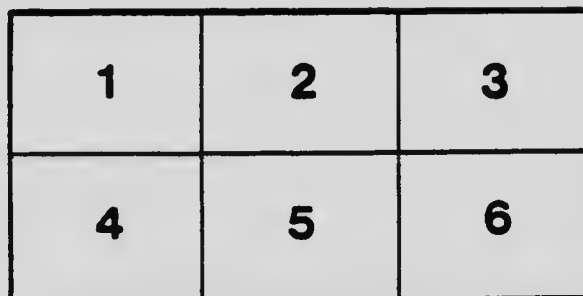
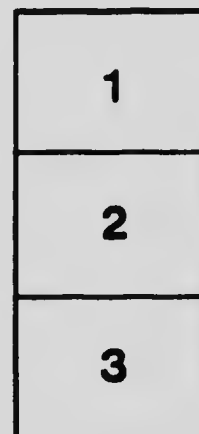
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# Dr. Newfield's Vision

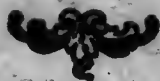
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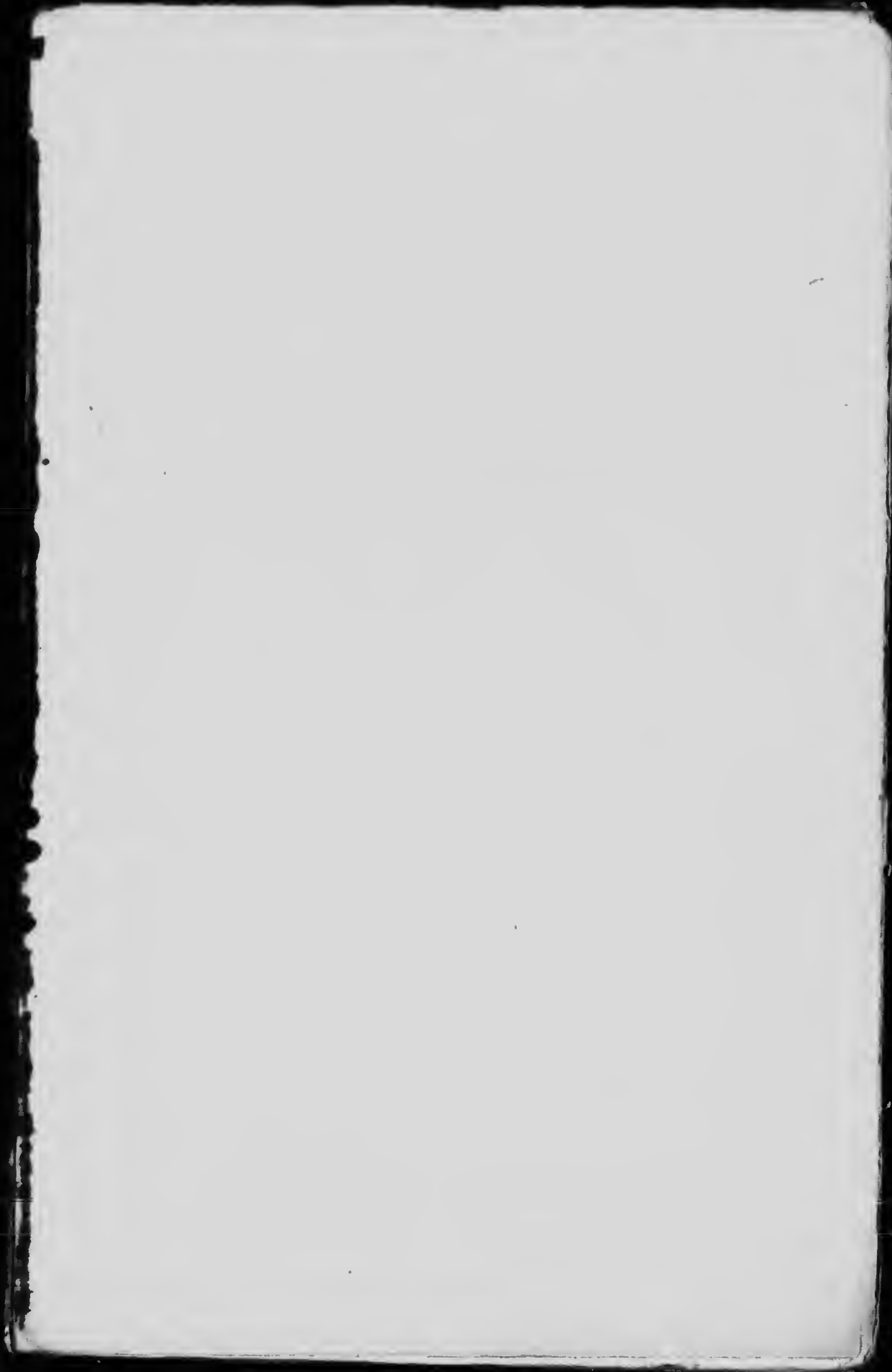
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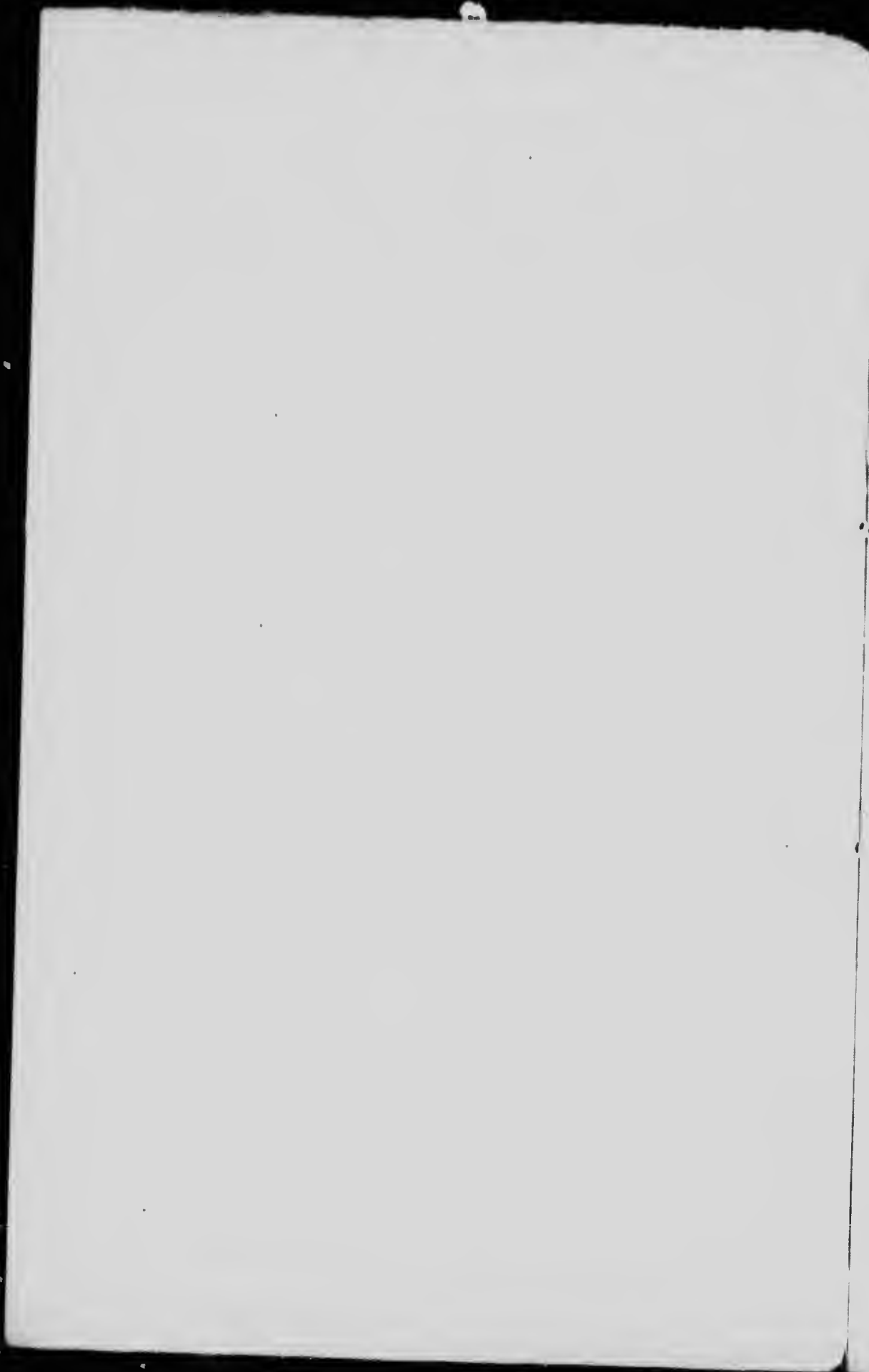
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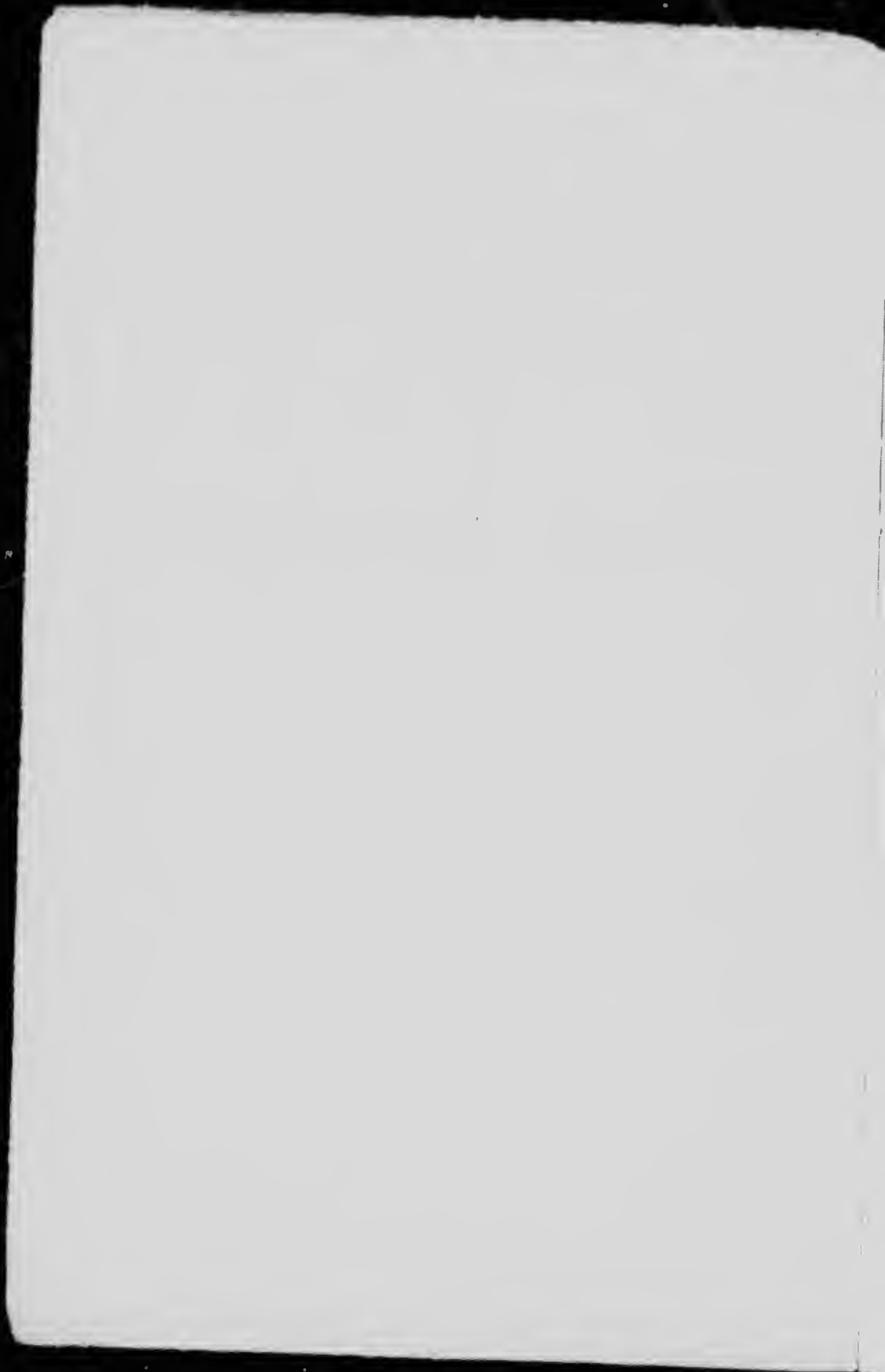


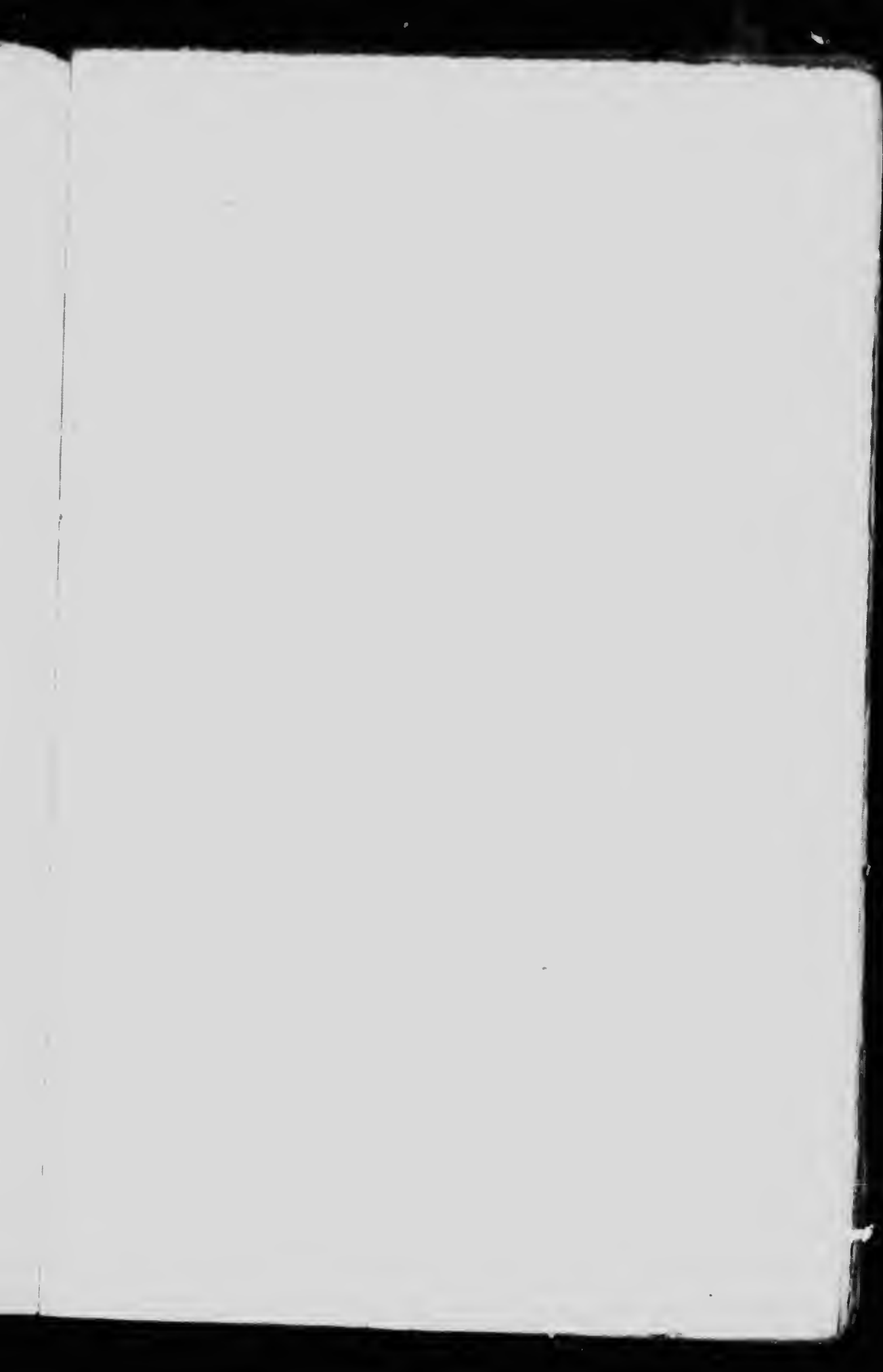


# Dr. Newfield's Vision

WITH OTHER TALES AND ESSAYS









*Yours very truly  
Elizabeth Gagnier*

# Dr. Newfield's Vision

WITH

OTHER TALES AND  
ESSAYS

BY

ELIZABETH GAGNIEUR

Author of "BACK IN THE FIFTIES," "CONFLICT AND  
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## Dr. Newfield's Vision

---

Of Doctor Junius Newfield, LL. D.,  
M. A. F. R. A. S., F. R. S. E.,  
My Muse would celebrate with due precision  
The wonderful and quite authentic Vision—  
A Vision veritable, genuine,  
Gravely appearing in the face of day,  
Regardless of our Nineteenth Century.

Our Junius from a boy was wondrous smart,  
The show-boy on the academic floor;  
He knew his Tables perfectly by heart,  
And passed Examinations by the score;  
He studied mathematics tongs and hammer,  
And went to bed reciting the Greek Grammar.  
Such training could not fail the way to clear  
For a great University career.  
The honours that were heap'd upon his pate  
Our humble rhymes in their first couplet state.  
In Arts and Sciences profoundly read,  
The learned tongues were as his milk-and-bread



(If we may use the simile). He bore  
 An envied name for Oriental lore,  
 Was versed in Sanscrit and Inscriptions Cufic,  
 In Chaldee, and Egyptian hieroglyphic.

But—for the criticizing particle  
 Intrudes its small probocis *will or nill*—  
 To this recorded success and applause  
 We must append a qualifying clause.  
 While crammed with 'ologies and 'onomies,  
 And this, and that, and ev'rything you please,  
 Until with knowledge he was quite besotten,  
 One item had been utterly forgotten.  
 In that great Science which alone explains  
 The Mystery of Life, its woes and pains,  
 Which shews of Right and Wrong th' opposing  
       natures,  
 Unveils the Destiny of Human Creatures,  
 Which cheers and brightens with its hopes sublime  
 The work and want and misery of Time—  
 A loving Hand beneath the weary head,  
 Soothing the terrors of the Dying-bed,—  
 Which can in wrath restrain, in sorrow calm us,  
 Poor Doctor Newfield was an *ignoramus*.  
 He knew its name, of course, but did confuse  
 The thing itself with something they call "Views"  
 And as for views all parties had a passion,  
 'Twas not in him to be behind the fashion.

Of Views he had no end—all somewhat muddy,—  
And gave himself to philosophic study;  
Not the Philosophy of Saintly Schools,  
Of Suarez, Viva and Aquinas blest,  
Bellarmine, De Lugo, and the rest;  
(At that grand threshold modern ardour cools.)  
Not the Philosophy of Hebrew Prophet  
Or great St. Paul; no, he knew nothing of it,  
Nor was his gush particularly great o-  
ver that of Aristotle or of Plato.  
'Twas modern magnates he profess'd to conn;  
He made the latest novelty his own;  
True to his name, on exploration bent,  
It was to each New Field the Doctor went,  
And on these lines, of course, to worse from bad  
He quickly fell. What little faith he had  
Went all to pieces on the ready rocks  
Of self-conceit and love of paradox.  
Of Kant and Lessing he devour'd the pages,  
Of Spencer and our other Modern Sages;  
Endorsed the fallacies of one and all  
From keen Voltaire to ribald Ingersoll;  
Swallow'd monstrosities without a spasm,  
And claim'd descent from Ape and Protoplasm.

What more was needed, we would ask in this  
Our self-sufficient Nineteenth Century,  
To bake the Doctor's cake? He could not miss

One of its brightest shining lights to be.  
 He charmed the cultured coteries; his name  
 Became, I will not say *illustrious*,  
 But that which passes current for the same  
 In these our days of shallowness and fuss,  
 The "chair" at meetings was to him assign'd;  
 On platform and on stump his Views were  
 quoted;  
 He was most liberally dined and wined,  
 And by the Press his smallest acts were noted.  
 An envied sceptre did the Doctor sway  
 O'er all the vot'ries of Progressive Thought,  
 Both male and female; until one fine day  
 The startling news was from the Orient brought  
 That the strong minded lass, Miss Calmazoo,  
 Had giv'n them all the slip, and *turn'd Hindoo!*

The Doctor was enchanted. "Here I find,"  
 He said, "a strong and philosophic mind  
 "Which looks our Western wisdom through and  
 through,  
 "And cuts it all, and goes and turns *Hindoo!*  
 "And wherefore not? What higher aim than this,  
 "To burst the bonds of hoary prejudice?  
 "Why should the teachings, say of Zoroaster  
 "Not be as good as any we can master?  
 "Why should the views of ancient Buddha not  
 "Chime in responsively with modern thought?

- “ May not the wisdom of Confucius  
“ Be great as that which emanates from us?  
“ These men were types of pure morality;  
“ As saints were venerated in their day;  
“ Each to his nation counsels left, and laws,  
“ Which justly merit every man's applause.  
“ Beside the Veddas and the Zendavesta  
“ The Scriptures of the Christian are at best a—  
“ *Hem!*—*haw!*—And if the millions who reside  
“ On this terrestrial surface we divide,  
“ A full three-fourths belong to them alone,  
“ As by the best statistics can be shown.
- “ True, if to elder periods we look back  
“ And then compare, some changes meet our gaze  
“ Their institutions in some quarters lack  
“ The strong vitality of former days.  
“ Our Government unfeeling and prosaic,  
“ Dead to the charms of everything archaic,  
“ And quite impervious to poetic beauty,  
“ Has put its clumsy foot down on the Suttee,  
“ Tied up the wheels of Jagganata's car,  
“ Tried to abolish caste, and gone so far  
“ That now we never—hardly ever—hear  
“ Of the once famed and picturesque fakir.  
“ Yet what an interesting field we see  
“ In those vast systems of antiquity,  
“ What consolation and delights one finds

" In rapt-communion with those master-minds  
 " Whose systems, if in nought else they agree,  
 " Combine to combat Christianity!"

Thus spo' e our friend to all his views who shared.  
 He quoted worthies of the Buddh persuasion,  
 And of the Veddas made a new translation,  
 And—and so forth. Yet, although thus prepared  
 The general amazement was not slight  
 When Junius, issuing a small invite  
 To friends and relative for such a night,  
 And then and there a formal farewell taking  
 'Mid lengthy speeches, and with much hand-  
 shaking,  
 Took his departure to the land of Jumbo  
 In a fast steamer charter'd for Colombo.

Yes; he was gone, with all his modern rant  
 And infidel philosophy, and cant,  
 The Pagan in full brotherhood to greet,  
 Knock at the door which late had open'd to  
 Receive the fair recruit, Miss Calmazoo,  
 And learn his lesson from the poor Hindoo;  
 Another proof of how extremes may meet.  
 He soon became the lion of the place  
 With white, and black, and ev'ry shade of face.  
 He ev'rywhere was feted and invited,  
 And was, of course, with ev'rything delighted.

The Brahmins beat his Western magnates hollow.  
He did not find their doctrines hard to swallow.  
With them the points he learnedly discuss'd  
Of each hypothesis rak'd from the dust  
Of ages; and throughout Colombo sounded  
His praise of Buddha's excellence unbounded,  
Of Zoroaster's pure morality,  
And virtue of the Prophet of Cathay.  
Mora'ty, when in the abstract view'd,  
Did not his soul particularly warm;  
But *their* morality—as understood  
By modern *savans*—had a nameless charm.  
So passed the time until the gala-day  
(Seats at a premium, in advance secured)  
When by his friends escorted, our M. A.  
Went up to Buddha's Temple, and abjured  
The Christian Faith—no, *that* had long departed,  
Abjured the Christian name. Some faint, half-  
Congratulations met him from a few, [hearted.  
Foremost of these our friend Miss Calmazoo;  
The Brahmins were most pompously polite,  
And condescending to the neophyte;  
And for the rest, there was a powerful under-  
current of sarcasm. 'T was a Nine-days' Wonder.  
The deed is done. The Brahmins home are gone;  
While, tired with pleasures of the last three  
weeks,

The social world a brief retirement seeks,  
And Doctor Newfield finds himself alone.  
He loved not solitude; he loved the flow  
Of conversation, the inspiring glow  
Of well-selected company, the voice  
Of sweet applause; but now there was no choice.  
So to his room he went to do his best  
With Solitude, his uninvited guest.  
The air was balmy and the sky serene,  
Yet Janius, somehow, felt depress'd and mean,  
With strong impulsion to review the past,  
And balance between gain and loss to cast.  
The gush was o'er; the goal was attain'd;  
It did not seem he very much had gain'd.  
He had attracted much attention, true,  
And dimm'd the laurels of Miss Calmazoo;  
The Press had noticed him, of course; but all  
Such homage seems, to the recipient, small,  
Of Flattery's feast he'd eaten to the fill,  
Yet did his soul seem void and hungry still;  
And (though the thought he frantically crush'd)  
Spite of himself his better nature blush'd,  
And from the mirror turn'd away his eye  
Lest his own features he should there descrie.  
This way and that way restlessly he turn'd;  
His eyelids droop'd his sallow visage burn'd  
As though reproachful eyes were staring at him.  
It was intolerable. Down he sat him

With hand on brow, endeavouring to exclude  
 Those disapproving Eyes that *would* intrude,  
 'Twas all in vain. Some pow'r he *must* obey  
 Bade him look up, and push'd his hand away.

Of all the things in Nature's realms that be,  
 GHOSTS were the last he ever dream'd to see;  
*Yet there they stood, distinct though shadowy,*  
*In aspect reverend, and in number—three.*  
 Vers'd in all themes of Oriental hue,  
 The Ancient Buddha at a glance he knew;  
 By rustling silks, pig-tail'd and shaven-pated,<sup>1</sup>  
 Was great Confucius plainly indicated;  
 While starry signs—Orion, Pollux, Castor—  
 Inscribed upon his zone spake Zoroaster.  
 Each rais'd his hand in mute severity.  
 Then Buddha spake, as spokesman for the three.

" What dost thou here, Son of a Western land,  
 " Waking the echoes of the Indian strand  
 " With idle panegyrics which but show  
 " Thine ignorance, as from thy lips they flow?  
 " What means the deed which thou this day hast  
 done?  
 " Alas! and yet alas! that the same sun  
 " Which look'd on Parava and Meliapore

<sup>1</sup> A sacrifice of chronology to local color. Pig-tails and shaven pates did not come in till the days of the Manchoo-Tartar-Dinasty.



" Should view such scandal well-nigh at their door!  
 " Is it to honour *us* thou hast denied  
 " That Light for which the ancient Prophets  
   sigh'd?  
 " Was it the glory of our names that drew  
 " Thee on, and made thee to the Truth untrue?  
 " Unhappy soul! what plea can'st thou put in  
 " To take one shade of blackness off thy sin,  
 " Saving, perchance, the heritage of woe  
 " Thy sires bequeathed thee centuries ago?  
 " This, this alone some pity for thee craves,  
 " And brings us hither from our hoary graves.  
 " To turn the light of ages pass'd away  
 " Upon the sorry pageant of to-day.

" When Adam, our first father, fall'n from Grace  
   " Went forth an exile from his Eden-home  
 " O'er Earth's unpeopled wilderness to roam,  
 " He, through God's Mercy, bore from that bright  
   place  
   " A priceless treasure.  
 " He bore the knowledge of the One True God  
 " Whose pow'r had form'd him from the earthy  
   clod,  
 " Who made the sun to shine, the seas to flow,  
 " Whose nameless glories and perfections know  
   " Nor bound nor measure.

- “ He bore the promise of the spotless Lamb,  
“ Th’ Incarnate Word of God, the great I AM  
“ Who should to Light and Life, and Heav’n  
    restore  
“ Himself and his posterity. He bore  
“ The Promise of the Precious Blood which should  
“ Blot out the sentence that against him stood,  
“ The promise of that Virgin Star whose bright  
“ Pure rays should herald the Eternal Light,  
“ That Woman who should on the serpent tread  
“ And crush for ever his rebellious head.  
“ This Holy Faith, ’mid penitential tears  
“ He taught his children for a thousand years;  
“ And when the race grew strong, and sin abounded,  
“ This Holy Faith, upon God’s promise grounded  
“ Was by God’s covenant the Trust decreed  
“ Of faithful Abraham and of his seed.
- “ But think not God to outer darkness hurl’d  
“ His erring children of the Gentile world.  
“ His loving Heart yearn’d o’er them, every one  
“ Throughout the Earth, in ev’ry tribe and nation,  
“ By sin and grievous errors all o’errun,  
“ He kept alive among the faithful few  
“ The smould’ring embers of Religion true,  
“ The odours of the primal Revelation.  
“ Then, as the day approach’d which should  
    behold

“ The Promised-One descend—that day foretold  
“ To favour'd Judah by prophetic sign,  
“ By portent, and by oracle divine—  
“ God sent Three Servants to prepare His Way  
“ In darken'd Iran, India, and Cathay;  
“ To gather up in their respective lands  
“ The precious fragments, to the slend'rest strands  
“ Of the True Faith, of the divine Commands.  
“ By Him commission'd, in His Power and Name.  
“ We fann'd the smould'ring embers to a flame,  
“ And multitudes to that True Faith return'd  
“ Which 'mong the faithful few had ever burn'd.  
“ Five hundred years that spiritual dawn  
“ Shed its benignant light those lands upon,  
“ And in its twilight, flow'rs of sanctity  
“ Sprang forth to welcome the approaching day;  
“ Witness Balthazar, Melchior, Caspar,  
“ Led by God's spirit to their holy tryst,  
“ O'er deserts led by Jacob's promis'd Star,  
“ There at His birthplace to adore the Christ.  
“ These were our children, faithful to our teaching  
“ Blest souls! The first fruits of the Gentiles, they  
“ In name of all their homage went to pay  
“ At the Redeemer's Feet; then, home returning  
“ Their hearts with holy zeal and fervor burning,  
“ They to their subjects Missioners became—  
“ The first Apostles of the Christian Name—  
“ The wondrous advent of the Saviour preaching.

- “ Alas! the Pow’rs of evil did not sleep.  
“ Ev’n of our children, multitudes were sway’d  
“ By worldly passions, and themselves array’d  
“ Against th’ Apostles of the Crucified;  
“ While Pow’r to Prejudice itself allied  
“ In saintly blood their guilty hands to steep.  
“ Ev’n of the Twelve went forth to these far lands,  
“ But to be martyr-crown’d by murd’rous hands,  
“ Their harvest, hardly-gather’d, but a gleaning  
“ The Word was preach’d; great miracles were  
wrought,  
“ And of each Truth we faithfully had taught  
“ Was shown the true development and meaning  
“ In vain. Those lands, to their eternal loss,  
“ Would not accept the scandal of the CROSS,  
“ And *that* rejected, ev’ry hallow’d prop  
“ On which had rested faith and holy hope  
“ Crumbled to nothingness. It was the ray  
“ From Bethlehem and blood-stain’d Calvary  
“ That brighten’d these; and when *that* Light  
was spurn’d,  
“ Their light went out in darkness.  
“ What wonder that, as time pass’d over, these  
“ Dishonor’d Truths became monstrosities!  
“ What wonder they who Heav’n’s Great Gift  
refused,  
“ Its messengers destroy’d, Its Grace abused,  
“ Back to Idolatry’s foul depths return’d!

“ What wonder that the Fiend, of lies the father,  
“ Craving that harvest promising to gather,  
“ Sent *his* apostles with our work to sport,  
“ Our words to falsify and to distort,  
“ To cloud the lands once more with rites unblest.  
“ And superstitions dark—as *our* behest!

“ And *thou!* In Christian country born and bred,  
“ Where the True Faith around thee broadly  
    spread,  
“ To just inquiry evermore inviting—  
“ *Thou*, its imperishable glories slighting,  
“ Art hither come, of that accurs'd school  
“ To sit thee down the pupil; and with full  
“ Consent t' embrace each error of the same,  
“ And eat their very garbage—*in our name!*

“ Back, worthless worm, to thy dishonor'd land—  
“ That Christendom of which thou art the shame.  
“ Hide thy black infamy behind thy hand  
“ Till tears of blood thy penitence proclaim.  
“ And rest assured that on the dreadful Day  
“ When gentle Patience grants no more delay,  
“ And Mercy's self shall mock at thy disaster,  
“ No louder voice shall glorify and laud  
“ In thy just doom the righteousness of God  
“ Than ours—Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster.”

## Symbolization of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh

---

Every one who is even partially educated has heard of the Pyramids, and understands that they were built to serve as tombs for the Egyptian kings. Within the last few years, however, the investigations of learned and scientific men have revealed the fact that there exists an immeasurable difference between the great pyramid of Gizeh—the most ancient, by far, as well as the largest—and the later pyramids built in imitation of it. In the first place, they have shewn that although *in* Egypt, it was not *of* it; it was built by men of another land, under favor of Cheops, the then king of Egypt. In the second place, they have demonstrated that it was not a Tomb, or ever used as such, although the later pyramids built by the Egyptians themselves were so. In the third place, by means of most exact measurements and calculations, it has been found to solve the most difficult and interesting problems of science,—the squaring of the circle, the sun's distance from the earth, the exact centre of the habitable globe-surface, the exact size and density of the earth; with many

more questions astronomical, mathematical and metrical. It also proves beyond all cavil that prehistoric man possessed the highest civilization, since it presents him erecting, 2170 years before the Christian Era, a building, not only the largest, most durable, most wonderful, but also the most exquisitely finished that ever stood upon the earth, even to the present day; an evidence most precious as completely demolishing the evolution theory of modern so-called philosophers. The purpose at present proposed is to draw attention to the Symbolization theory propounded; not only to the points already treated of, but also, and mainly to some which we consider have been overlooked. This necessitates a brief description of the Pyramid itself.

The shore-line around the several mouths of the Nile forms a large semi-circle receding at the centre nearly a hundred miles from the Mediterranean. This circle of elevated ground constitutes a *border* to the great land beyond; and on the rocky elevation which marks its centre stands the Great Pyramid. The date of its erection is ascertained in various ways; and although both Jewish and Arabic traditions represent it as having been built before the Flood, it can be shewn that it dates about six hundred years after that event, namely, 2170 B. C. It is thus, by many hundred years, the

oldest building, or trace of building, on the face of the globe. It covers a space of thirteen acres, and its height vastly exceeds that of any known tower or steeple in the world. Its orientalizing is perfect—a characteristic not to be found in like perfection in any other building, ancient or modern. Its four corners are *socketed* into the solid rock. In its perfect state it was covered on all sides with immense, smooth, finely polished casing-stones. Of these, as well as of some twenty-five feet of its summit, it has been denuded by the Moslems; but two of these casing stones have lately been found still in their places, to testify not only to the perfection of their workmanship, but also to the exact angle of the four diagonals of the Pyramid.

Until a few years ago, it was not known that there was any entrance into the interior excepting the forced passage-way torn through the masonry by Al Mamoun, the Mohammedan Caliph, in the ninth century. The entrance proper is on the northern face of the Pyramid at a considerable height from the ground, and consists of a low narrow passage or tube, inclined at a very pronounced angle downwards towards a deep and unfinished cavern a hundred feet below the level of rock on which the Pyramid stands, known by the ominous title of "the bottomless pit." At a point nearly level with the surface of the rock,



another passage of similar dimensions takes an upward course—still from north to south—at a similar angle. This in turn opens out into a splendid gallery, twenty-eight feet high, whose polished floor still ascends till it reaches a dead-wall, beyond which the passage again becomes contracted and horizontal. This last passage, which is short, leads into a sort of ante-chamber, across which hangs, suspended in grooves in either wall, a huge leaf of granite. This leaf hangs so low that it is necessary to stoop much in order to pass below it. Once passed, there opens out a splendid chamber or hall, known as the “King’s Chamber,” in which stands an empty coffer or chest of granite—the only article of furniture as yet found within the building.

Returning to the point where the narrow upward passage ends, and the Grand-Gallery begins, a passage is found running horizontally—still towards the south. At the end of this passage, which inclines downward somewhat at its termination, there is found another chamber of exquisite workmanship, *but without a floor*, known as the “Queen’s Chamber.” As the details of this apartment, as well as those of the various passages, require particular notice in connexion with the suggestions we desire to make, we will, to avoid repetition, pass on to the Theory propounded, of which our suggestions are but an extension.

While a thorough search reveals that the Great Pyramid was never used as a Tomb, it also reveals that it could never have been intended as any kind of dwelling, being utterly unsuited for such a purpose. The absence of furniture, or any article whatever, shews that it could not have been used as a treasure-house; and the rage of the plunder-seeking Moslems on finding it empty, bears incontestable witness to the fact. The old Arabic traditions speak of it as a place built "to store knowledge;" and modern science has demonstrated the "knowledge" stored up in it to be simply superhuman. The Theory proposed, then, is, that the Great Pyramid was built by the "Sons of God"—i. e., those who remained faithful to the traditions of Adam, Seth, and Noah; and that they built it by the command and under the direction of God himself, and according to patterns and measurements laid down by Him; as had been the case with the Ark, and was afterwards the case with the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Temple. Space will not permit us to go over the arguments adduced in favor of this view; suffice it to record our conviction that the perfection of the monument itself, the wonders of science contained in it cannot be rationally accounted for on any other hypothesis. But the Theory, going so far, must necessarily go farther. If the Pyramid was

erected by God's command, and according to His direction, its primary purpose could not have been to teach men natural science. It must have had some spiritual mission to fulfil. Hence it is claimed to be a forecasting in stone of the things that were to come, of the order of God's Providence, in regard to man; in other word, *Prophecy* laid up in granite, ages before even it was laid up in the Bible, the most ancient of all written records; Prophecy, also, sealed up until the day when human Science should have made such progress as would enable men to read its message—and read in it the condemnation of modern arrogance and unbelief.

This theory seems somewhat strange; but a close inspection of Holy Scripture reveals many passages which go to show that in some such light the Great Pyramid was regarded by the inspired Hebrew Prophets. We must remember that the vast structure was celebrated from the earliest times, and among all peoples. Jews, Egyptians, Chaldees, Arabians, Hindoos, all had their traditions about it. It was, therefore, hardly possible, that amidst the superabundant imagery employed by the Prophets—who were also *poets*—so great and renowned an object, almost at their door, should never have been referred to, either for good or evil. Is it not, therefore, to the Great Pyramid that the Psalmist looks for a figure when he says:—"The

Merciful Lord hath made a Memorial of His Wonders." (Psalm 110)? David was speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and prophesying of that Ineffable Memorial of God's Wonders which should be set up in future ages—the Blessed Sacrament. But he distinctly employs as a type or figure some Memorial which *had been* set up in the past. Again; Isaiah, prophesying of the future Church, says:—"In that day shall there be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a Pillar at the borders thereof to the Lord; and it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt." (Is. 19. 19; 20.) He here speaks of the spiritual Egypt—the World—in the midst whereof that Altar of which the Jewish was but the type, should one day be set up; that glorious and ubiquitous Altar whereon the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world should offer Himself to the Eternal Father till the consummation of ages; that Altar which was one day to replace the altars of Idolatry in the veritable land of Egypt itself, peopling its deserts with saints, and its cities with virgins and confessors. But he draws his figure most unmistakeably from the Great Pyramid. It is as though he said,—“There is now a Memorial to the Lord in the land of Egypt, even the Pillar at the border thereof; but in that day the Memorial of which it

is but the type shall be set up in the midst of the spiritual Egypt, and on the border thereof"—i. e., a link between earth and heaven—and it shall be for a Sign and Witness to the Lord of Hosts." There can be little doubt that this idea would be found to elucidate and give new significance to many passages of Scripture. Let us now see what indications of a prophetic character the venerable structure presents; touching as briefly as possible on those points which have been treated of by others, (because they can be studied more at length elsewhere,) and reserving our longer wind for such as have not, to our knowledge, been, thus far, adverted to.

We have said that the entrance-passage consists of a long, low, narrow, square tube, straight as a rule, which *descends* at a very inclined angle toward a deep cavern called the "Bottomless Pit." The floor of this passage shews evidence of having been originally as smooth and slippery as glass, and it is taken to illustrate the *downward tendency* of the human race consequent on the Fall—a downward tendency which only a special intervention of God could remedy. This passage-floor, moreover, is crossed by delicate horizontal lines chiselled into the stone at the distance of one inch apart. In most of the Pyramid measurements, the *inch* is shewn to stand for a *year*; and the number of inch-

lines marked on this passage from the entrance to the point where it meets the first *ascending* passage, corresponds exactly with the number of years allowed by the best chronologers to have elapsed between the Fall and the Exodus.

The first *ascending* passage—still low, narrow and square, has its smooth and slippery floor marked in like manner with as many inch-lines as there were years between the Exodus and the Birth of Christ. It is therefore supposed to indicate the Jewish dispensation. When first discovered, this passage was found curiously obstructed by heavy stones, contrasting singularly with the perfection of its workmanship, and evidently left there intentionally, and for a purpose. May not these obstructions have been left to testify to future ages to the stubbornness and contradictions by which the obstinate and stiff-necked Jews frustrated the merciful designs of God in their own regard?

From this narrow upward passage opens out the Grand Gallery, inclining upwards at the same angle; still narrow, but lofty, and of most beautiful workmanship. It is supposed to represent the Christian Dispensation. Counting off thirty-three inch-lines from its commencement as the period of our Blessed Lord's Life upon earth, we reach a wide, yawning hole in the wall, like the mouth of an

open grave! This hole is taken to symbolize the Death of our Blessed Lord and Saviour; and this inference seems to be fully confirmed by the ramp-stones which line both walls through the whole length of the Gallery. These ramp-stones are about a foot high and wide, *and they are all cut with miniature symbolic graves, every one of which is open.* More than this, right by the side of these open graves is a neatly-cut stone set "vertically in the wall. It is a symbol of standing upright"—of that New Life to which all Christians are called, of that Eternal Life to which all true Christians aspire. We cannot help thinking that these symbolizations hold water; and to them one would subjoin another which the Author of "A Miracle in stone" very naturally does not advert to.

From the yawning hole, supposed to indicate our Lord's Death, descends a passage—not smooth and inclined like the others, but abrupt and rough, as if torn through the masonry—to a large Cavern where there is a Well. This Cavern of the Well is at the bottom of the Pyramid's stone-work, but not below the rock-level on which it is built. From it, the rough, irregular descent continues, but at a greater incline, till it meets the first descending entrance-tube, just at the brink of the Bottomless Pit. Now, what is the idea suggested

by a *well*? Is it not the idea of purification? A Place of Purification opened out for us by the Passion and Death of Christ? And whereas the broken passage continues at an incline close to the brink of the Bottomless Pit, this is not that any should descend, but that those who have already reached the brink of destruction by the smooth and alluring path of sin, may, through our Lord's infinite merits, find even yet a path to Eternal Life—a path, hard, rugged and difficult, but still offering a foot-hold and hand-hold to those who will struggle; while the smooth, polished sides of the Pit proclaim, "Out of Hell there is no redemption!" But this path of rescue at the eleventh hour, leads through the Place of Purification, even as the Christian's path through the Tomb of Christ leads down to it. Could *Purgatory* be more eloquently or emphatically preached? Again; does not the Cavern of the Well symbolize the Limbo of the Fathers, to which the Sacred Soul of Christ descended at His Death? If these two distinctive dogmas of the Catholic Faith are not graven on the Great Pyramid, we do not know what is.

The Grand Gallery, over 150 feet long, is walled on either side through its whole length by seven overlapping courses of polished stones. Our author can see no better interpretation for these than



a reference to the Seven Churches of Asia. Now, these Seven Churches—Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, etc.—were *local*, and have not by any means accompanied the march of Church History down to its completion. Besides, why should they be singled out for symbolization preferably to the Churches of Corinth, of Ephesus, of Alexandria, etc., etc.? (Parenthetically we may observe that their “angels” were their *bishops*. In the chapters which refer to them, we find our Lord reproaching some of them for their backslidings, and praising others for their fidelity. [Apoc. 1. 2. 3.] There are no back slidings among the “angels” of heaven; nor do these require to be *written to*, even by an Apostle.) It is very plain to a Catholic eye, that if the Grand Gallery was meant to symbolize the Christian Church, these Seven Courses on either side represent the Seven Sacraments on the one hand, and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost on the other. These *do* accompany the Church from the beginning to the end of her career, and are indeed and truly the *very walls* of the Church.

This Gallery is roofed with thirty-six slabs of granite, corresponding, as the author observes, to the thirty-six months of our Divine's Lord Ministry. This is all the analogy he perceives; but we think there is something more. What, in the eco-

nomy of the Church, has special and peculiar reference to our Blessed Lord's *ministry*? What is the crown and culmination of all her Mysteries, the point up to which they all run as walls ascend towards the roof? What is the mystery under whose sacred shadow she lives her supernatural life, and continues, in His Name, that same ministry to the end of time? Is it not the presence of her sacramental God upon her altars? And is not that divine Presence in itself the living perpetuation of our Blessed Saviour's teaching and preaching? Is there a truth He taught, or a virtue He inculcated that is not preached to us day and night by that ineffable Presence? Charity, patience, silence, humility, adoration, intercession? It is the touch stone and triumph of our Faith, the end of all our hope, the divine object of our love. Moreover, if we consider the number—which some may think a fanciful idea, although there is warrant for it in Scripture—thirty-six is THREE multiplied by TWELVE. Now, in the Holy Scripture the number TWELVE like the *square*, is always used to signify *completeness*; the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the Twelve Apostles, the Twelve Foundations and Twelve Gates of the New Jerusalem, the Twelve times Twelve Virgins "who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." *Three*, also, has been ever held a special sign of the Most Holy Trinity. If

we deduce anything from these numbers, what is it excepting a tribute to the divinity of the Blessed Sacrament?

At the end of the Grand Gallery there is a step about 36 inches high, which the author supposes to represent the recent liveliness in missionary enterprise. Now, if we reflect that the whole Roman Empire, the whole of Europe, Western Asia, Egypt, Northern and Eastern Africa, South America, wide districts of India, and portions of China, Japan, and Australasia were Christianized by Catholic Missionaries, centuries and generations before a modern Bible Society was in existence, we can hardly suppose that while these stupendous and successful missionary labours—achieved at the cost of countless martyrdoms—are treated as matters of course, as constituting simply the onward progress of the Church, the outlay of a few thousands, or say hundreds of thousands, to establish denominational opportunities for the European residents of foreign countries, merits to be singled out for particular symbolization; especially as the author concedes that the Christianity represented by this modern missionary movement is of a sickly and unsatisfactory constitution. Does not that broken and dilapidated step upwards, at a distance of 1814 inches from the beginning, rather indicate the gradual uplifting of the Church from

the mire into which the Reformation cast her; an uplifting which will probably continue until she enters on her last persecutions, and corresponding to the triumphal entry which our Divine Lord made into Jerusalem to be crucified? Such an interpretation receives countenance from the fact that there is another such step (the only other in the Gallery) near the beginning, just where we might expect to see symbolized the establishment of the Church by Constantine. Moreover, some such temporary return of prosperity in the latter days seems indicated by the prophecy:

“ There shall come a day which shall be neither dark nor light, but grey; *and towards evening, it shall be light.*”

The day of Protestantism, dark as it has been in comparison with the brightness of Catholic Faith, has been light as compared with the blackness of Pagan idolatries; *grey* represents it exactly; *and towards evening it shall be light.* But as the acclamations which greeted our Divine Lord on Palm Sunday, came from the same throats that cried out, “ Crucify Him!” on Good Friday, so may the momentary triumph which awaits His Church be aptly symbolized by that broken and dilapidated step.

Of the narrow antechamber where hangs the Granite Leaf, we shall only remark that the refer-

ence it is supposed to bear to the Last Judgment seems fully borne out, not only by the frowning porteallis under which all must crouch in passing but by the fact that all the rules and measures according to which the Pyramid was built are graven upon the walls. There does seem a striking analogy between this stone-record of the standards by which every stone of the building must be judged, and that Opening of the Books mentioned in the Apococalypse.

The magnificent " King's Chamber " beyond, we shall also pass, merely calling attention to the *three times three* granite blocks forming its roof, which, according to this symbolic theory may well be taken to testify to the Divinity of Christ.

So far, then, the passage-ways of the Great Pyramid, taken as a chart of spiritual history, and of the doctrinal teaching of the Catholic Church. If we regard them in the light of her moral teaching the picture is no less striking. Taking the Grand Gallery as symbolizing the perfect way of God's Commandments, the narrow passage on the same incline to signify the path of lukewarmness and venial sin, and the first entrance tube as the path of mortal sin, we have here a picture which may well make everyone, even the righteous, tremble. For in all three the path is narrow, inclined, and slippery; in all three the *ascent* re-

quires a deliberate effort, while the *descent* is fearfully easy; in all three the lines of progression are extremely fine, yet ultimately amount to the entire length of the passage; forming altogether a solid commentary on the warning of the Apostle,—  
“ Despise not small things. He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little.”

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## 2. THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER

The Queen's Chamber stands, as we have said, at the end of a horizontal passage branching off from the very beginning of the Grand Gallery. From the fact of its being a seven-sided room—owing to its roof being a pointed, two-sided arch—and of the number seven, as well as the Sabbatic symbol—a seventh marked off from six—appearing in some of its measurements, our author suggests that it may represent the restoration to the Jews of their nationality, worship, etc., in renewed splendour, close upon, and even previous to their acceptance of the True Messiah. There are in the chamber two ventilating tubes, which, instead of having been left open by the builders, as in the “ King's Chamber,” were covered with scales of polished stones about one inch thick, rendering them invisible from the apartment, although open

beyond. It was only by something like an accident that these thin scales were broken through, and the foul air which had accumulated in the beautiful apartment dispersed. These scales the author takes to represent the spiritual blindness of the Jews, which will require some miraculous intervention to dispel it.

Now, this explanation is wholly untenable. Nowhere in Scripture is there promised any such national restoration of the Jews. God promised to restore them to His favour, and to the privileges they had forfeited; but what were those privileges? They were the ineffable graces of the Catholic Church, those graces which all their old prophetic and symbolic worship and laws *worked up to*, and which, through their unbelief, they failed to inherit. That spiritual inheritance is promised to them in the latter days; that is to say, they will embrace Christianity. But how could there be any return to the old prophetic *regime*, the old symbolic worship, whose office ceased when the Reality appeared and took its place? How could the altar whereon Christ continues to offer to the Eternal Father, in an unbloody manner, the Sacrifice of the Cross, give place to the typical altar whereon was offered but the blood of bulls, and goats, and rams? How could His Eternal Priesthood according to the Order of Melchisedek stand aside to make room

once more for the priesthood of Aaron? A careful and reflective study of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews will explode any such notion in the mind of any honest man, be he Protestant or Jew. The Jews were appointed a chosen people as a figure or type of the Christian Church; the only restoration which can await them is a place in that spiritual nationality.

If, therefore, the beautiful theory concerning the Great Pyramid is to hold water, some other interpretation must be found for the "Queen's Chamber." Nor is it far to seek. The apartment stands on the twenty-fifth tier of masonry, and the number twenty-five appears in all its various proportions. The approach descends somewhat at its termination, only to find that no flooring is laid for the chamber at that low level, but that a floor-line is distinctly marked out, encircling it as high as the roof of the entrance passage. The scales of measurement, weight, etc., of the whole structure are all graven on its walls, as they are on the stones of the passage of Judgment. It presents an array of sabbatic symbolism. It stands midway between the base and the "King's Chamber." It forms a verticle to the incline of the Grand Gallery; and its entrance-passage touches the beginning of that Gallery, while a perpendicular line from its southern wall would touch its end, embracing, as it



were, the whole length in a perfect triangle. Now, let us see how all that interprets in the light of Catholic dogma.

It is, or rather, it ought to be, perfectly clear to common sense, as well as to Faith, that if the mysterious Pillar be indeed a prophetic record of the decrees and designs of God, there must be in it some adequate recognition of His Blessed Mother,—that holy and exalted being from whom He descended to take that Sacred Flesh in which He made satisfaction to the Eternal Justice for our sins, and which He elevated to the Uncreated Throne of His Divinity. Mary's place in the economy of spiritual things cannot be ignored without a gross violation of truth, justice and reverence. She is the second Eve, as Christ is the Second Adam. She is our spiritual Mother, as Eve was our natural mother. The Holy Scripture speaks of her as the "Queen standing at the King's Right Hand." The Written Record is full of her, although, for wise reasons, its allusions are mostly veiled under types and figures. The Stone Record also, must speak of her, if it be genuine. Let us see if it does so.

1st. She sprang from the race of Judah just when the elder dispensation was about to close, and the Christian dispensation about to begin. The passage leading to the "Queen's Chamber "

branches off just where the first ascending passage ends, and the Grand Gallery begins.

2nd. She humbled herself to the point of renouncing all that the women of her race hoped for, by consecrating her virginity to God; a humility beautifully symbolized by the slight incline towards the end of the passage.

3rd. Her "floor-line," instead of being laid on the ordinary level, was raised, in the Immaculate Conception, to a level with the roof of the passage. Thus were "her foundations upon the mountains"—that is, she began her earthly career where the saints leave off; their roof is as her floor.

4th. The Chamber stands on the 25th tier of masonry; so does Mary's glory stand on her Divine Maternity which dates from the 25th of March, the day of the Annunciation; a date, we may observe, which is also that of the Fall of Adam, when the Woman who should crush the head of the Serpent was first promised; as also the date of our Lord's Crucifixion. Our Divine Lord was also born on the 25th of December. No wonder, then, that a monument to Mary should be redolent of *twenty-five*; because the number is pointedly associated with the Divine Maternity, and the Divine Maternity colours all the mysteries of Mary.

5th. The scales of measurement, weight, etc., of the whole structure are engraven on her walls,

as on the Passage of Judgment, to shew that she perfectly fulfilled the law and will of Almighty God, and that Judgment has no lean on her. His Law was engraven on her heart.

6th. The Chamber presents an array of Sabbathic symbolism. Sabbatism is no more Jewish than it is Christian. What does it mean being specially introduced here?

The word *Sabbath* signifies *rest*. The day was to be consecrated by rest, to commemorate the rest which the Lord represents Himself as taking after finishing Creation. These symbols in the "Queen's Chamber" signify the complacency which the Divinity takes in this perfect creature, the crown of all His works. They celebrate in stone that surpassing love of the Eternal Father for His most perfect daughter, of the Eternal Son for His Beloved Mother, of the Eternal Spirit for His Immaculate Spouse, which the inspired king of Israel afterwards celebrated in the Canticles. Mary was God's Sabbath on earth - His place of Rest in a world where there was no other untainted spot. He *rested* for nine months in her virginal womb. He *rested* on her maternal bosom, in her encircling arms, during His infancy, and again, when His Sacred Body was taken down from the Cross. Above all, His Divine Spirit *rested* in her incomparable perfection, singing through the lips

of the inspired prophet,—“Thou art all fair, my dove, o my love, and there is no spot in thee.” No more fitting emblem could adorn the “Queen’s Chamber.”

7th. It stands midway between the base and the King’s Chamber to signify that Mary is our Mediatrix with her Divine Son, even as He is our Mediator with the Eternal Father. The roof is pointed upward as if to indicate that she continually offers her prayers for us.

8th. It is called the “Queen’s Chamber.” If Judah ever was a Queen, it was surely while the day of her dispensation lasted; therefore, any type to signify her queenship would necessarily be placed on the plane of her own angle. But the “Queen’s Chamber” stands on the plane of the Church’s angle; its entering passage touches the Church’s beginning, and a vertical line from the southern wall would touch its end, indicating that Mary knows, loves, and cherishes the Church in God—signified by the triangle—from the beginning even to the end. And as the Chamber forms the apex of a pyramid whose base line is the Grand Gallery, so Mary is the apex or crowning point of all pure creatures.

Now for the Ventilating Tubes, with their thin scales of polished stone. We have said the Written Record—the Holy Scripture—is full of Mary.

although its allusions are mostly veiled under figures. The reason of this *veiling* is very simple. The Unity and Trinity of God, and the Divinity of Christ, as well as His Death and Resurrection, had to be preached to nations accustomed to polytheism; and to have given prominence to the wonders relating to Mary would, at that early time, have put a stumbling-block in the way of neophytes, who would, perhaps, have found difficulty in discriminating between the glory of so exalted a creature and that of the Infinite Creator to whose Bounty she owed it all. It was for this reason, that God reserved to a future age the full knowledge of Mary's incomparable graces. It was for this reason that Mary herself forbade the Evangelists to mention her at all, except in as far as was absolutely necessary to elucidate the Mystery of the Incarnation. Christians, from the very earliest days—even before our Blessed Lord's Death—honoured her with a most special honour; for, recognizing in her the Mother of the Incarnate Word, they held the key to all her greatness, and venerated her as such both while on earth and afterwards in Heaven.. But the world of graces which surrounded her Divine Maternity like a royal *cortège*, was veiled until the day appointed by God to reveal it; and amidst the tempests and afflictions of the 17th century, the gift descended to the suf-

fering Church—the revelation was made to the holy Abbess Mary of Jesus, of Agreda, who was commanded to write all that was revealed to her of Mary, the Mystical City of God. That revelation—made two hundred years ago—has proved a treasure and a power in the Church; and its influence spreads and will spread every day.

Here, then, we have the miraculous breaking through of the scales purposely left over the ventilating tubes of Mary's glory. Even the foul air which accumulated in the beautiful apartment has its symbolism in the insults and irreverence offered to the Blessed Mother by the enemies of the Church. In estimating all these interpretations, every one must bear in mind that we are dealing with *facts*; and Almighty God's interpretation of prophecy is—*its fulfilment in fact*. We must never forget that Mary's position, as maintained by the Catholic Church for nearly two thousand years, is *an accomplished fact*. Whatever may be a man's own ideas or prejudices, they are powerless to alter that fact. The Reformation had no effect on it whatever, as regarded the great body of Christians. It was a fact *foreseen by God*, and a fact so prominent that in no system of prophecy could it be overlooked. King David calls her the "Queen" standing at Christ's Right Hand "clothed in a vesture of gold wrought about with divers colours."

And he says to her—

“Hearken, oh! daughter, and incline thine ear: forget, also, thine own people and thy fathers' house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for He is the Lord thy God; worship thou Him . . .

“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children whom thou mayst make princes in all lands . . .

“Even the rich among the people shall make supplication before thee. *I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations, therefore shall the people praise thy name for ever and ever.*” (Psalm 45th.)

Mary's name *has* been remembered, and the people *have* praised her in all generations; and diversities of sectarian opinion can no more obliterate that *fact* than the sneers of sceptics can obliterate the two thousand years of the Church's history.

The author from whom we draw our data acknowledges—apologetically it must be allowed—that he can detect no indication of the Reformation in the prophetic Pillar of Egypt; unless, he adds, sundry scratches on the walls, and chippings of certain ramp-stones be taken to indicate the “corruptions of the Church” prior to that glorious event. He, however, finds consolation in reflecting that “it is extremely difficult to find any allusion to it in the Written Record of Holy Scripture, whether in the Old or New Testament.” In this

we think he is mistaken. Each Testament supplies us with a prophecy of the Reformation so graphic and so exact in detail, that it reads rather like a history than a prophecy. Here is one :

“ False witnesses are risen up; they have laid to my charge things which I knew not; they have rewarded me evil for good. (Psalm 34.)

“ Hide me, oh! God, from the gathering together of the froward, and from the insurrection of wicked doers, who have whet their tongue like a sword, and shot out their arrows, even bitter words!” (Psalm 64.)

If the Reformation was not the “ insurrection of the wicked doers ” of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—men who had lost *faith* because they had first lost *grace*—we do not know what it was. Here is another:

“ Thine adversaries roar in the midst of Thy congregations, and set up their banners for tokens.

“ He that hewed timber afore out of the thick trees, was known to bring it to an excellent work. But now, they break down all the carved-work with axes and hammers.

“ They have cast fire into thy sanctuary, and have defiled the dwelling-place of Thy Name even unto the ground.

“ Yea, they said in their hearts: ‘ Let us make havoc of them altogether!’ Thus have they burnt



up all the Houses of God in the land!" (Psalm 74)

Can any one stand within the roofless precincts of Holyrood or Melrose, of Kelso or Jedborough, and look up at the stains of fire which yet blacken their walls, and fail to recognize this prophetic photograph! Here is another:

"The Spirit saith expressly that in the latter days some will revolt against the Faith, attaching themselves to seducers, and to doctrines of demons, teaching lies through hypocrisy, being scared in their conscience." (I Tim. 4. 1.)

Are Calvinistic *Predestination*, the permission of divorce, etc., doctrines of Christ, or "doctrines of demons?" Surely, any one but moderately studied in the Holy Scripture can tell. These texts do not represent the Reformation in a light acceptable to its votaries; yet they forecast it with undeniable precision, for all that; and if the cracks in the wall and the chipped ramp-stones mean anything, it is more in accordance with these prophecies to understand in them the wounds inflicted on the Church by successive heresies, and the hollow and unsatisfactory nature of her relations with earthly powers.

But not only in the Holy Scripture do we find these striking and graphic allusions to the Reformation. We find them, also, in connection with the Pillar of Egypt—not *within* it, but *around* it.

We find them in the three dozen pyramids which ape its general form, but which, when examined, shew none of its peculiar marks, of its superhuman characteristics. They ape its general form; but the "knowledge laid to the line, and the wisdom to the plummet" are not there. Nothing of the Great Monument's symbolism is there, saving the downward path and the Bottomless Pit. Look at all the Sects—those children of the Reformation; we speak not of the individuals composing them, but of the institutions as such. Some among them retain a few beliefs brought down from the Church; but what have they *of their own*? Absolute nothingness. Is there one among them which does not, as the years go by, drop, one after another such shreds of Catholic doctrine and practice as still cling to them? Is there one among them which, as the years go by, does not multiply *denials*, and draw nearer and nearer to that Pit of Infidelity in which they will all ultimately merge? Yet the Ancient Church that was before them all, that still vastly outnumbers them all, rises up in the midst to testify against unbelief, even as her stone model testifies on the border-land of Egypt. Her foundations are upon the Rock. Her corners are socketted in the Four Gospels. Her face is turned to the four corners of the earth., stamped with the symbol of the Triune God. Within her bosom she

bears the spiritual Reality of those mysteries which the Prophetic-Pillar contains in figure. Her government is a perfect pyramid; the priests over the people, the bishops over the priests, the Sacred College, and the Vicar of Christ as Head-corner-stone; a perfect antitype of the Pillar of Egypt, and again, a perfect type of the Spiritual Edifice which ascends from its countless multitude of faithful ones on earth, through tier after tier of saints, confessors, martyrs, angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, and the Hierarchy of the Incarnation, till it culminates in the Virgin Mother holding in her arms her True Son whose own place for ever is the uncreated throne of God.

# Poor Little Ninette!

## CHAPTER I

### NINETTE

" You will not marry the man your father and mother have selected for you? What do you mean, child? Are you crazy?"

The speaker was a tall, stately, dark-complexioned woman, somewhat past the prime of life. The party to whom she addressed the remonstrance was a quiet, little, modest-looking brunette, resembling the lady, her mother, in nothing but the color of her hair and eyes. She was the youngest of a pretty large family, the other members of which more nearly resembled the mother, both in appearance and in imperiousness of character: while Nina took after her father, a man naturally amiable and generous, although rather too much under the influence, direct and indirect, of his wife. Indeed, Madame de l'Orme had been accustomed to " rule the roost " all her life. Her husband saw everything with her eyes; and even her children, who shared her own haughty temper, although they were not backward to show fight

when any difference of opinion arose, invariably ended by doing just as Madame wished, whether it were right or wrong. The three elder daughters had married the man of her choice; her sons had settled in life according to her wishes; and she had now set about arranging a match for her youngest daughter with a wealthy but unattractive and elderly proprietor in the neighborhood. The idea of meeting with even a remonstrance from the timid and gentle Nina never entered her mind. From infancy this youngest daughter had always been so submissive and conciliating that her self-asserting brothers and sisters never dreamed of consulting or considering her: her ready and unflinching consent to whatever others wished was looked for as a matter of course, meriting neither thanks nor comment. The only acknowledgment her amiable docility called forth, especially from her mother, was a lurking and thinly veiled contempt. "Poor little Ninette" was considered too weak to have a will of her own, and too insignificant to be taken into account at all. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that Madame de l'Orme was somewhat stunned when "poor little Ninette" signified her intention of declining the matrimonial advances of M. St-Hilaire; which she did, not boldly, but quietly, and with due respect for her mother.

"You will not marry him?" continued the exasperated lady. "And why not, may I ask?"

"Because I do not love him," answered Ninette.

"Love him! No, of course you don't, but you will love him after you are married. Nobody thinks of love until then."

"Yes, mamma, I do. I am perfectly sure I never could love him, and how, then, could I kneel down at the altar and *swear before God* to love him? I could not do it."

"Stuff and nonsense! You always think yourself wiser than everybody else. What works very well for other people is not good enough for you, eh? Your sisters married to please their parents: are they not happy? Do they not love their husbands?"

"Perhaps they do, and perhaps they are happy, but Adèle and Désirée and Louise differ in character from me. They lack depth."

"They lack *what?*" exclaimed Madame de l'Orme, opening wide her eyes in astonishment. In fact Nina was coming out in so unsuspected a character that the good lady began to have an uncomfortable and bewildering impression that she was talking to a total stranger whom she had never before met.

"*Depth*, repeated Nina composedly. "They are, I have no doubt, as happy as fine houses,

fashionable dress, and plenty of visiting can make them; and they could get along pretty well with any reasonable person, because they find their happiness in these other things. But I am different. I never did care a great deal for such matters; I care for them less and less every day. I must love the man I marry for himself, not for what he can give me, and how he can keep me."

"Where did you learn all that nonsense, child?" asked her mother, angrily. "Do you think people can pick and choose in this world? Who has been filling your head with these silly notions. Nina," she exclaimed, as a sudden thought occurred to her, "has that Conrad been talking to you?"

Now, "that Conrad"—Conrad Neuendorf, a German by birth—occupied the position of book-keeper in M. de l'Orme's mercantile establishment, at a not very large salary. He was a gentleman, both by parentage and education, and being, moreover, highly accomplished, was considered an acquisition at the house of his employer; that class of dependents being, in France, freely admitted to the social circle. Madame de l'Orme, however, had early discovered that he held what she considered romantic and heterodox sentiments on several subjects, and that he had a mind of his own in maintaining them. Her daughter's opposition to her plans, grounded as it was on senti-

ments of a similar kind, now suddenly and for the first time awoke in her mind a lively advertence to the fact that Conrad had always devoted the greater part of his attention to "poor little Ninette" — a circumstance which Madame had always laid at the door of his modesty, but which she now began to attribute to a different cause. The expression of Nina's face, and the rapidly changing color which were the only reply to her abrupt question, increased her suspicions and caused her to repeat it yet more angrily:

"Has he been talking to you, child?"

"I don't know what you mean, mamma. He often talks to me, and talks very sensibly too."

"And he has been trying to draw you into a silly engagement, unknown to your father and mother?"

"No, he has not," answered Nina: her indignation almost getting the better of the habitual awe with which she regarded her mother."

At this juncture, the door of Madame's boudoir, where the conversation took place, opened, and M. de l'Orme, newspaper in hand, entered.

"Here's a pretty mess," exclaimed Madame, vehemently. "That Conrad has been making love to this silly chit, and she says she won't have anything to say to M. St. Hilaire."

"Mamma, I never said that about Conrad—he



did nothing of the kind," said Nina, aroused to unusual energy by the imputation cast on an innocent person. "I said I would not marry a man I could never love; and Conrad—" here she stopped short, and her mother struck her.

"Ah; you could love *him*—that is!"

Nina's first impulse, responsive to this question, was to hang down her head in silence; but the reply her mother fully expected, and something in the tone and expression which accompanied the remark caused her to drive back her tears, and to say deliberately:

"Yes, I think I could."

"Tush!" said her father, "stuff and nonsense, child! Go to your piano and practise your music, and leave such matters to be settled by those who understand them."

With habitual deference to the parental command, Nina immediately withdrew; but instead of going to the piano, she went to her room to have a good cry.

"We must dismiss that Conrad," was madame's first remark to her husband.

"That is more easily said than done," answered he. "Has he really spoken to the child?"

"If he has not," she replied, "at least she is predisposed in his favor. I can see that."

"It will be difficult to replace him," said M. de

l'Orme, reflectively; "difficult, also, to dismiss him without any reason. What did Nina say?"

"Flatly refused to do as all her sisters have done and as everybody does. The saucy girl had the assurance to tell me that what might do very well for them would not do for her because she had more *depth*, forsooth!"

"There is some truth in that," returned her husband, still reflectively. "There is some truth in that. Nina takes after her aunt Cecile."

"And did not her aunt Cecile marry the man her parents chose for her? and was not their married life a very happy one—quite a success, in fact?" asked madame, triumphantly.

"True, again," said M. de l'Orme, brightening. "Come, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll send Nina down for a week to Cecile, who is full of good sense, and get her to talk the matter over reasonably with the child. I don't see how I could dismiss Neuendorf, or even forbid him the house."

So Nina was sent into the country for a week, to visit her aunt Cecile, who was duly informed of the circumstances that required her interference.

## CHAPTER II

## AUNT CECILE

Aunt Cecile, M. de l'Orme's only sister, was a widow lady, residing in a snug *campagne*, or country house, situated about a league and a half from the city where dwelt that gentleman and his family. Her husband had been dead for some years, and her only child, a son, having entered the priesthood, she lived all alone with her domestics. She was greatly beloved, not only by her dependants, but by all who came in contact with her, socially or otherwise; her amiability and obliging friendliness, and, above all, her sunny, cheerful temper and bright countenance, rendering her a univerral favorite. Detraction could find but one plea to pick with her behind her back, and Detraction was not slow to pick it, *viz.*, how *could* a mother be so cold-hearted and unnatural as to allow her only son—her only child—to leave her and become a priest? Remarks, however, fell harmless on Aunt Cécile, for the reason that she seldom heard them, and paid no attention to them when she did.

It was with this genial relative that Nina de l'Orme, nothing loath, was sent to spend a week at her cheerful and sunny *campagne*. Nina was greatly attached to her aunt, and M. de l'Orme

rightly calculated that whatever Aunt Cécile said would be likely to weigh with her more than anything else. On the present occasion, however, the young lady prepared herself for battle; and it was a great relief to her, as deferring the evil hour, when her aunt, who met her at the hall-door, after embracing her tenderly, said, as she conducted her to her room:

“ We won't talk business to-day, Ninette; we will enjoy ourselves this afternoon, and sleep over matters for a night.”

And they did enjoy themselves that afternoon. The elder lady had not outlived the beautiful and quiet tastes of her girlhood—tastes which her youngest niece fully shared. They had music, and fancy-work, and pleasant chat, and delicious cakes and coffee: all of which were participated in by a neighbor or two, whose uninvited though pleasantly welcomed company afforded one reason, even if there were no other, for the postponement of private discussions. It seemed to Nina, however, that on this evening her aunt was scarcely so lively as usual. She looked somewhat pale, and dropped frequently out of the conversation, and Nina sometimes caught her glance fixed on herself with a thoughtful expression.

Next morning after breakfast, Aunt Cécile took up her work-basket, and said:

"Come, Ninette, we will go and sit under the vines, and enjoy the scent of the roses. Put on your hat, and bring your crochet."

Nina obeyed, and the two were soon pleasantly seated in the garden under a shady arcade covered with grape-vines. The needlework was set agoing, and after a while they began to talk.

"Tell me, my child, what is all this fuss about at home?"

Aunt Cécile had been put in possession of the facts as viewed by the older folks; but she wished to give Nina an opportunity of stating the matter from her own point of view.

"My father and mother wish me to marry M. St Hilaire," replied Nina, coming at once at the point.

"And you are not willing to do so; is that it?" asked her aunt.

"Yes, aunt, that is it. I am sorry to disoblige them, and would gladly obey them if I could. But I can't. Even if he were not so old, and so homely, and so tiresome, I could not do it. I would rather die."

"He is a very good man, and could keep you well," said her aunt gravely.

"Perhaps so," answered Nina. "It is possible some girls might get along very well with him. They would 'wash him down,' so to speak, with fine dresses and Turkey carpets, and all that sort

of thing. But I could not. My heart would be hungry all the time, and if, in after life, the happiness of which I dream came to be at length within my grasp, I could not answer for consequences. Besides—oh! aunt," she cried, laying down her crochet, "I could *never* marry him!"

"Don't cry, my poor Ninette!" said Aunt Cécile, soothingly: "don't cry. I wish to hear everything unreservedly from your own lips, and to advise only for your happiness. No, my child," she added after a short pause. "You could never marry under such circumstances, and I would be the last in the world to advise it."

"You, Aunt Cécile!" exclaimed Nina in surprise and feeling as if a load were lifted off her.

"Yes, my child," replied her aunt. "I know too well, by bitter experience, the sufferings it would entail upon you."

"Why Aunt Cécile, everyone always says you were so happy."

"Everyone is happy who loves our Divine Lord and practices conformity to His holy will. It is not in the power of external circumstances to render such a one *unhappy*. But Nina, *unhappiness* and *sufferings* are not synonymous; they are two very different things, although persons are apt to confound them. I have been happy, for I have had peace of conscience and the many consolations

of our holy religion. But I have also suffered—oh! as I trust never to see you or any one else suffer.”

Nina regarded her Aunt with a look which spoke her sympathy more eloquently than words would have done, while the latter, after a brief pause, continued: “I never speak of it, because, while it lasted, it was easier to bear in silence; and now that it is past, it would seem like reproaching the dead. I mean no reproach, however; I only speak for your good, because I know you are not a girl to think of marriage merely as an occasion for display, and fine dresses, and cards, and wedding-cake, and all the rest. My husband—may he rest in peace!—was a very good man in his way; upright, honorable, and attentive to his business. But he was cold and unsympathetic—a man whom I never would have chosen had it been left to me. From the very first he never showed me any affection; and to a fond and clinging nature that would have been pain even had we stood to each other in a less intimate relation. Perhaps he liked me as well as he could like anyone; but he never showed it—never showed it in any way. Time would fail were I to recount the efforts I made to thaw his icy nature, or were I to detail the weary hours I passed in solitude with my hungry heart, and the pain of supporting the ebullitions of a not over-pleasant

temper, with nothing to support me but the determination to do my best, now I was in for it. Many women would have made light of these things, and found their happiness in society. I could not; I wanted love. I know not what I should have done but for my child. He was the sunshine of my life; and God has rewarded his love for his mother by calling him to His own service, and has compensated me for many sufferings by giving me a son who offers up for me daily the Holy Sacrifice, and will offer It up for me daily, after I am dead. "No, Nina," continued the poor lady, wiping her eyes, "a woman like your mother cannot even imagine the anguish of having to fulfil the duties of a wife with a persistent will—ay, and a pleasant face—while every faculty of the inferior or sensitive soul is in rebellion."

"I could not do it, aunt; I would run away," said Nina determinedly.

"That, my child, would only be to make bad a great deal worse. It would be to break your marriage vow, and commit a great sin. A woman cannot afford to lose her soul, just because she has a few sorrows to bear. It is bad enough to miss domestic happiness in this world, without, also, missing Heaven in the next. We must each of us stand by our cross; but before a sensitive and affectionate woman commits herself to a loveless



marriage, let her be well assured that it is the cross her Heavenly Father desires to lay upon her, and not a mere matter of fine house, stylish establishment, and good settlements."

"How can I know, dear aunt?" said Nina, her eyes once more filling with tears.

"Pray, my darling, that He would guide and direct you. He knows how to make His will clear and unmistakable. Take no step of which your parents would disapprove; but, on the other hand, remember that in the matter of your settlement in life, their counsel binds you only in as far as it is *according to reason and religion.*"

"Thank you a thousand times, aunt Cécile; your words both comfort and strengthen me. If mamma—" here Nina paused, and her aunt, divining her thoughts, said:

"I will write to them and tell them what I think. But I will wait a few days; and, meanwhile, we will put the subject away, and spend cheerfully the time you are to remain with me."

Aunt Cécile embraced her niece, and, gathering up their work, they returned to the house. The next few days passed pleasantly by, in country walks, reading, sketching, and agreeable talk. Towards the end of the week the good lady despatched a letter to her brother, the contents of which she did not impart to Nina further than their

late conversation enabled her to surmise them. Next day a short note from her mother was handed to Nina, requiring her immediate return home.

"I thought so," remarked Aunt Cecile. "That was why I delayed writing. I did not wish your pleasant visit to be cut short sooner than could be helped."

It was with some trepidation that "poor Little Ninette" turned her face homewards to meet her imperious mamma; and truly, that worldly-minded lady was nursing a somewhat wrathful mood for her daughter's benefit. It may be remarked that she did not for a moment consider Nina's opposition as menacing any ultimate frustration of her plans; she had been too much accustomed to bear down opposition on every point, and to carry all before her through force of overweening self-will. She merely resented that Nina, whose gentle docility she mistook for feeble-mindedness, should give her so much trouble. The ultimate issue she held to be quite assured.

It chanced that on the day Nina returned to the paternal mansion, M. de l'Orme was confined to the house by indisposition; and, being unable to go to his place of business, he had ordered the attendance of his book-keeper, the obnoxious Conrad. The two were busy over account books when Nina entered the library to salute her father. Madame

de l'Orme, also, was there with her needle-work; and when the young lady made her appearance, the emotion that flashed up in Conrad's blue eyes, and the flush that overspread his face, even to the very roots of his golden brown hair, revealed the state of his feelings to Madame, who watched him narrowly, with a certainty that could admit no doubt. His warm German heart literally glowed on his expressive countenance. Even the old gentleman took note of it; and when, subsequently, his wife drew his attention to the fact, he could not but admit that her surmises were correct.

"He must go," said Madame.

"'Tis a pity," said her husband, "an excellent young man, and first-rate at business."

"You will find hundreds from whom to replace him."

So M. de l'Orme, desirous of doing the thing as tenderly as possible, found some trifling business for Conrad to transact for him at Frankfort; with the intimation that after it was done, he might take *congé* for a month to see his relations, and that he, M. de l'Orme, would find a substitute *pro tem*. The old gentleman hoped that before the month was up, all temptation would be removed, and that Conrad would return only in time to pay his respects to Madame St. Hilaire.

**MOTHER GENEVIEVE**

" Now, let it be well understood," said Madame de l'Orme next day, at the conclusion of an interview—a stormy one on her side—with her daughter " let it be well understood: I give you one week for consideration. If, at the end of that time, you still refuse to meet our wishes, you will retire into the convent at A——, and take the veil. Half the sum I had intended for your *trousseau* will suffice for your dowry, and be a small fortune to the religious house. Make your choice within the time I mention, and I, meanwhile, will have such things prepared as may be indispensable for your reception, if they are not required for your marriage," saying which, Madame turned on her heel, and quitted her daughter's apartment.

Poor Ninette! The joy that lit up Conrad's face when she entered the library on the previous day, was no less apparent to her than to her parents: nay, much more so, contrasting it, as she did, with her father's worried look as he returned her embrace, and her mother's stony countenance as she coldly turned her cheek to receive the warm kiss she would not return. But the revelation was no new one to her. She well knew the warm heart that was lying at her feet. No word, indeed, had

ever passed between them on the subject; but eyes more eloquent than any tongue had often told the tale, and one less intelligent and sympathetic than Nina could hardly have failed to read it there. When her mother left her, the tears she had managed to restrain during the interview flowed freely, as she sat down by her bedside and buried her face in the pillow. The thought of Conrad made her heart sink at her mother's unfeeling sentence, but although she wept, she did not hesitate.

"I would rather a thousand times, go back to dear Mother Genevieve," she said, wiping away the fast falling tears. "A life spent in prayer and good works could not but be a life of peace, and even of happiness; while, as poor Aunt Cécile says, a loveless marriage would be a life-long martyrdom. How many are there who could come through it as she has done? I am very sure I could not. I might give my mother her answer now, but since she has given me a week of respite, I may as well take it. She can wait for her answer till the end of the week."

That week saw Conrad depart for Germany—unwillingly, it must be confessed. The business with which M. de l'Orme entrusted him was so far from pressing, and the proffered holiday so uncalculated-for, that he at once divined the truth, and saw

that his love for Nina had been more than suspected. He was forced to depart without even seeing her again. At length the week came to a close; and as Ninette declared herself no farther on the road towards accepting M. St. Hilaire than she had been at its commencement, Madame de l'Orme wrote to Mother Genevieve, Superioress of the convent at which all her daughters had been educated, to say that Mademoiselle, her youngest daughter, desired to enter her house as a postulant. A satisfactory acknowledgment to Madame, and a long, loving letter to Nina arrived in due course from the Reverend Mother, and within a few hours the young lady left her father's house, and proceeded to the convent where her happy school-days had been spent. She was received by the Superioress and the Sisters with a loving tenderness that contrasted strangely with her dismissal from her home.

Mother Genevieve, the Reverend Prioress, was as gentle and bright-faced and motherly as Aunt Cécile, whose particular friend she was; although the latter's love of retirement and unwillingness to intrude on the many duties of the nun, prevented them from meeting very often. When Nina saw her sweet, kind face, and found herself once more among the Religious she loved, she felt, for the moment, fully reconciled to the idea of spending

all her future life in that quiet and holy retreat. The trim grounds, the pretty chapel embosomed in rose-bushes, the sunny parlor with its white floor and cheerful windows, in at which peeped wreathing jessamine and honeysuckle, the school-rooms where she had studied, every nook and corner, in fact, were old friends, and redolent of happy memories. The gay laugh of the pupils in the playground, and of the novices at recreation, was the solitary item of her surroundings which grated on her, and with which she felt herself to be out of harmony. She entered, however, upon the duties of her new sphere with good-will, if not with ardor. She performed faithfully the tasks appointed her, and the hours spent in prayer were her greatest consolation; for the good Religious had already formed in her, while their pupil, that spirit of piety which is no less necessary to the Christian in the world than to the Christian in the cloister. When the thought of Conrad *would* intrude—which it sometimes did—she disposed of it in the wisest, as well as the most practical manner, by commuting it into a prayer for his spiritual and temporal welfare.

But with all these points in her favor, Nina soon began to feel that something else, she could not tell what, was wanting. A feeling, scarcely perceptible at first, but daily gathering strength, took

possession of her—a miserable feeling of being where she was not intended to be, and a vague but ever growing impression that her duties lay elsewhere, and that she remained in the convent to the neglect of her true vocation, haunted her like an evil conscience. Her sleepless nights were passed in weeping; she began to shrink from her happy companions, and craved for solitude, and it was with difficulty she could repress the ready tears, on the simplest remark being addressed to her. These symptoms, together with the visibly declining health of the poor young lady, did not escape the watchful eyes of the gentle Mother Genevieve. She observed her silently for some time, and as her suspicions strengthened, she took Father Louis, the confessor of the Community, into council. Nina had now been in the convent for about six weeks, when one day, at the hour of evening recreation, which, during the lovely summer months, was spent in the garden, Mother Genevieve withdrew from the other nuns, and joining Nina where she stood apart from the rest, proceeded to walk with her down a shady alley where they could converse at ease.

“You are not happy here, my child?” said Mother Genevieve, in an enquiring tone.

Nina tried to smile, and to mutter something about how kind they all were to her; but she broke



down with the first words that passed her lips, and threw herself on the bosom of her kind friend, in an agony of weeping.

"I see how it is," said Mother Geneviève, while a shade passed over her face. "Your parents are pushing their parental prerogative beyond its just limits. They are forcing your inclinations, and compelling a choice between a hateful marriage and a life in the cloister. I will write to your mother this very night."

"Oh, Mother, dear!" exclaimed poor little Ninette, "mamma will kill me if she knows I told you."

"Told me what, my dear child?" asked Mother Geneviève, quietly. "You have told me nothing.

Nina pressed her kind friend's hand in silence, and the Reverend Mother at once changed the subject. Returning to the convent, the Superioress took Nina into her own room, and, sitting down at her table, wrote a short note to Madame de l'Orme, merely stating that, after due consideration, both she and the Father Confessor were of opinion that Mademoiselle, her daughter, had no vocation to the religious life; which being the case, she would have the honor of returning Mademoiselle to her home. This note written, she handed to Nina to read. The young girl felt deeply touched by this delicate way of re-assuring her as to the ground on which

she stood with her mother in this matter of her return. She retired to her cell that night with unspeakable sense of relief; and for the first time since entering the house, she slept soundly and placidly. A couple of days saw her once more at home, Mother Geneviève's note having preceded her. Madame de l'Orme hardly deigned to notice her daughter's presence; and Nina would have felt very miserable under her banishment to " Coventry " had it not been for a certain spirit of hopefulness and elasticity which seemed to have been infused into her heart by her late interview with the Reverend Mother.

It was on the third day after Nina's return home that an incident occurred which broke up the lofty silence of her mother, and launched the poor young lady herself upon a new sea of trial. It was after breakfast on the morning in question, that Nina, retiring to her room to write to her kind friend at the convent, according to promise, met in the hall her father hurrying towards Madam's dressing-room, with a troubled look on his face, and an open letter in his hand. On reaching her own apartment and preparing to write, she found she had mislaid her pen, and immediately descended to the library to procure another. On entering, the first object on the table which met her eyes was an unopened envelope addressed to

herself, but in a handwriting wholly strange to her. The letter bore no stamp or post-mark of any kind. Puzzled beyond measure, Nina, after a moment's hesitation, tore open the envelope, and began to peruse the contents. It was a passionate declaration of love from Conrad Neuendorf, and a modest yet manly entreaty for her hand, coupled with the information that he was now in a position to keep her in a style somewhat more suited to her merits than he formerly could have done, as he had just obtained a lucrative and advantageous settlement in his own country. The letter referred her to the one he had written to her father, in which hers was enclosed; and concluded with every loving assurance that could be desired.

It would be impossible to say whether surprise or satisfaction was the feeling uppermost in Nina's mind on the perusal of that letter. She stood looking at it in a sort of trance, forgetful of everything except the joy of learning from Conrad's own lips, as it were, the secret she had long since read in his eyes. But the opening of a distant door, and the sound of her mother's voice, recalled her to uncomfortable realities.

"It is not to be thought of for a moment," was Madame's exclamation in her harshest tones, as she hurried along the corridor towards the library to possess herself of the obnoxious epistle before

Nina should have a chance to see it. But alas! when she pushed open the half shut door, there stood her daughter with the fateful letter in her hand, and full possession of its contents beaming from her countenance.

"How *dared* you open it?" she demanded, indignantly stamping her foot.

"I had a right to open it," Nina quietly replied. "The letter was addressed to me. There is my name on the back of it." And she held up the envelope.

"Hold your peace!" retorted Madame, angrily. "Is that your respect for your mother? Very well, Mademoiselle," she continued, pushing towards Nina her father's writing-desk. "You will sit down and at once answer that person, declining his addresses, and stating that they are not agreeable either to yourself or your family."

"Mamma, I cannot. Conrad Neuendorf's addresses *are* agreeable to me, whatever they may be to my family; and I will not sit down and pen a lie. Papa, do *you* disapprove?" Nina added, appealing to her father.

"He is not a bad lad," said the old man, not answering directly, but addressing his wife. "Ninette might do worse—she might do much worse."

"She shall do as I have said," thundered Madame, imperiously. "Am I to be bearded

and rebelled against in my own house? Is a parent not to be obeyed? Is a daughter to have no respect for her mother? Look you!" she continued, addressing herself to Nina, "sit down and write what I tell you, or you return this very day to the convent."

"But, Madame," said Nina, making no movement towards the desk, "Mother Geneviève and Father Louis have already told you that I have no vocation."

"A fig for Mother Geneviève and Father Louis!" vociferated the exasperated lady; "their heads are no better than a couple of *choux*. Silly as you are, I doubt not you can make them think and say whatever you like. But, Mademoiselle, you shall not go back there; you shall go to the Abbey at B——. You will find Mother Clotilde a different sort of person; you will not be able to twist *her* around your finger."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY

The Benedictine Abbey at B——was a very different looking place from the convent over which the gentle Mother Geneviève presided. It was an old structure of the middle ages, surrounded

by very high walls which presented to the road a dead, unbroken blank, saving at two points; one, where the massive and heavily-studded oaken door which opened into the courtyard, varied the monotony; the other, where it was broken by the public entrance into the Abbey church, which served as parish church to the village and neighborhood. Instead of the bright, sunny aspect, white floors, and cheerful windows which rendered Nina's former place of banishment so attractive, its parlors and others apartments were sombre and gloomy, owing to the great thickness of the walls, the small size of the latticed windows which blinked at the far end of the deep recesses, and the dark color of the oaken flooring and other wood-work, toned down by the artistic hand of time. The bright little chapel, with its shrubbery of roses around the entrance which opened on the smiling lawn, was represented by a magnificent church, built in the days when the best of everything was offered to Almighty God: an edifice whose lofty pillars, groined arches, delicately sculptured stone-work, elaborate wood-carving, and richly-tinted windows inspired the beholder with devotion in spite of himself, and bore witness to the exquisite taste, skill, and science, as well as to the piety, of the "Dark Ages"—those ages whose darkness is like the darkness of noon to a blind man. The very

sound of the deep-voiced bell, as it rang for the various offices of the day, seemed to recount the history of long centuries; and even the ivy and hollyhocks, which relieved the stiffness of the old-fashioned courtyard and the long, low buildings that surrounded it, had a quaint and mediæval look about them.

It was to this Abbey that Nina de l'Orme was sent, as soon as the reply of the Lady Abbess to Madame's extremely conventional and generalizing communication permitted. All things considered, it is not to be wondered at that such sombre surroundings should have the most depressing effect upon the young girl. In fact, when the little wicket in the great oaken door was opened by the portress to admit her, and she found herself under the gloomy, paved archway leading to the courtyard her heart sank within her and she felt like one deposited in prison to serve out a life-sentence. The impression was not diminished when, after following the portress across the court, and through a low doorway into a long corridor, she at length was shown by that functionary into one of the sombre little parlors to await the coming of the Lady Abbess. But the climax of her dismay was reached when the parlor door opened and the Reverend lady herself, attended by one of her nuns, entered to greet the new postulant. Nina had

often heard of Mother Clotilde as a person of fine intellect and most holy life; but she had never before seen her, and she had endeavored to picture to herself such another as Mother Geneviève, despite the hint Madame de l'Orme had dropped. But now, here she was, tall, swarthy, and resolute, reminding Nina forcibly of her mother in all but the classical, finely-cut features, those of the Lady Abbess being irregular and homely. The unattractiveness of her appearance was increased by the antique *ensemble* of her habit, the veil of which was supported in front by a little horn, an article Nina had never seen except in pictures. To add to the impression, the nun who accompanied the Reverend Mother had a most lugubrious cast of countenance and a subdued, downcast air which Nina at once connected in her own mind with harsh legislation on the part of the swarthy Superioress.

It had been Nina's intention to throw herself at once on the sympathy and good-will of Mother Clotilde, encouraged, as she was, to do so by the remembrance of Mother Geneviève. The knowledge that Conrad really loved her, and had made her the offer of his heart and hand, had inspired her with new courage, and she had mentally resolved to lay the whole matter before her new friend. The Lady Abbess's manner, however, although so noticeably mild as to be unexpectedly



out of keeping with her appearance, was still so abrupt and far from inviting confidence that poor little Ninette did not even make an attempt to rally her thoughts, but listened in silence to the few remarks the Superioress made and finally retired without a word, to the apartment prepared for her, under conduct of the grave-faced nun, Sister Evangeline.

For three days poor Nina kept up her courage hoping for an opportunity of making known the facts of the case. She took part in all the offices, and followed in all things the direction of Sister Evangeline, to whom, alone, she was permitted to speak. The speaking, indeed, did not amount to much, for the good Sister, who never raised her eyes from the floor, seemed bent on maintaining her rule of silence as far as was compatible with the task laid upon her; while Nina was too much wrapped up in her own troubles to care about asking questions or making remarks. As the days went on, however, she began to lose heart, and it was no small relief to her when, one day, Sister Evangeline came to her cell with the intimation that the Lady Abbess desired to see her.

She followed the nun to the parlor of the Superioress, and at the bidding of the latter, took a seat beside her.

“ Have you long had the desire to embrace the

religious life?" asked Mother Clotilde, in her dry, but not unkindly manner.

"It is not my own desire," answered Nina, cutting straight to the point, for her feelings were threatening to overcome her, and she could not trust herself with many words. "It is my mother's."

"Ah!—Your mother's?" echoed the Lady Abbess, a shade of dissatisfaction settling down on her swarthy countenance.

"Yes, Madame," answered Nina, resolved to have it out now or never. "My mother has set before me the alternative of a hateful marriage, or life in the cloister."

"And you prefer the latter?"

"I do, madame. I should never hesitate between them. But I will not conceal from you that I do not feel myself called to it; and both Mother Geneviève and Father Louis said I had no vocation."

"You have been in a Religious house before?" asked mother Clotilde, looking much surprised.

"My mother sent me to the convent at A — where I had been educated.

"And they sent you home again?"

"Yes; they said had no vocation."

The Abbess remained for a few moments in deep thought. Then she said:

"You find the attractions of the world too strong, is that it?"

"Not exactly," returned Nina, hesitating, and somewhat at a loss to express herself. "I do not care much for society, and style, and amusement, and that sort of thing. If I did I should marry M. St. Hilaire, as my mother wishes me to do, and then there would be no more about it."

"An earthly attachment, perhaps?" suggested the Reverend Mother. 'Nina's blush, and the agitated expression of her countenance answered the questions sufficiently, for the other continued:

"Ah! I see. You have given your heart to one who is not worthy of it."

"Pardon me, Madame, he is worthy," answered Nina with energy. "Conrad Neuendorf is worthy the best affections of any woman.

"Neuendorf, did you say?" asked the Abbess, looking up quickly with an expression which caused Nina to say eagerly:

"Do you know him, Madame?"

"His family live at C——, do they not?"

"Yes, Madame." Then the Abbess relapsed into another momentary reverie, while Nina, watching her face with intense emotion, could see it developing into an unmistakable index of the resolute side of her character. Presently she said:

"Yes, my dear child, I know him well, and also

his family. He is a most excellent young man. When did you meet him? And does your father share your mother's disapproval? Tell me all about it."

So Nina gave her Reverend friend a full account of everything, not forgetting the expressed sentiments of Aunt Cecile, as well as the negative approval of M. de l'Orme. Mother Clotilde listened attentively, and then, after another moment's meditation, said:

"Well, my child, I will help you if I can. His Lordship the Bishop is expected here soon, and I will lay the whole matter before him. Meanwhile, recommend yourself fervently to your Divine Lord, and ask Him to order everything according to His holy will, and for your eternal welfare. The pleasures of the world are deceitful, and its affections unsatisfying. If it has pleased God to mark you out for His own, you owe Him infinite thanks."

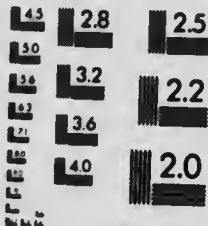
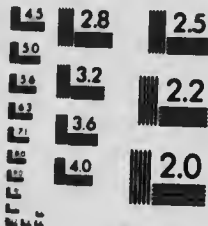
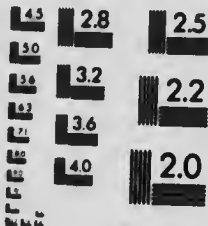
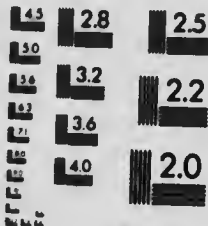
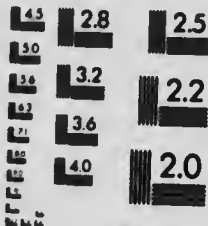
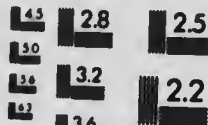
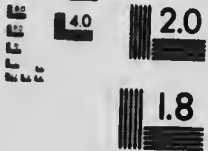
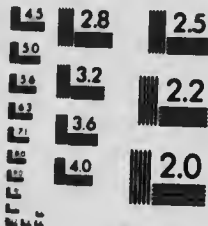
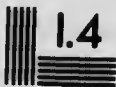
"But, Reverend Mother, how can I know? I feel no interior attraction to the Religious life; and I cannot help realizing that a woman may have all important duties in the world — duties which lie at the foundation of everything good and noble."

"That is true," answered the Abbess. The duties of a mother are the most important that can be imagined; and if none but the giddy and



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worldly minded are left to fulfil them, what is to become of the men and women of the future? At the same time, it is not for us to put ourselves in opposition to the Divine will, which is often made known to us by external circumstances only, in order to try our obedience. You will, therefore, commit the matter wholly into His hands."

As the Abbess concluded, she arose; and Nina, understanding the interview closed, retired to her cell. When there she threw herself upon her knees, and wept a flood of tears; after which she began to pray earnestly, and following the instinct of her heart, as well as the advice of her kind friend, commended herself unreservedly to the Divine will.

The days which followed Nina's interview with Mother Clotilde were marked by nothing save the alternations of hope and despondency in the heart of the poor young lady. The strange feeling she had before experienced, as of the culpable neglect of some more important duty elsewhere, began again to haunt her, growing stronger every day. She grew pale and spiritless, performing her duties mechanically. She often wondered whether her doleful-faced monitress, Sister Evangeline, had passed through a similar experience; and one day she ventured an inquiry as to how long she had been in the abbey. Sister Evangeline, for the first time, looked up at her; and the light that danced

in her eyes, and the heavenly smile that radiated her plain countenance produced such a transformation of her appearance that Nina regarded her with mute astonishment.

"I have been here since I was fifteen," she answered.

"Did you come of your own accord?" asked Nina.

"It was my own desire," replied the nun.

"And do you never regret your choice?"

"On the contrary, no day has passed on which I have not blessed the Divine Goodness for having deigned to choose me for His own."

"Alas!" thought Nina, "how far am I from feeling like that!"

Three weeks had passed over when the tranquil routine of the abbey was broken by the expected visit of the Bishop, who had affairs to discuss with the Superioress. Even that event did not modify it further than that His Lordship assisted at Vespers and gave Benediction. It was on the evening after the Bishop's visit that Nina was once more summoned to the presence of the Lady Abbess. When she entered the room, the Reverend Mother signed to her to seat herself, while she enveloped and addressed a letter, which she then put away in her desk, not, however, before poor little Ninette caught sight of a superscription which set her



heart a-palpitating. Mother Clotilde then entered on a long conversation with the young girl; and at its close, she dismissed her weeping postulant—weeping, but with a light of renewed hope sparkling in her eyes—saying:

“ You will do, my child, as I have now told you. Take courage; be true to yourself, and all will be well. Meanwhile, I will notify the different members of your family that your reception is fixed for the octave of the Assumption.”

\* \* \*

The octave of the Assumption dawned bright and lovely as could dawn a summer's day in sunny France. The birds sang cheerily, and splendid flowers adorned the abbey church, where the ceremony of the *prise d'habit* was to take place. At early noon the carriages containing the invited guests began to arrive. The ceremony was not a public one; only those invited by the friends of the postulant were supposed to be present. Still, the gathering was considerable; for besides Monsieur and Madame de L'Orme, all Nina's brothers and sisters with their respective spouses and several junior members, as well as the more intimate friends of each family, were there. There, also, were Aunt Cecile and her priest-son—the latter in attendance on the Bishop, who was to perform

the ceremony. In the refectory of the abbey was laid out a collation for the guests; and a modest but tasteful dress had been forwarded under Madame de L'Orme's direction, to attire the young postulant for her spiritual espousals.

Meanwhile, Nina, within the recesses of the abbey, prepared herself to meet her fate. No one was allowed to see her—not even aunt Cecile, the Abbess desiring to avoid whatever could tend to upset her self-command. The hands of the Religious adorned her for the occasion; and very lovely she looked in the robe of white *glace* silk, the long veil of *tulle*, and the wreath of white roses which had been provided to array her for her espousals to the King of kings. The robe would have been of the richest satin, the veil of the most costly lace, and a tiara of silver would have taken the place of the rose-wreath, had she been approaching the altar as the bride of M. St. Hilaire. The nuns observed the palor of her face, and the set, rigid expression of her mouth, but, saving the words, "Take courage, my child," kindly uttered by the Lady Abbess, as she pressed the hand of the young girl, no remark was passed. Yet many were the prayers which had been offered up for her that day by every nun in the abbey; and the entire community had offered up for her the morning's Communion.

At length the appointed hour arrived. The Bishop and his attendant priests and acolytes were already in the sanctuary; and the nuns in their choir entoned the beautiful and touching canticles suited to such an occasion. Nina, accompanied by the Lady Abbess and Sister Evangeline, entered the church by the private entrance from the abbey, and proceeded to the seat prepared for them within the sanctuary. Every faculty of the poor young lady seemed sharpened to the uttermost, through the strain which had been so long upon her. As she entered she seemed to take in every detail at a single glance with the utmost minuteness—father, mother, relatives, friends, and strangers; and lastly, one who stood apart from the rest, leaning against one of the pillars of the church. It was Conrad Neuendorf. There he stood, his face as white as her own, and his eyes fixed upon her, as though he were taking a last look of life. Nina did not shriek, or faint, or make any demonstration whatever; but the set of her lips became firmer, and a bright spot glowed on each cheek.

“Take courage, my child,” again whispered the Abbess, who watched her closely.

Then the ceremony began. The Bishop, seated upon his throne in front of the altar, held in his hand the Ritual from which to read the service, and Nina knelt by his side on the altar step.

"My child, what do you desire?" asked the Bishop, according to the formula of the Ritual, and without prefacing the ceremony with the usual address on the duties of the religious life. Every ear amongst the congregation was strained to catch the response of the postulant. At length it came, low, but clear, and without the slightest tremor, audible through every corner of the building:

"I desire the protection of the Church against a forced marriage."

There was a moment of perfect stillness. Then the Bishop, rising from his throne, and signing to the congregation to seat themselves, began to speak.

MY GOOD FRIENDS—You are here assembled this morning to witness one of the beautiful and touching ceremonies of the Church. Our Divine Lord, who disposes all things with infinite wisdom, and to His own greater glory, has seen fit to make use of this occasion in order to bring home to some of you a point of Christian duty which does not appear to be well understood in some quarters. I speak of the duty of parents towards their children. Many parents seem to imagine that a child owes them a blind obedience in the matter of his or her settlement in life. A partner is selected whose worldly position and bank-account

are satisfactory to the parents; and the son or the daughter is expected to accept that selection whether their inclinations are turned that way or not. The consequences of such arbitrary conduct are often very grievous; unhappy, ill-assorted unions, domestic dissension and ultimate separation but too often follow. Who, think you, will be called to account for all these domestic calamities? The worldly-minded father, the vain and imperious mother, who scrupled not to make merchandise of the daughter's hand and to force a compliance to which her duty as a Christian child did not oblige her. That children should take counsel with their parents in a matter of such importance, and be advised by them according to reason and religion, is according to the spirit of the Church; every Catholic child is taught that. Where parents see their children attaching themselves to unworthy persons, they are entitled to oppose, to the utmost of their power, such marriages. But to force the inclinations is a very different thing, and has always been abhorrent to the Church. Hear, as touching this matter, the decree of the Holy Council of Trent (Decret. Council. Trid. sess., 24 cap. 9th.): "Earthly affections and desires do, for the most part, so blind the understanding of temporal lords and magistrates." (The Council means to include under

these heads parents and guardians of every description.) "as that by threats and ill-usage they compel both men and women who live under their jurisdiction—especially such as are rich, or who have expectations of a great inheritance—to contract marriages against their inclination, with those whom the said lords or magistrates may prescribe unto them. Wherefore, seeing that it is a thing especially execrable to violate the liberty of matrimony, and that wrong comes from those from whom right is looked for, the Holy Synod enjoins on all, of whatsoever grade, dignity and condition they may be, under pain of anathema, to be *ipso facto* incurred"—observe the anathema does not require to be launched by ecclesiastical authority, but is incurred *ipso facto*, by the fact itself—"that they put no constraint in any way whatever, either directly or indirectly, on those subject to them, or any others whosoever, so as to hinder them from freely contracting marriage."

"This is what the Council of Trent decrees on the subject. And if it be so grievous a sin to force the inclinations in respect of earthly espousals, what shall we say of those who would force on the King of kings a bride whom He has not Himself condescended to woo! Hear what the same Holy Council says of them:

"The Holy Synod places under anathema

all and singular those persons, of what quality or condition soever they be, whether clerics or laymen, seculars or regulars, or with whatsoever dignity invested, who shall in any way whatever, force any virgin, or widow, or any other woman whatsoever—except in the cases provided<sup>1</sup> by the law—that is, the cases of *convertitæ*, or penitents—to enter a convent against her will, or to take the habit of any religious order, or to make her profession; as, also, all those who, knowing that she does not enter into the convent voluntarily, or voluntarily take the habit, or make her profession, shall in any way interfere in that act by their presence, or consent, or authority.'” (*Ibid.* Session 25, Chap. 18).

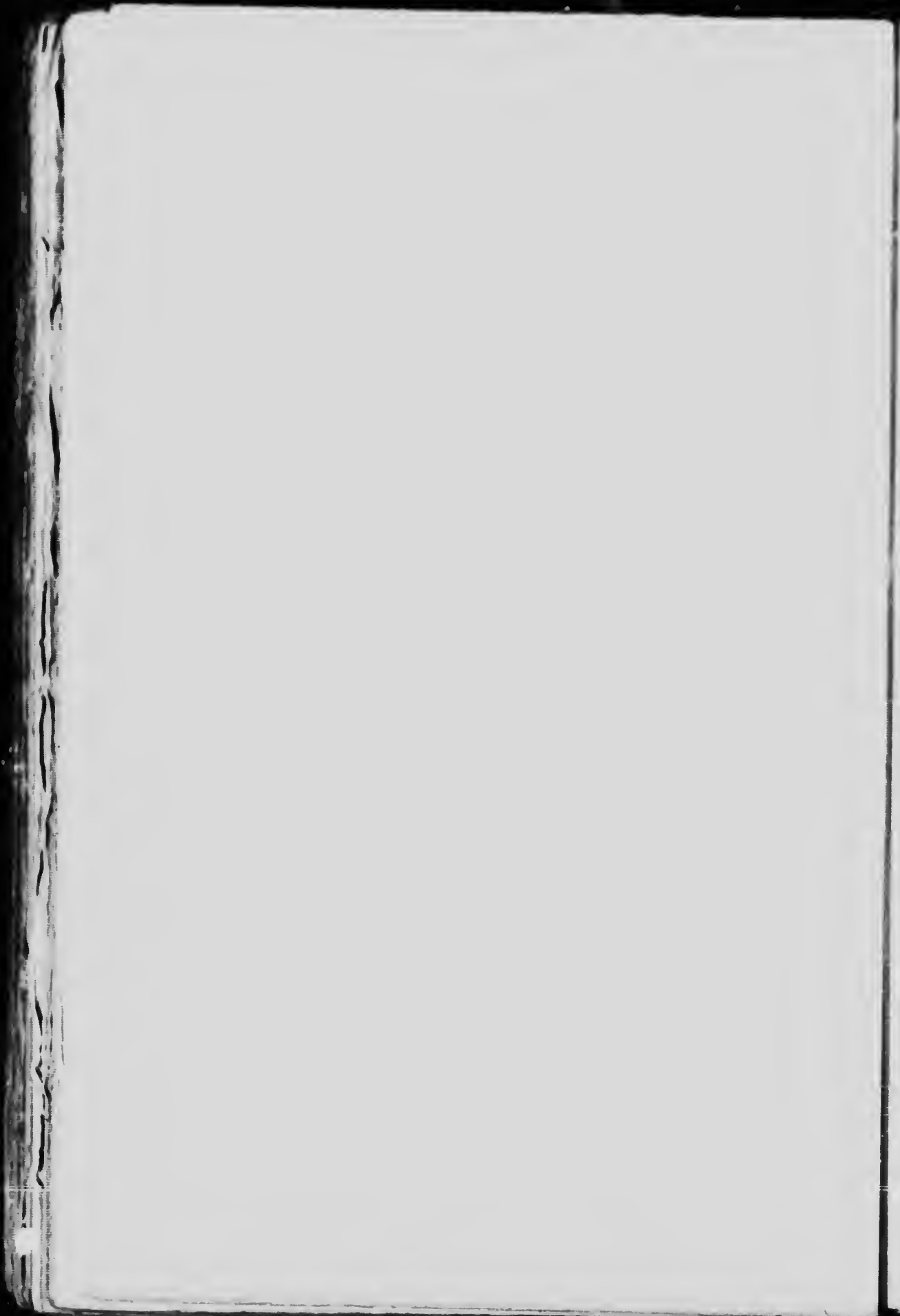
The Bishop ceased; and amid the profound silence which followed his words, M. de l'Orme arose from his seat and approached the pillar where leant Conrad Neuendorf. Taking the young man by the hand, he, without a word, led him within the sanctuary and placed the hand of his daughter within that which he held. The Bishop then re-opened the Ritual at the Marriage Service, and proceeded to tie the nuptial knot there and then; and the first to salute the fair cheek of the bride with a congratulatory kiss was the grim Lady Abbess.

“ Mine at last! Thanks be to God and to Mother Clotilde!” whispered Conrad, as he clasped

to his heart his blushing bride; while her brothers and sisters said, laughingly, among themselves:

"Just to think of mamma being check-mated at last—and by 'Poor Little Ninette!'"





## The Signs of the Times

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In casting a thoughtful glance over the Future—our own, and that of the world in which we live,—we cannot help feeling a certain awkwardness; not the mere diffidence necessarily attending our fully realized inability to do more for our subject than merely to indicate the impression our various data have left on our own mind, but the shame-facedness arising from a dread that our attempt will expose us to the ridiculous position of a niche among the numerous pseudo-prophets who have, from time to time, announced day and date for the end of the world. Whether it is wise to proceed with our meditation in face of this formidable prospect, or whether it would be wiser to yield to the dread of it and at once lay aside the pen, is no light problem. One consideration, however, inclines us to proceed at all risks. It is this. Our Blessed Lord took the pains to foretell with His Own Lips many of the indications which should portend His Second Coming, and expressly said,—“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

“When ye shall see these things, know that it

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is nigh, even at the doors." He laid no restriction in favor of learning, or even of authority except what might be implied in the fact that He spoke to the Apostles; but even this implication could have no place in His reproach to the Jews,—“Ye hypocrites! Ye can discern the face of the sky, but ye cannot discern the Signs of the Times.” He found the Jews guilty in that they did not study in the spirit of faith the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to both His First and Second Coming. The importance He attached to the elucidation of these drew Him into the Temple at the age of twelve years, to enlighten, under cover of questions, the Doctors who<sup>1</sup> failed to discriminate between the two Advents; and on the very day of His Resurrection He accompanied two of His disciples (not apostles) to Emmaus, in order to “expound to them all the Scriptures concerning Himself.” That we are entitled to look into the Signs given of the Second Advent is still more clear from the fact that His own very exhortation is repeated *seven times* in the beginning of the Apocalypse,—“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.” This command cannot be limited to the short message sent to each of the Asiatic

<sup>1</sup> *La Cité Mystique.*

bishops, which message was in every case purely personal; but must apply to the entire book, written, as it was, for the edification of all the churches.

In entering on our meditation, one circumstance presents itself so obtrusively that it must, perforce, be dealt with before we can proceed. It is the fact that the Modern World, outside the Catholic Church, is fast losing all belief in the future Day of Judgment—in the visible and judicial summing-up of all terrestrial affairs. To those who have lost faith in Christianity, it is of little use to speak; but many who wish to believe aright are being led away by theories which will end in producing that state of affairs foretold by our Blessed Lord when He says, "As it was in the days before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noe entered into the Ark, and knew not until the Flood came and destroyed them all; so shall it be at the Coming of the Son of Man." And this in the face of such Portents as Our Lord describes! To faithful Catholics our remarks are perhaps unnecessary; to unbelievers they will be vain, for such do not accept that Teacher and teaching from which we start; but to the class above-

mentioned they may be useful, by confirming their wavering faith: Christ and His words have still some authority with them.

Now the view which seems to weigh most with this class is, that the Prophecies of Christ have already been fulfilled in the Destruction of Jerusalem, and in the Devastation of Rome by Alaric and his Goths. No doubt, they *were* fulfilled in these events; but these were not their final fulfilment. They were what we may call their *figurative* fulfilment; being in themselves figures and foreshadowings of the destruction of the world. Regarded in this light, the portions of our Lord's prediction which point to these events, lose nothing of their application to the End of the World; and over and above these are the Signs He has given us which have not yet appeared—the darkened Sun, the Moon presenting the appearance of blood, and other tremendous phenomena.

Our Blessed Lord said to His Apostles, “of that day and hour no man knoweth, not even the angels of Heaven, but the Father.” He Himself knew it through His Omniscience as God, but not as a thing to be communicated, therefore He said—“neither the Son, but the Father.” Of course, these words of Christ will

remain absolutely true to the end; but we must remember that they were spoken nineteen hundred years ago, and that, therefore, nearly two thousand years of the Divine Pattern has since been unfolded before the eyes of angels and men. It is not pretending to knowledge of that which we cannot know, to look into the details of that Pattern, especially as He signified His desire that we should do so, saying,—“When ye shall see these things, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.” And again,—“What I say unto you, I say unto all—watch.” The first thing which strikes us is the period of time that has elapsed—nearly two thousand years. From the carefully preserved record of the Patriarchal Times, we find that two thousand years spanned the history of mankind from the creation of Adam and Eve to the Proclamation of the Divine Law from Mount Sinai; which event inaugurated the Second Period of human history, that wherein the Church was fore-shewn under the figure of the Jewish Nation, the chosen and peculiar People of God. That Second Period embraced a like division of time—another two thousand years, to the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and the establishment of Christianity. Now we come to our third two thousand years, so nearly completed; and certain

considerations strike us powerfully. First, the number THREE imprinted on the Ages, like a Divine Seal; second, the proportion laid out so equally between the dispensations, and the assurance of our Blessed Lord that "this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." There will no future Dispensation succeed the Catholic Church, as Humanitarians, Mrs. Humphrey Wards, and other Utopians, dream. Third, the number Six—Six thousand years, corresponding to the Six Days of Creation, "the Seventh being the Sabbath of the Lord"—the Sabbath, the Day of perfect Rest, that Seventh Thousand which will never end. When we consider what a pointed significance Divine Providence has attached to numbers, it is not going out of our way to do the same; and the numbers Three, Six, and Seven hold a mysterious prominence.

In connection with this consideration, we may gain a light from the Prophecies of St. Malachi—prophecies made nearly a thousand years ago. They consist of a prophetic list of all the Popes who should govern the Church from the year 1143—five years before the Saint's death—to the end of the world. They are indicated by mystical names which in every case fit with greater or less significance, according to the character or surroundings of the Pontiff; some

merely indicating family, or birthplace, or episcopate, in the case of men who played no very prominent part; others, as the "*Aquila Rapax* of Pius the Seventh, the *Crux de Cruce* of Pius the Ninth, and the *Lumen in Cælo* of Leo the Thirteenth, characterizing by a word the grand personality, the great sorrows, and the splendid work of mighty men. Of this list only *nine* are still to come: *Ignis Ardens*; *Religio depulata*; *Fides Intrepida*; *Pastor et Angelus*; *Pastor et Nauta*; *Flora Florum*; *De Medietate Lunæ*; *De Labore Solis*; *Gloriæ Olivæ*. The list concludes with these words, which end the prophecy:—

"*In persecutione Extrema Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ sedebit Petrus Romanus qui pascet oves in multis tribulationibus, quibus transactis, civitas Septi collis dirumpitur, et pie ex tremendis prædicabit populum suum.*" "*Petrus Romanus* take to be representative of the Papacy in the abstract, not another Pontiff, for there is no number to it—none after that of "*Gloriæ Olivæ*." It seems to indicate that the Holy Father will never leave Rome. Now, if we allow an average of ten years for the reign of each Pope, that will bring us to the two thousand years.

Our Blessed Lord said that before the End of the world His Gospel should be preached among



all nations. But He nowhere said that all nations should embrace it, or remain faithful to it. He Himself preached it in all the cities of Israel and Judah; yet at His Ascension, He left a handful of a *hundred and fifty* disciples (Acts 1) to be the germ of the Church. Now, if we look well into history, we shall find that there are very few countries indeed where the Gospel has *not* been preached; and in these few, armies of fervent missionaries are to-day at work. At the dawn of the Christian Era, Asia was the great centre of population, as well as of civilization. Not to speak of India and China, which hold their own to this day, Tartary was exceedingly populous in the early centuries and from it poured forth the multitudes that in great measure peopled Northern and Eastern Europe. North-eastern Africa was similarly replenished; also Arabia, Turkey, Persia. We have only to consult a good map of these countries as they were in classic times, to recognize their populousness. What is now desert-sand over which a few Arab hordes roam was once a land dotted with numberless cities, some of them of considerable size. It is quite reasonable to suppose that Central and Southern Africa, America North and South, as well as the remote Island-world, were but sparsely inhabited if inhabited at all. The contention of those who would create a new

Genesis, a separate and unrecorded origin for the tribes of the Western World, is sufficiently answered by the fact, that all those eastern countries we have named were peopled from *three families* subsequently to the Flood which occurred not more than 2,500 years B. C.; and not only were peopled, but brought forth the magnificent civilizations of Rome Greece, Persia, Egypt. Certainly the 1500 years between the Christian Era and the beginning of European communication with the West was *ample* time, at the same rate, for the development of Occidental populations and civilizations, such as they were.

It thus becomes evident that in considering the preaching of the Gospel in the First Ages, it is to Asia, Southern Europe, and Northern Africa we must look. Besides the Seven Churches of Asia Minor founded by St. Paul, we find Arabia visited by both him and St. Thomas, and later by Origen and others. We find there the Christian tribes of Hamyar, Rabiah, Taglab, Bahra, Tanuch, Rai, Rodaah, Nejeran, Gassan. An ancient writer Procopius, asserts that the disciples of Christ had filled Arabia with churches. Episcopal sees were established at Suez, Sinai, Petra, Feiran, Akaba, Bosra, and other places; in Irak, one at Akula, near Bagdad, another at Hira; in Arabia Felix, Nejeran, Dhafa: and Aden; probably also Sanaa, Damar,

and other towns. These did not include the Nestorians. Armenia embraced Christianity thirty years before Constantine. Records of its progress in Persia are said to be scarce, but doubtless the labors of its martyred Apostles bore plentiful fruit; the names of Persian saints adorn our Calender. As for India, the blessed St. Thomas converted there an "innumerable multitude" before his martyrdom at Calamina; as we learn from the *Acts of St. Thomas* (found in Greek, in some libraries), and from the Ancient Oriental liturgies. The names of at least four of its early primates are to hand, to wit, John, Frumentius, Theophilus, and Marutha Bishop of Bengal, the latter a full-blooded Hindu, and a most holy prelate. These men took a conspicuous part in the Councils of the Church, Nice, Constantinople, and *Primates* suppose suffragan bishops, whose names have not reached us.

Christian Africa has left its splendid record in the great names of Augustine, Athanasius, Jerome, Cyprian, Origen, etc., etc. The city of Osirinthus was a city of monasteries; and the saintly contemplatives of the Thebaïde are still in undying remembrance.

Of Tartary, M. l'Abbé Huc says—"The propagation of the Christian Faith in Upper Asia is a subject that has been very little studied. People

have generally contented themselves with supposing that the Gospel was not carried there till recent times; and it is nevertheless now discovered that *to a certainty* the doctrines of Jesus Christ were preached *from the very beginning* to the natives of the utmost East." (Italics ours.)

The Abbé Huc also quotes thus from Theodoret:—"They (the Apostles) have induced not only the Romans, and those who live under their empire but also the Scythians, Sarmatians, Indians, Ethiopians, Persians, Seres (Chinese), Hyrcanians, Britons, Cimmerians, and Germans to receive the Law of the Crucified Saviour; and, in short, have preached it to all nations, and to every class of men." Truly the Abbé may well say—"The Light has often shone in the midst of darkness, and, unfortunately, the darkness has "comprehended it not!"

It may be asked, why this digression? It is not a digression; it is the manifest fulfilment of the opening of the First Seal.

"And I saw, and behold! a White Horse; and He who sat thereon had a Bow, and a Crown was given unto Him, and He went forth conquering and to conquer."<sup>1</sup>

He went forth, conquering and to conquer, from the Day of Pentecost, the Birthday of His

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. 6

Church. He sent the Twelve and their spiritual sons to "teach all nations." Their sound went out into all lands, gathering in all who would be saved. Alas! the demon of error and heresy oversowed the good seed with cockle, and Nestorians, Monosophites, Manicheans, Gnostics, Arians prepared the way for the opening of the Second Seal.

"And there came forth a Red Horse; and to him who sat thereon was it given that he should take peace from the Earth, and that he should slay his neighbours, and a great sword was given to him."<sup>1</sup>

No better figure could be presented of the inundation of Islam. It is, indeed, hardly a figure; it is as literal as the most prosaic history could be. Arabia, which especially opened its gates to every variety of heresy, was a suitable cradle for the False Prophet. Like a Tidal-wave, from the middle of the Seventh Century Mahometanism flooded the lands in every direction, swallowing up alike catholic, heretic and pagan. It did more. It created an almost impassable barrier between Europe and Asia. In the preceding ages, from the earliest times a lively intercourse had subsisted between the various countries of the East. Damascus, Jerusalem, Tyre, Sidon, Antioch, Aleppo, Ispahan, Bagdad, Petra, Bosra, Yezd, with many

<sup>1</sup> Apoc. 6-4

others, besides all the great cities of Egypt, were immense centres of commerce; and caravans were continually travelling to and fro, carrying rich merchandise from the bazaars of India and China, even to Rome and the cities of the West. Nor was political intercourse neglected. Embassies were sent from sovereign to sovereign. The Chinese sent one to the Emperor Augustus. Let anyone read the list of those who listened to the words of St. Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, and he will then realize the intercourse of that existed between nations in those times. Islam changed all this. Death, chains, apostasy stared in the face every Christian who ventured into the submerged regions. And this state of things lasted through centuries, so that the missionary efforts which the Church never ceased to make became few and fitful, and were conducted under incredible difficulties. The Crusades might have accomplished something had a truer spirit prevailed. As it was, they achieved something *indirectly*; they kept ever alive in Christendom reverence for the Holy Places, and faithful remembrance of the adorable mysteries of which they were the scenes. Also, the noble Knights of St. John, the sailor-monks, proved an effectual barrier against the further encroachments of Islam. But although its political power was finally broken at Lepanto and in Transylva-

nia, the Warrior on the Red Horse still "takes peace from the Earth" wherever his crippled power extends.

"And when the Third Seal was opened, behold! a Black Horse; he who sat upon him had a Balance in his hand." *Ib.* 6. 5.

What mystical meaning may belong to the words addressed to this rider—"A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the wine and oil"—we are, of course, unable to surmise. But the concluding words convey a very clear *warning* and *limitation* of some sort; therefore we are quite justified in regarding this as a new enemy. A special and vital interest surrounds him for the reason that, if we rightly interpret the Balance he holds in his hand as the note of *Infidelity*, we must recognize his advancing power as the special ordeal of *our own* age. Let us see, therefore, what we can make of it.

It will be said that Infidelity is no new thing. It would, we think, be more correct to say that *Irreligion* is no new thing. Infidelity as it is seen in our day—the Infidelity which professes to weigh everything in the Balance of mere human reason—is a new thing. If we look back over the Pagan world, and enquire into facts, we find that

all its Beliefs, however contorted and corrupted the superstructures, were based on the traditions of the original revelation. We find the idea of the Most Holy Trinity in the *Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva* of the Hindoo. We find the idea of the Eternal in the *Homovar, or I am, and the Word* of the Zendavesta. In the *Ormuzd* of the same, the *Jesu* of the Hindoo Puranas, and the *Balder* of the Scandinavian Edda we can trace the idea of our Lord Incarnate. In the nymphs and peris, the elves and fairies, we see a distorted remembrance of the angels. Every Pagan system makes an attempt to disentangle the history of Creation and our First Parents from the mass of rubbish under which time and the devil had buried them; and every one, without exception, looks forward to the judicial destruction of the world by fire, the everlasting blessedness of the good, and the eternal punishment of the wicked.

The practical working of these Pagan Systems was very simple. The masses, high and low, merely left dogma to take care of itself, and devoted their undivided attention to the concerns of this world; falling back on the natural virtues—and vices—in their intercourse with their fellow-creatures. A few Superior souls, a Socrates, a Plato, an Æschylus, a Sophocles groped after the Divine Light, and doubtless inherited the Bene-



diction of those who "hunger and thirst after Justice." Among the converts to Christianity, certain restless minds occupied themselves in developing theories which resulted in grievous heresies. Still, there was belief in the Supernatural; there was *faith*, however misdirected. Nowhere do we see the bold, impious denial of all religion and revelation which came in with the French Encyclopedists, and which has since been spreading more and more among all nations. Men believed in the True God, or they believed in false gods; and if they did not quite believe in the latter, they made a pretence of doing so. The Infidels of the present day have done and are doing what never was done before,—sweeping away the very spirit of Faith *as such*, whatever its object, true or false. If this be not the very "Abomination that maketh desolate" of which Daniel speaks I know not what is. They have exalted the "God of Forces" above the God of Israel, as foretold by the same prophet; the "forces" of Material Nature, the very forces of His own creating, they have exalted and are exalting above the wonderful God who created them, who appointed to every one its place and its functions. If this be not the spirit of the Antichrist what is? and this worship of the "God of Forces" which the Prophet says is to come in the Last Days, is steadily on the

increase. Sixty years ago, it dared not shew itself except in France; now it is open and unblushing everywhere. The thought of the spectacle it will present when the youth now being educated on its lines shall reach maturity, makes one tremble.

Simultaneous with this growth and spread of Infidelity, we see another growth and spread of a different kind, but one which no less marks the character of the times. One of the Lesser Prophets—Hosea says, "There will come a Day when it shall be neither light nor dark, but grey; and toward evening it shall be light." Does "neither light nor dark, but grey," point to the post-reformation times?—neither the light of the True Faith, nor the darkness of Paganism? I think it does. And if so, then the Evening is even now drawing on with its return of Light, for the Church is slowly but surely penetrating the clouds of error in every land, and presenting, as before, the Truth to all who will accept it. The Catholic Church of to-day is a vast organization, proportionate in magnitude to the World of to-day. It counts its bishops by the thousand, its priests and religions by the hundred thousand; and those who are in a position to know, say, that never before, in all ages, was it better equipped for the battle, nor did it present a grander aggregate of holiness and learning in its ministers.

As might be expected, it is chiefly to the new lands and the fresh soil we must turn, if we would follow the Church in her conquests. In like manner, it is to the old lands, the worn out soil we must look, to gather a foretaste of her coming conflicts. From a religious point of view, the world presents the appearance of a tree or vine which shews vitality at its farther branches, but is becoming rotten at the trunk. The Church, like her Divine Spouse, will have her Palm-Sunday triumph; but it will be wholly a spiritual triumph. There will be no more political prominence, no more worldly power or grandeur. The spoliations we have seen in our own day will never be revoked; the Bark of Peter, cast loose from its moorings, will spread its sails to the Eternal Breeze. The Church, like her Lord, will make her Entry into the Holy City amid the hosannas of a vast multitude from all tribes and tongues; but, like her Lord—to be Crucified.

“ And when he had opened the Fourth Seal, behold! a Pale Horse; and the name of him who sat thereon was Death . . . and to him was given power over the four parts of the Earth, to slay with the sword, hunger, death; and the beasts of the Earth.

“ And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the souls of those who were slain

for the word of God, and for the testimony they had given. . . . And white stoles were given to every one of them; and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little time till the number was fulfilled of their brethren who should be slain as they were." Apoc. 6. 7—11.

Infidelity and its work have brought us face to face with the Last Persecutions. Here, again, the mystical titles of the future Pontiffs throw light on the times. *Ignis Ardens* may refer to intensity of personal character; or it may refer to surroundings that can only be symbolized by a Burning Fire. Even in the first case, it implies such a state of affairs as will draw out the manifestation of that intensity. *Religio Depopulata* tells its own tale, without any alternative of interpretation. *Fides Intrepida* in like manner. It brings with it no uncertain sound of tempest. The three which follow seem to refer chiefly to personal character. But the last three, whose reigns will probably be comparatively short,—*De Medietate Lunæ*, *De Labore Solis*, *Gloriæ Olivæ*—bear what seems a sort of affinity to the predicted portents of the Last Day, and to the Agony of our Divine Lord under the Olive-trees; a fitting close to the Earthly Pilgrimage of *Roman Peter*.

About five hundred years before the First

Advent of our Divine Lord, the Prophet Daniel left on record the revelation made to him, that it should take place in "seventy weeks (of years);" *i. e.*, in 490 years from the time he wrote. Subsequent to him followed, at intervals, all the Lesser Prophets—twelve of them—preparing the way before the coming messiah; Meanwhile, a somewhat similar "revival," as we should call it now, was taking place simultaneously among all the great Gentile nations. Confucius in China, Sakya-mouni, or Buddha, in India, Zoroaster in Persia, devoted themselves to restoring, as far as possible, the original truths and traditions which, in primitive times, had been held by all people. These men were contemporary with Daniel; they were men of austere and virtuous life, and they did a vast amount of good in their respective countries. We may, therefore, say, that for five hundred years before Christ's coming, a gradual dawn, ever advancing towards the light, overspread the nations. The expectation of a coming Redeemer was universal in the ages preceding the Christian Era. Europe expected Him to appear in the East; Oriental Asia looked for His coming in the West. These impressions were, doubtless, strengthened by the wide dispersion of the Jews among all nations. The Sybils, or poets, in various lands sang in advance of the Coming Messiah. He was, indeed,

the "Desired of all nations," although, when He came, the Gentile as well as the Jew took umbrage at the spiritual character of His Kingdom, persecuted His followers, and refused, many of them, as *nations*, to embrace His Faith. They had looked forward to temporal prosperity, victory over their enemies, and the complete cessation of all wickedness and violence. When they found the Victory promised was over their own passions, when, to attain the last, they were required to begin every man for himself, and each to sweep in front of his own door, that was what they had not bargained for.

Now, look at the corresponding canvas. Have not the five hundred years since the Reformation—of which a hundred are still to run—reversed the order, and developed a deepening twilight, an ever-increasing *darkness* over the moral and intellectual world? It may be said that heresies of one kind or other have been rampant in all ages. True; but the Reformation was something *new*, like its black-mounted descendant, infidelity. It was not a splitting on this doctrine or that; it was an upheaval, a wholesale rebellion; and as such, a fitting harbinger of that Second coming which will be in judgment.

There remain but two Seals to be considered,

the Sixth and the Seventh, both of which unfold the portents of the Last Day. While the first three have embraced a period of almost two thousand years, the Apocalypse presents them, as, also, the Fourth and Fifth, with but a few lines each. On the contrary, the Sixth and Seventh occupy a large portion of the vision, twenty-three verses being given to the Sixth, and seven chapters to the Seventh; yet I think it very probable that the mysteries which are narrated thus at length will occupy a comparatively short period in the fulfilment. Our Lord said that the Last Persecutions would be short. Of the Seven Blood-sheddings of our Lord, the First was just after His Birth, all the other Six being condensed into a period of Fifteen Hours. So with the Seven Dolors of Mary. The First and Second were in the days of the Sacred Infancy; the Third came twelve years after; the remaining four were, at the end of twenty-one years, crowded into the fateful Fifteen Hours. I believe the analogy will hold good.

The mysteries unfolded in the opening of the Sixth Seal foretell catastrophes which are the Beginning of the End, and which we should take for its final consummation but for the extended picture which closes with the 16th chapter. First, there is the Great Earthquake.—

“ And I saw, when he had opened the Sixth

Seal; and behold! a great Earthquake, and the Sun became black as sackcloth, and the moon became as blood; and stars fell from heaven upon the earth, as the leaves fall from the fig-tree moved by a mighty wind; and the kings of the Earth, and princes, and tribunes, and the rich, and the strong, and all men, bond and free, hid themselves in caves and rocks of the mountains and said to the mountains and rocks—' Fall upon us, and hide us from the Face of Him who sitteth upon the Throne, and of the Lamb; for the Great Day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand! '

" After that, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the Earth, holding the four winds, that they should not blow upon the Earth, nor upon the sea. nor through any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the Sun, having the Sign of the Living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it is given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying—' Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have signed the servants of our God in their foreheads.' "

Then follows the signing of the Elect under the figure of the Twelve Tribes of Israel; which signing I take to mean their confirmation in grace, preparatory to their martyrdom. For immediately after the signing, St. John beholds the multitude



of the Redeemed, in Presence of God and of the Lamb, chanting their songs of triumph among the angels; the vision of their consummated and eternal felicity occupying no less than nine verses. From this vision, following in all completeness the preceding events, I infer that before the opening of the Seventh Seal, all the People of God will have been gathered in; that there will remain on Earth no more Catholic Church, no more Divine Sacrifice, no more Roman Peter. There may be an aftermath of penitents, especially in the days of the "Two Witnesses;" verses 14, 15, and 16 of chapter 14th seem to indicate it; but the vision of the Church Triumphant closes absolutely the Christian Dispensation.

Seventh Seal—Silence in Heaven. Seven Trumpets given to as many angels. Angel offers incense with the prayers of all the saints, and casts from the thurible fire from the Altar upon the Earth. Thunders, lightnings, and great earthquake.

*1st Trumpet.*—Hail and fire, mingled with blood, fall upon the Earth, and a third part of the earth, of the trees and green things burnt.

*2nd Trumpet.*—Great mountain of fire falls into the sea, and the third part is turned into blood, and a third part of the fishes die, and a third part of the vessels are destroyed.

*3rd Trumpet.*—Great flaming star falls on third part of the rivers and fountains, and they become absinthe, and many die of the water.

*4th Trumpet.*—Sun, moon, and stars stricken for a third part, so that there is no light for a third part, by day or night (ten days out of the month).

*5th Trumpet.*—Opens the Bottomless Pit. Smoke; locusts, led by Apollyon, or the Exterminator.

*6th Trumpet.*—Four angels loosed from the Euphrates to slay a third part of men. Angel descends on sea and land, and swears that time shall be no more, but that *in the Days of the Seven Trumpets, the mystery of God will be finished.* As there only remains one more Trumpet to sound, all the horrors of the Phials containing the Seven Last Plagues will evidently be condensed within the time of that 7th Trumpet.

Besides the continuous narrative which closes with the disruption of the "Great City"—the material globe, as I take it—into three parts, the Apostle presents in the later chapters of the book what seem like detached pictures; the vision of the exaltation of Mary, and of the enmity of the Demon against her and her "seed"—her spiritual children Blessed Mary of Agreda understands it; the vision of the conflict in Heaven between St. Michael and Lucifer, which took place before the creation of

Man; also, the Antichrist and his works under various figures. I imagine the first two are explanatory, giving, as it were, the reason and origin of the Conflict between Good and Evil. The "Beasts" which seem to represent the antichrist and the dreadful blasphemies and idolatries he will inaugurate and inforce, doubtless will work simultaneously with the stupendous horrors of the natural world. And the City, drunk with the blood of the saints, whose desolation and destruction are so vividly portrayed in chapter 19th, and have had their twofold pre-figuring in the days of Titus and Alaric, is evidently to meet its doom simultaneously with that other "Great City"—the material Globe, of which it is a figure. What says the ancient Sybil?

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;

"When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;

"And when Rome falls, the World."

And what says the Prophecy of St. Malachi?

"—*quibus transactis, civitas Septi Collis dirumpitur.*

Now, despite all past vicissitudes, the Coliseum has never yet fallen; it still stands, indicating very plainly that the Fate of Rome is still a thing of the future. Yet there can be no doubt of her identity with the "Babylon the Great" of the Apocalypse; and her past record shews her, indeed, "drunk

with the blood of the saints," although her cup is not yet full. This consideration opens up a curious question, which, however, we feel perfectly justified in contemplating.

Of the power, wealth, and magnificence of Rome in her First Civilization, all has been said that can be said. Capital of the Pagan world, and mistress and ruler of all known nations, she indeed sat a Queen, with none beside her. That First Civilization closed amid the catastrophes and desolation which were an undeniable figure of her final overthrow. Then, upon its ruins arose a Second Civilization, where her Victim was now the Reigning Queen; where the Earth-wide dominion was *spiritual*, not *material*; where her lofty state, her *prestige*, her very name, all that had constituted her *moral* power was pressed into the service of Him against whom she had made war, and with the blood of whose servants she was drunk. Has it not been reserved for our own times to hear the advancing footsteps of a *Third* Civilization, having within it germs which may well develop the Babylon of the Apocalypse? When we look on little Italy, so meagrely supplied with revenue, so limited in point of territory, so petty in the world of politics, and surrounded by powerful nations—England, with her vast wealth, Germany, with her great armies, Russia, with her enormous territory

—the idea of her ever coming to the front again seems too ridiculous. But in all these great nations in every land, there exist vast organizations absolutely vowed to the twofold object of the uprooting of Christianity, and the restoration of the glories of Pagan Rome. England, France, Germany, America, are full of them under one name or another—Masons, Odd-fellows, P. P. A.'s, Illuminati; Russia, India, China are honey-combed with them; Italy itself swarms with them—Carbonari, Camorra, Mafia; and we see before our eyes, both in that country and in France, a present sample of their work. It is only a question of the consolidation of these societies under one head, and then, with Rome as their centre, they will control and tyrannise over the whole world. And see what power the wonderful inventions of modern times will put into their hands! The word of the Antichrist will indeed girdle the whole Earth for he will secure absolute control of telegraphs, telephones, and all modes and means of communication. His persecutions will be ubiquitous, as the lightning shining from the east even to the west. His followers, bound, as even now they are, under oaths of blind obedience, will pour out at his tyrant-feet all their abundance, to exalt the Third Rome to a point of material splendor such as even she never before knew.

And that army of Satan, in virtue of its deliberate and determined purpose to make war against God and His people, will take upon its own head the blood of *all* the saints, the Blood of the Divine Lamb Himself, shed by the minions of Rome. Behold the Babylon of the Apocalypse!

Now we come to the question—*Cui bono?* What do we gain by this meditation? When we reflect not only on the innumerable victims of those Days of persecution, but also on the vast number who have ignorantly identified themselves with the Destroyers, the duty of Intercessory Prayer at once presents itself. Intercessory Prayer for the conversion of the one, for the final perseverance and triumph of the other. Also, a prayer for ourselves.—

*“ Libera me, Domine, a morte aeterna, in Die illa tremenda, dum veneris judicare mundum per ignem!”*



## The City of Terror

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When I first came to the use of reason, I found myself an inhabitant of the well-known but uninviting region of Sapless-land. It consisted mainly of barren and desolate moorland, and offered nothing in the way of sustenance excepting a few roots, which a small number of the inhabitants sedulously cultivated, without, however, as time went on, their effecting any improvement in flavor or nourishing properties. Even these had been originally brought by the first settlers, from a more favored and now forgotten land. Of indigenous products Sapless-land had absolutely none excepting stones and thorns. A chilling mist perpetually overshadowed it; the rays of the sun seemed to have forgotten it. Its solitary sources of enlivenment were the twinkling lights of the neighboring City of Mammon, and, occasionally when the wind was favorable, the sound of musical strains supposed to be wafted from a Grove situated somewhere in the Forbidden Valley. Notwithstanding, however, the dreariness of our native heath, the inhabitants professed themselves perfectly contented and happy. I speak of the older and more mature inhabitants; the rising



generation vainly strove to dissemble an irresistible weariness and discontent. Our elders read us many lectures on the unreasonableness of desiring anything beyond what our beloved country afforded; pointing out our obligation of thankfulness that our lines had been cast in such pleasant places, our moorland being, they said the very choicest spot on earth. Our lot might have been cast in the dark City of Terror—that gruesome haunt of ghouls and goblins, that stronghold of thieves, robbers, and ruffians of every description—whose black fog bade defiance to the beams of day. (I may mention, *à-propos* of this awful City, that the King of the whole country, who lived a long way off, held it, we were told, in such abhorrence that he had determined to raze it to its foundations, transferring, at the same time, his own residence to Sapless-land which was the region of all others dearest to his heart. A few of our sages went so far as to name day and date for the twofold event; but as each term passed in succession without anything unusual, the predictions fell somewhat into discredit; and not a few in the back settlements of our country opined that the “king” was a myth, and that matters would continue to go on as heretofore *ad infinitum*.) Our instructors supplemented their exhortations with excellent advice, strictly warn-

ing us against straying into the Forbidden Valley, wherein, they assured us, were dangers innumerable. Of the City of Mammon they spoke less, but more encouragingly, promising us that if we were good children we should one day visit it, and enjoy all delights. As I grew older, I perceived that a brisk commerce with that delectable town was kept up by the greater part of our seniors, who, I had reason to believe, substituted privately its imported luxuries for the roots which were exclusively considered wholesome for the youth of the district. This seemed to explain satisfactorily the general contentment.

Being of a reflective and imaginative turn, I frequently revolved all these matters in my mind, but without imparting my cogitations to anyone. The sports of my companions had not much charm for me. My recreation, when work was over, consisted in wandering up and down the ridge which overlooked the Forbidden Valley, endeavoring to catch such strains as the wind wafted from the Grove of Dissipation, and developing in my mind certain latent longings to taste of its unknown pleasures. Sometimes my attention would be more particularly attracted to the City of Mammon, which certainly, presented a magnificent spectacle, especially at night when its palaces, porticoes, arcades and monuments were

brilliantly illuminated. Sometimes I longed for the glorious day when I might, perchance, become the happy dweller in one of those grand edifices—a felicity by no means beyond the range of possibilities, as I was given to understand. Again it would happen, though rarely, that seating myself on a certain crag in the most solitary part of the moor, my eyes and thoughts would wander away to the dark and gloomy mists which obscured that part of the horizon where stood the dreaded City of Terror. They possessed that strange fascination which belongs to the mysterious and unknown; and although in my childhood I could distinguish none of the features of the place—nothing save a mass of black mist where it was said to stand,—as I advanced in years and in perception, I began to make out dimly that it was built on a rocky eminence, and to fancy that I could, at times, catch faint and momentary glimpses of what seemed to me like Palm-trees, and of architectural outlines by no means lacking in symmetry, though of a somewhat military character. I one day inadvertently mentioned these observations to some of my fellow-countrymen; alluding at the same time to certain lights which I felt sure I had seen and which had greatly surprised me, as I had always been given to understand that the City of Terror lay in profound and perpetual darkness.

I was not at all prepared for the commotion which my innocent remarks excited. Had I owned up to a robbery, or even a murder, I am sure it would not have caused such a stir. I was angrily taken to task for daring to say such things when everyone knew to the contrary. I was forcibly reminded of certain unfortunates who had taken the same notions into their heads, and who, allured by those Lights I mentioned,—which were only Will-o'-the-wisps,—had actually set out to seek their fortune in the City of Terror, and had either perished miserably in the Swamps which surrounded it, or were languishing at that very moment in the dungeons of that stronghold of evil. My admonishers instanced particularly one of the name of Fairheart, whom I knew well, and who had, shortly before, disappeared from Sapless-land. He had, they said, been often heard to make just such stupid remarks as I had been making; and so had he fared. I remembered the poor fellow well. I used to see him wandering up and down our moorland, looking starved and melancholy, with a wistful expression in his hungry eyes. The vociferations of our elders recalled to me—what I should otherwise have forgotten—that it was chiefly in the neighbourhood of the crag above-mentioned that I used to meet Fairheart; and that it was a remark of his which first

led me to try to trace some definite outline through the foggy horizon we were both contemplating. My advisers concluded by strictly forbidding all further study of that particular fog, as being likely to attract its pestilential influences towards our healthy and happy land; and as I felt no particular interest in the matter, it was not difficult to obey.

Not so, however, with the Forbidden Valley. From the stony ridges of Sapless-land where the days were bleak and drear, and the nights dull and stuffy, I cast many a longing glance below, attracted by the music, the lights and the bursts of hilarity which, deadened by distance, occasionally reached me. In the monotonous round of daily duty I cheered myself by looking forward to the evening for I must mention that none of the above-named signs of merriment ascended from the Valley during the day. A curious cloud rested over it, apparently different in kind from the damp mists that enveloped our own territory. We had daylight of a sort, enough to allow the pursuit of necessary avocations; although where it came from was a mystery, as we never saw the sun. The cloud which hung over the Valley was dense and murky, and emitted an unpleasant odour of innumerable smouldering lamp-wicks. I concluded however, that its disagreeable properties must be less, if at all, observable to those below,

since it certainly did not seem to interfere with the nightly enjoyments, whatever these might be.

I had no distinct intention of descending into the Happy Valley, as I privately called it, although my life in Sapless-land was dull and aimless enough. But having one day had it pointed out to me, under rather peculiar circumstances, and somewhat reproachfully, that I was now a reasonable being whose duty it was to strike out for himself and use his eyes and his brains; that a young man could not tie himself all his days to his mother's apron-strings, but was bound to look about him, and find out who was who, and what was what; I, after a long meditation, resolved to follow this advice, and to begin my study of things in general by a descent into the Happy Valley. My intention, which I duly announced, was met by a chorus of disapproval, which, however, fell considerably short of what had confronted me on the former occasion. I was going headlong to ruin, they said; I should never regret *that* step but once; many had gone there from Sapless-land, and the few who had come back were sorry wrecks. What my good friends advised me to do was to make a straight line for the City of Mammon, which presented such opportunities and inducements to a likely young man. But my resolution was taken; so without so much as bidding them farewell, I

turned my back on the cheerless land of my birth.

It was still day when I began the descent. I found quite an easy path down-hill; it was of smooth turf, slippery in places; but fortunately I had brought with me a stout staff which had belonged to my father and with that I steadied my steps, and kept myself from falling. By the time I reached the hollow, I could perceive the lamps lighting up in the grove of Dissipation, and could hear the strains of music wafted on the breeze. As twilight deepened into night the scene became more and more attractive. The spreading trees arched overhead, and opened out on all sides dreamy and poetic vistas, across which flitted dancing nymphs of great beauty, their charms illuminated by the many coloured lights which hung from the boughs. As I proceeded farther into the Grove, I could see that the revellers of both sexes were in great number; and nothing could be more expressive of joyous exhilaration than their rapid and graceful movements. A sense of my own homely appearance and attire slackened my pace as I drew nearer to the scene of revelry; and I finally ensconced myself on the shadow-side of a large tree, whence I could, at my leisure, contemplate all that passed.

The first particular which struck me, when I

had recovered from my state of dazzled bewilderment sufficiently to note details, was the style of costume affected by the nymphs. The upper part of the figure, although not entirely denuded approached so nearly to that condition as to leave upon the mind of the spectator an impression of intense disgust. Then I began to observe that the delicate bloom of rosy health which the damsels displayed proved, on closer inspection, to be nothing but a daub of red powder smeared on above some white chalky substance evidently employed to conceal the yellowness of the skin. One poor creature shocked me greatly. Through the crowd of dancing figures I had been for some time watching her, her beauty marking her out for special admiration. Finally, the whirl of the dance brought her close to where I stood, and I saw on her cheeks a yellow patch of wizened, faded skin, where the chalk-stuff had rubbed off on the lappel of her partner's coat. Her luxuriant tresses at that moment becoming unfastened she stopped to replace them with a large pin; and although it was rapidly and dexterously done, I had time to catch an undoubted view of the thin, grizzled hair over which she pinned them. Seen from a distance, every face appeared wreathed in smiles; but a nearer view revealed in every case a worn and haggared expression which deepened



as the night wore on. After I became accustomed to the mask of paint and false hair, I recognized many I had known in Sapless-land; among the men especially I perceived not a few familiar faces.

After a time, I began to feel giddy from watching the whirling motion which appeared to be the only dance patronized in the Grove of Dissipation; and I longed for the company to sit down and rest awhile. But no such thought appeared to be in anyone's head, and I began to experience a feeling of amazement not far removed from fear, as I saw the well-nigh exhausted dancers stretch out their hands with nervous eagerness towards a species of refreshment of a pale greenish color, handed around by impish-looking waiters, and then, with flashing eyes, start off again upon their wild tarantula dance. I perceived that after once partaking of that refreshment, whatever it might be, the applications to it became more and more frequent, and, of course, its maddening effects more and more apparent. One after another the unhappy victims dropped exhausted to the floor, and lay moaning among tattered shreds of drapery, and trampled flowers. The men regarding them with more disgust than pity, began to saunter off in couples towards another part of the Grove. The music died

away, and the lights, which were well-nigh burnt out, began to emit an insufferable smell; so that I was glad to abandon my post of observation, and seek a purer atmosphere. I felt very sorry for the poor creatures, but I could be of no earthly use to them; and besides, I perceived three sombre-looking figures approaching as if to render assistance, carrying between them what seemed a stretcher. So without more ado, I turned my back on the hateful scene.

I had, as I have said, observed the male portion of the revellers tending with great unanimity towards a particular point from whence proceeded sounds of uproarious mirth, and which, as I could see after following for a few steps in the same direction, was still illuminated with great brilliancy. As I advanced through the Grove towards this point, I noticed that the atmosphere did not at all improve; but I paid less attention to it being absorbed in contemplation of the scene I was approaching. In the midst of a wide arena carpeted with smooth turf, and surrounded by lofty trees from whose branches hung innumerable lights, there stood upon a broad marble plinth a square pillar of the same material and of inconsiderable height, supporting a figure which might have been thought of marble also but for the rich bloom on her cheeks the sparkle

of her eyes, and the captiv<sup>ing</sup> smile on her ruby lips. Her *pose* and draperies were of the purest classic, and her head was crowned with a garland of leaves from which long tendrils drooped and twined among her waving tresses. In her right hand she held a richly ornamented vase or jug, and in her left a large goblet which she filled with a clear and sparkling amber liquid, and passed graciously to whatever eager hand was outstretched to take it. The arena was crowded, chiefly with men, some of whom I knew well by sight; but none of them took any notice of me, being, all of them, absorbed in the task of elbowing their way towards the fascinating dispensatrix of the alluring liquid. Attendants of the same impish type as those I had seen among the dancers, unceasingly supplied the Diva with fresh goblets which, as soon as filled were hastily snatched by the thirsty multitude. After what I had already seen of the refreshments of the Grove, I felt suspicious, and watched sharply to note the effect of this. At first it seemed to exhilarate the recipients, and to render them very joyous; from these proceeded the song and shouts of merriment which had attracted me to the spot. But I observed that far from allaying thirst, it had the contrary effect. The applicants returned at shorter and shorter intervals; the faces

which had beamed with jollity became flushed and feverish; the eyes which had danced with pleasurable excitement became blood-shot and angry; the tongue seemed parched, the voice became husky and the utterance choked and indistinct. I looked to see those who were already in this condition—and all were approaching it—retire from the scene; but instead of doing so, they became more and more frantic in their efforts to snatch the fluid which was destroying them. They no longer elbowed each other, but fought like demons; the songs became curses; the shouts of hilarity became execrations and blasphemies. They tore each other's garments; they trampled each other under foot; knives, clubs, fire-arms were used unsparingly. Filled with horror, it was only when the stifling atmosphere began to choke me that I observed the lights, as before, dying slowly out, and filling the air with the suffocating cloud which rested all day over the Valley. But the raving multitude tore at each other in the gloom, while the Diva's radiant smile developed into a hideous grin, and her tresses, and the tendrils which adorned them writhed and twisted—a Crown of serpents! As I noted the transformation, a shudder passed through me from head to foot; for at that moment I saw approaching from behind the pillar on which

she stood, the same three dark figures I had before seen carrying the stretcher. The light, such as it was, fell full upon their ghastly faces, and then I knew who ruled in the Grove of Dissipation. The three sister-hags, Disease, Want, and Grim Death were come to clear the floors for the revels of an entirely new company on the following night.

## CHAPTER II

My experiences now led me to serious reflection on my future movements, as I endeavored not without great difficulty, to extricate myself from the intricacies of the Grove. To return to Sapless-land was out of the question—at least for me. Others might live there contentedly, perhaps, but I could not. The years I had already spent there had only been rendered endurable by the steadily nourished hope of something better. I had sought that something in the "Happy Valley," and with what result! There remained, therefore, only the City of Mammon as a field for my exertions, and a Land of Promise for my aspirations. The counsels I had received in my native land had all pointed in that direction, and I had found animadversions passed on the Forbidden Valley so amply justified that I began to entertain more respect for the judgment

of my friends of Sapless-land. I had, however, by my descent into the Valley, missed the direct road to the desirable centre of prosperity; and there remained nothing for it but to follow the stony-bed of a dry river course which would ultimately bring me into one of the many by-ways that led to the city of Mammon, although, as I guessed, that, in turn, would bring me only to the fag-end of the town. It was a dark and solitary journey; neither moon nor stars could be seen through the murky cloud of lamp-smoke, although a faint ruddy glow, as of the coming dawn, served somewhat to encourage me. I should have broken my neck many times but for the aid of my trusty staff. However, I summoned all my courage to the task, and made the best of my situation. But my experiences of the night were not yet ended. I had still something to learn of the delights of the "Happy Valley."

I had travelled a considerable way down the dry river-course, stumbling in the dark against boulders and shelving rocks, when, on rounding a bluff which stood almost at the end of the Valley where it debouched on the road leading to the city, I discovered that the faint glow above mentioned was not, as I had hoped, the morning dawn, but proceeded from a large building, whose pillared portico revealed the brightly illumined and richly

adorned interior in which a vast number of persons were moving about. The approach was by several broad marble steps; and of the stream of travellers who seemed to be already on the road, many had turned aside, and were ascending these steps, while a few were descending and pursuing their way. There was no sound of music or of laughter, nothing to break the dead silence, except the tread of feet. Stopping to reconnoitre, I observed that those who made their exit were in an extremely delapidated condition. One was minus his coat; another had lost his hat; a third was barefoot. Seized with an irresistible desire to unravel the mystery, I passed up the stair and entered the hall. Straight facing the entrance was a gilded throne, whereon sat a richly-robed figure, her head surmounted by a gaily-colored toque of curious shape. Her eyes were blindfolded; but peering closely, I could see that the bandage was tilted over the right eye, though in a way to escape a casual observer. In her hands she held bags of netted-work, through the meshes of which could be seen a wealth of gold-pieces, similar bags of various sizes depended from every finger; and she sat with both arms outstretched, as if to display her gifts to the hungry and longing eyes of her courtiers. Before her throne stood a sort of altar, whereon were inscribed in gay colors

the words "Give and you will get." Behind this was a large stool on which the foot of the Diva rested; and looking narrowly I perceived that a spring extended from it to a small wheel which turned as the Diva pressed the spring, and communicated, in turn, with the moveable top of the altar. On this the company crowded to lay their gifts. First, they laid money—all they had of it; then, watches, breastpins, keepsakes. Then they began to divest themselves of their attire, beginning, of course, with the more dispensable articles. It was all in vain; the Diva pressed the spring, the wheel went round, the moveable top tilted, and offering after offering disappeared for ever into a seemingly bottomless receptacle, while the treacherous gifts still hung invitingly on her fingers. Once or twice she threw a small purse at some votary who looked as if he had had enough of it, and was about to depart, but in every case the meshes broke and the gold-pieces, scattered over the moveable top, were tilted into the merciless receptacle.

I had now no difficulty in accounting for the beggared condition of those whom I had seen turning their backs on this temple of misfortune. But it amazed me much that any could remain; and, impelled by something more than curiosity, I withdrew behind a pillar to watch how these



fared. From where I stood I had a full view of the hall, and of a sort of passage-way at one end, which I took to be a side entrance. This passage-way was very dark, and there seemed to be some one sitting in it—a dark figure which reminded me uncomfortably of the three sister hags. While making note of these things, I was startled by a fearful cry—not a shout from the company, but the piercing wail of a single voice; and looking towards the centre of the hall, I beheld a man standing in an attitude of despair, and in a state of complete nudity. He had sacrificed everything down to his skin, in order to win the favor of the Diva. Just then, a wild figure with flaming eyes bounded from the farther end of the hall, and with a many-lashed scourge drove the unhappy victim towards the dark passage-way. A trap in the floor, obedient to the foot-pressure of grim Death, received him out of sight. My heart sickened as I slunk from the hall; and, shaking from my raiment the dust of the Accursed Valley, I fled.

The dawn was breaking grey and cheerless as I reached the great plain which skirted, on that side, the city of Mammon. Even at that early hour I there beheld a vast multitude of persons of both sexes, busily employed in digging the soil. Some who had preceded me along the

road were already at work, while others were looking around, spade in hand, for a spot where they might dig. The greater part of the laborers were poorly clad, although some presented a very respectable appearance. Quite a number of mangy, idle curs were prowling about, to whom one and another of the diggers would, now and again, throw something, for which they would eagerly scramble. The scene, altogether, was far from inspiring, but the air was comparatively pure and invigorating—a great relief to one just escaped from the stifling atmosphere of the Valley. Seeing among the diggers many I had known in Sapless-land, the thought occurred to me, could *this* be the destined field of my own future efforts? The idea was dismaying; not that the prospect was in itself particularly repulsive, for I was not afraid of hard work; but because it contrasted so dismally with the day-dreams and imaginary pictures in which I had indulged regarding my future in the city of Mammon. However, I quickly made up my mind to look things straight in the face; and, as a first step, to obtain all the information possible concerning what I saw around me.

Looking about for some one to address on the subject, I perceived that my nearest neighbor was one of the gentler sex—a circumstance which made me hesitate to intrude myself upon her.

She was neither young nor handsome; her hands were hard and horny with handling her spade, and her eyes, which might once have been fine, were sunken, as though with much weeping. But there was on her countenance a look of such peaceful contentment that I felt wonderfully attracted, and stood watching her, unperceived, as she worked. Her method struck me as very peculiar. In common with all the rest, she appeared to be digging up a homely kind of root; but every now and then she stooped down and picked up what seemed to me a very small stone, which she slipped into her pocket. It was done so rapidly, and with so little motion that I did not notice it until after several repetitions. This drew my attention to the fact that the soil was full of these small stones, although of what possible use they were, I could not make out. Filled with curiosity, I carefully regarded such other laborers as were within reach of my scrutiny, to see whether they did likewise. A few did; and what struck me as very strange was that these few all wore the same expression of peace and content as did the woman. The great mass of the people, however, went straight on with their digging, stolidly or savagely, according to temperament, and paid no attention whatever except to the business in hand. To one of these—a sulky-looking fellow

in a coarse blouse, who was driving his spade viciously, and tossing the clods about as if he were working strictly under protest—I at length addressed myself.

“What are you digging for, may I ask?” I inquired as civilly as I could.

“For daily bread,” he answered gruffly, jerking out with the corner of his spade the homely root which, I inferred from his gesture, represented that necessary article.

“Is that what they are all digging for?” I asked again.

“’Spose so. Don't think any of us would dig if we could help it, do you? There's nothing else to be got out of this ground, and mighty poor it is, and wouldn't care if there was enough of it.”

“You have hard times, have you?” asked another who stood near. His face was turned from me, but I fancied I had heard the voice, although I could not say where.

“Hard times! I should think so! They've all the soft times over there”—pointing to the city. “Wonder how they'd like to change places with us fellows!”

“Perhaps they are as sorry for themselves as you are,” answered the stranger. “Do you think they have no troubles?”

“Troubles! What can they know about trou-

bles, with plenty of money in their pockets, and nothing to do? That won't wash, Mister; that won't wash. When their day's turns are done they have their money-bags to lie down and rest upon, while I've got to lie down *there*." And he pointed to a heap of Discontent and other ill-smelling weeds which lay around in large quantities.

"Money-bags don't make a soft pillow," returned the other, "even when there is nothing in them but Cold Coin. You are better off than they, if you only had the wit to profit by your advantages. Why don't you pick up the stones?" And with his foot he pushed towards the man a little heap of earth that was full of them.

"Stones—pshaw! What good are they?" replied the man in a tone of withering contempt. "A plug of tobacco is worth a cart-load of them. What would they fetch over there?" pointing again to the city.

"Not much, certainly; but I can take you to a place where they come in handy."

The man looked at the speaker with a scowl. He evidently knew and understood him better than I did.

"You be—!" He did not finish the sentence, but resumed his digging more doggedly than ever.

While this conversation was progressing I had

been puzzling my brains over the identity of the stranger. His voice was quite familiar to me, but not so his face; I could not recall that ever I had seen it. It was a bright, beaming face, plump and wholesome-looking. He was dressed in a long, dark-colored tunic, and wore a tallish head-covering of very peculiar shape, but very becoming withal. He saw me looking at him, and smiled.

"You don't remember me?" he said. "Fairheart." And he held out his hand.

"Fairheart—you don't say?" I exclaimed, cordially grasping the same. "How you are changed! I should never have known you. Where have you been all this time? They had it all over Sapless-land that you were"—and my voice instinctively dropped—"pining in a dungeon in the black City of Terror."

"Not exactly," he replied, laughing. "Not exactly. There are more things in Heaven and on Earth than are dreamed of in the philosophy of Sapless-land. Have you been long here?"

"Only just arrived. I came to strike out for myself and make my mark in the town there."

"This is the best part of it, he answered, gravely.

"The best part, do you say? Why, its only the fag-end—can't be said to be in the City at

all. Here they only dig for Daily Bread. I should hope to do more than that."

"Well, come along, and we will take a look at the City proper. The road, as you see, does not cut clear across this extensive common, but goes zig-zag, giving a fine view of the town as you approach it.

And certainly, from the Common the City of Mammon had a very imposing aspect. We could see rows of palatial buildings directly in front of us; beyond these, lofty pavilion shaped roofs gaily ornamented with flags; and beyond these, again, a hill crowned with superb monuments. I waited with some impatience the full daylight, that I might adequately enjoy the scene, and I said as much to Fairheart while we walked along. He shook his head gravely, and stooping to pick up a stone, which he slipped into his pocket, said:

"You will not find the prospect improved when you see it more clearly. The atmosphere of this whereabouts is very deceptive, and things look best at distance. Now, take notice of these lamps, as we approach them." I did so, and saw, to my surprise, that the magnificent lights which beamed on us from the immediate outskirts of the city, proved, on our reaching them, to be very sorry lamps indeed. The fact was—and I realized it more as the day went on—that over the City of

Mammon, as over Sapless-land, there lay a perpetual mist; only it was different in kind. In Sapless-land it thickened in proportion as it went up; it hung like a leaden pall over the sky, while the barren land with all its uninteresting features remained distinctly plain. In the City, on the contrary, it hung low, and gave deceptive, shadowy forms to everything; while in the upper sky a kind of light which was not sunshine, but, if I may use the expression, a *promise* of it, served to impart a feeling of hopefulness. That light was noticeably brightest just over the Hill of Fame, where stood the monuments. I remarked this to Fairheart.

"We will look at them all," he said again, gravely. "We will look at them all." And again he stooped for a stone.

"What in the world do you want with these stones?" I asked.

"You will find out some day. Meanwhile, take my advice, and gather as many of them as you can."

"Are they of any value?"

"They are precious stones, but only in the rough at present, so people won't bother their heads about them."

"Perhaps they are ignorant of their value," said I, stooping, also, to pick up one.



"None so ignorant as those who won't believe," answered Fairheart in the serious manner he at times assumed.

"Are they confined to this locality?" I inquired.

"They are very scarce in the City. I found a few near the river. There are none down there, but they are indicating the direction of the Smoke-clouded Sea."

I now began to look out for the stones myself.

"Only the clean ones," said Fairheart, seeing me about to lift one which did not come under that head. "Only the clean ones. The rest are good for nothing."

Having gathered some, I was about to put them in my pocket when Fairheart said:

"Stop a bit. Have you a clean handkerchief?" It happened I had one, so he made me tie my stones into that. He then showed me that he had a small bag inside his pocket, and it was into it he put what he gathered.

By this time we had reached the palatial buildings which were the main feature of the City of Mammon. They certainly lost a great deal of their imposing effect on a nearer inspection. We were about to enter one of them when the glitter of a bright golden coin lying on the pavement attracted my attention.

"Halloo!" I cried, diving on the impulse of the moment, to pick it up.

"Take care!—don't touch it—it is red-hot!" exclaimed Fairheart hurriedly. But I had already discovered that it was so, and had thrown it from me, along with the skin of my fore-finger and thumb, before he had done speaking.

"What sort of coin do you call that?" I asked testily, as I shook my suffering members.

"You will find a good deal like it in this town," answered Fairheart.

"Is it all red-hot?"

"No, not all, but most of it. Come in here and see for yourself."

We passed through the wide pillared entrance, and found ourselves in a large and lofty hall. At the further end heaps of shining gold pieces piled up on the polished pavement were being eagerly transferred to bags of various sizes by the fortunate First-comers who stood near the treasure, while the numerous company that filled the hall crushed and pushed to get nearer and help themselves in turn. Looking about me, I perceived along the wall certain recesses, grated across to about the height of three feet. Within each of the three recesses nearest the entrance, sat a quiet-looking individual of pleasant aspect, throwing out, from time to time, small silver pieces on which the company mostly bestowed very

contemptuous looks. A few persons occupied themselves in gathering them, while avoiding—as it seemed, purposely—the more glittering coin; but it must be confessed, their bags, which were by no means large, did not fatten very fast.

“These,” said Fairheart, pointing to the three pleasant faced ones, “are Industry, Prudence, and Self-denial. Their money may be safely handled, for they deal only in Cold Coin.

“It would take long to grow rich upon it,” said I, despondently.

“Perhaps so,” returned Fairheart, dryly. “But look there, for a change.”

Saying which, he made way for me so that I could have a fair view of those in front, and of the impish occupants of the other recesses, who kept shovelling out the gold pieces. The men grasped them by the handful, as many as they could, although I could see their fingers blistered, and deep brands upon the palms of their hands, as they shoved the money into their bags, and stretched out for more. Some whose bags were large and well-filled had hardly any fingers left. They were burnt to the very joints; yet the miserable beings stretched forth the mutilated stumps as eagerly as ever. Nor was this all. The bags, in spite of their being made of specially prepared material, would sometimes catch fire, communi-

ating it to the clothes of the possessor; and then a howl would pass through the hall, and those nearest the unfortunate would hustle him out to burn by himself—very often with their own bags smoking—lest their clothes might catch at his fire.

“How do you like that for a change?” asked Fairheart. “Dishonesty, Bribery, Breach of trust and Extortion,” pointing to the imps in the other recesses, “deal only in Hot Coin. What do you say?”

“Let us go away,” I answered, for I felt fairly sick. We passed out of the building and into the street, turning up a great thoroughfare that led to the heart of the city.

As we advanced up the wide and busy street I observed that while the pavement on which we were walking was firm and tolerably clean, the middle of the roadway was a perfect quagmire, and became worse as we reached the Grand Square, which was simply a sea of mud. It was in this Square we found the pavillon-roofed edifices whose flags and other decorations had so fine an effect when seen from a distance. The pretentiousness, however, of the upper story only rendered still more ridiculous the paltriness of the rest. From the bed of black mud arose wooden piles, across which were laid loose boards, some, apparently, pretty sound, other quite rotten. Ladders of

various heights reached from the mud to the different platforms; and above the general buzz of the busy town could be plainly heard the voices of the men who were endeavoring to climb those ladders, and the cheers or execrations that greeted them from the crowds who stood below, knee-deep in the mire. When any succeeded in reaching the platforms, they immediately received a shower of mud; and their efforts to address the audience might have been spared, since no one listened. Sometimes the rotten planks would give way, and the unfortunates be ignominiously precipitated into the deep quagmire, others rushing up to take their places.

"What, for goodness' sake, does it all mean?" I exclaimed in amazement.

"These," answered Fairheart, "are candidates for the honor of cleaning the street. Each man among them has invented and patented some pet apparatus for the purpose, which he is eulogizing and endeavoring to explain; but up to this time none of their experiments have been quite successful, as you may see." Saying which, he pointed to a variety of curious-looking structures that seemed to have stuck fast, like stranded ships, in different parts of the sea of mud.

"You haven't a mind to try your luck among these, have you?" he laughingly asked. "You

haven't any particular views on street-cleaning?"

"I'd rather go back to the Common," I replied. "It's a wonder those maniacs don't get smothered in the mire."

"Some of them do," returned my friend, quietly.

We continued our walk around the square, and by-and-bye I perceived that Fairheart noticed the frequent looks I cast towards the Hill of Fame.

"Your heart is on that hill," he said, looking steadily at me.

I confessed that it was. Even before leaving Sapless-land I had contemplated endeavoring to make, if possible, a settlement on that inviting spot, where, as I was told, the lots were open to all, and there was plenty of room—especially at the top. The many plantations visible on its slopes indicated a rich and productive soil; while the numerous residences presented a most charming effect, as seen from the lower ground.

"It is not so good as it looks," remarked Fairheart, significantly.

"Some appear to find it very good," I retorted a little sharply, for I felt in no humor to be thwarted or discouraged. "Vegetation seems to thrive amazingly. My only fear is that all the available Lots are already disposed of."

"It is said there is plenty of room at the top,"

returned my companion, dryly. For myself, I have never been there."

We were now following a pleasant road which ascended a gentle and verdant acclivity. At some distance in front of us stood a large building through which the road seemed to pass, as the edifice extended on each side of it.

"They built pretty far down the hill," I observed, pointing to the structure in question.

"That," responded Fairheart, "is only the Emporium, where you procure seeds, and whatever may be necessary in the way of implements, before beginning the ascent of the hill."

"Are we not now ascending the hill?" I asked in surprise.

"Hardly," returned he, with a smile.

My experiences of the morning recurred to me with disheartening effect. I looked at Fairheart, but he said nothing more, and we walked on in silence till we reached the Emporium. Then it was that, standing in the wide archway through which the road passed, and in which it terminated. I saw that the hill I had imagined myself already ascending rose at the off-side of a deep and rugged ravine, where jagged rocks and thorn-brakes offered a formidable defiance to the daring adventurer; while the hill itself presented a succession of rocky terraces only attainable by steep and narrow path-

ways, instead of the smooth and easy slopes I had pictured to myself. These terraces did not appear to entirely surround the hill, but were terminated at each end by a dense jungle.

"It is just practicable," said Fairheart, as we both looked down into the ravine, and then looked upward. "To Keen-wit, Courage and indomitable Perseverance it is *just practicable*. The questions to be considered are first, Have you these qualities? and, second, Is the game worth the candle?"

I did not immediately reply. My mind was going, half unconsciously, through a process of summing up, which took in all I had heard and seen since leaving Sapless-land, together with a review of things generally as found in that depressing region itself; and by way of sum-total, the consideration presented itself—"If I turn back, what is there else to live for?" My resolution was taken. Come what might, I would endeavor to ascend the hill. I could but fail.

"Fairheart," I said, "it is not for me to say whether I have Keen-wit, or, indeed, much wit of any kind. But I know I have Courage and Perseverance; and with these, and any wit I may have, I am determined to try the ascent. What is there to turn back to? Daily Bread, perhaps; but I hope to find that on the hill, and a good many



other things besides. The prospect must be charming, and the air most salubrious. I am resolved to proceed."

"Very well," replied he. "I will help you to select your seed, and then bid you God-speed."

We entered the Emporium, where Fairheart kindly directed my purchases. He insisted strongly on my investing only in the very best quality of seed. Numerous bags were standing around, invitingly open, and adorned with recommendatory placards; but my companion, after a critical examination, declined the contents of each and all, telling me privately that they were all inferior, and some of them absolutely pernicious and poisonous. We were told that this was the quality of seed best suited to the soil of the Hill of Fame; that purer brands were hardly ever asked for, etc., etc. After much rummaging, a sample was produced which Fairheart, who seemed up to the business, pronounced fairly good. Armed with a hatchet, to clear my way withal through the brush, and with my bag of seed slung over my shoulder, I was ready for the road. Other implements they said, could be had on the Hill.

"Won't you come with me?" I suggested to Fairheart, for I was loath to part from him.

"No, thank you," returned he. "I am going

home. Take care of yourself, and don't wander into the jungle."

### CHAPTER III

I will not say how long it took me to cross the ravine, nor will I relate the difficulties I encountered. Suffice it to say that an age seemed to have elapsed before I found myself perceptibly journeying upwards. The luxuriant vegetation which grew in the many rifts and marshy places of the Hill, proved, on nearer acquaintance, to be excessively rank,—so rank, indeed, as to render the air most unwholesome. The fruits which it produced were very abundant, but they were of the nature of *fungi*, offensive, I thought, both as to taste and smell; and the blotched, unhealthy appearance of those I saw eating them was sufficient evidence of their pernicious character. This crop, I presume, was grown from the seed Fairheart had denounced; for the plantations had evidently been laid out with care, and embosomed habitations more or less imposing. Many of these were already uninhabited and in ruins; and the dwellers in those that were still occupied shewed unmistakable effects of bad air and food. I found some wholesome roots, very much like those I saw on the Common, and also some pretty flowers;

but these were on the drier and more stony places. I did not linger on my way, but made what haste I could to reach a purer elevation. By dint of scrambling up a steep and stony path, I at length attained a small table-land, the upper surface of one of the rocky prominences. Here I found a little unpretentious dwelling, with a surrounding of pretty flowers, and a healthful breeze. A man was at work on the lot, digging up roots of the same kind I had already made acquaintance with. After the first salutations, we began to talk.

"Is this the only crop you raise?" I asked, pointing to the roots. "One might just as well stay down upon the Common."

"Every bit as well," returned the man—whose name, by the way, was Sterling. "Every bit as well, and save all the climbing. Unless, indeed, " he added ", you are fond of flowers."

"Here are some I gathered down there," I said, indicating the direction whence I had come.

"Yes" answered Sterling, "but they don't have much show among the weeds. Now, here, as you see, I train them all over my cottage, and the effect from the level country must be charming."

Poor Sterling! I had not the heart to tell him that his pretty flowers were invisible from the town, and little more discernible from the road. I felt very much depressed, and could not help remarking.—

"It seems an aimless sort of life."

"It is better than sowing Devil's Seed down there."

"But could one not do better at—a— little higher up?"

Sterling laughed. "I dare say one could; but I have never been there. It was hard enough to get thus far; and I am satisfied to eat my roots, plant my flowers, and enjoy their fragrance while it lasts. By the time one reaches even a perch like this, one is glad to hold on to it. Besides," he added, wearily, "I am tired of climbing; and all for what?"

Yes, I could see that his contentedness but veiled disappointment; it was not re-assuring to me. However, I continued.—

"I should like to reach the top."

He looked at me for a moment as if he thought I was jesting. Then his expression changed.

"You will never get there."

"Why not? *Some* have reached it."

"Yes—but *how* is a thing I can't explain. There is a legend on the Hill to the effect that One of the name of Chance appeared to them and took them up. Some, however, say there is no such person, and that it was all done by sheer climbing. But if it was, I can't see how. If you are minded to go higher, you will see for yourself."

I was minded to go higher, so I took a friendly leave of my informant, and re-commenced the ascent. At length I reached the upper terraces, where I found that the most prominent and desirable sites were by no means always occupied by the most valuable and handsome residences. Finally, I attained the last terrace, which was very narrow, and quite solitary; and then I saw to my dismay that the summit of the hill rose in a sheer precipice as smooth as glass, where, indeed, further climbing was impossible. I walked around it as far as I could, on either side, feeling sure there must be, at some point, a practicable pathway; but there was absolutely none. I sat down on the solitary ledge, and wept.

After remaining there a considerable time, I became aware that there was some one on the terrace besides myself. I arose and walked towards him, scarcely knowing why. I found an individual of peculiar appearance, who, to my astonishment, was placing against the precipice a ladder which reached to the top. He shewed no surprise at seeing me, but, bowing politely, asked me in a pleasant voice whether I would like to ascend. I could not resist a tremour at the unexpected apparition; and in a rather unsteady voice, I asked—"Are you the one they call Chance?"

"That is not my true name," he replied; "but it is the name by which I am spoken of among men. If you would like to ascend, I will hold the ladder for you, so that you need not fear."

Indeed, I was eyeing the ascent nervously, and he saw it. But I quickly reasoned with myself. "Here," I thought, I have fallen on an opportunity which rarely offers. I see before me the ambition of a lifetime, to accept, or to reject. For what have I come thus far? Not, certainly, to go back as I came." Then to Chance I said.

"I will gladly ascend if you think the ladder secure."

"Have no fear," answered he. "Leave your hatchet here; you will have no further use for it. Sling your staff across your shoulder, along with your seed-bag. Now—steady!"

Clinging closely to the supports, I slowly but surely ascended the ladder, and stepped off at the top. Turning to give my assistant a nod of acknowledgement, I was startled to find that both he and his ladder were gone! I walked around the brink of the level space on which I found myself, and peered cautiously over on every side, but in vain. Chance had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. I had attained, at length, the height of my ambition, the fulfilment of all my hopes and desires; and now, if there was

in the whole land a solitary, desolate, heart-sick creature, it was myself. For I was alone now, with nothing more to press forward to, and with the cold wind for sole company. No, not *sole* company. I had around me the monuments of all ages. How grand they were, even in their decay!—for they were nearly all crumbling more or less some being in absolute ruins; and they were all untenanted, save by the fossil remains of those who had reared them. The feeling that filled my soul as I wandered from one to another was—desolation. The very wind seemed to sigh through the delicate traceries the single word.—“Forgotten.”

But what struck me more than all was a Wonder that stood in their midst. At the straighter side of the great semi-circular platform, where, as I had ascertained while looking around for Chance, the sheer descent became lost in the jungle before-mentioned, there stood an immense mound composed of huge blocks of dark granite, and surmounting these, a mighty Cross of the same imperishable stone. No mortal hand had chiselled that stupendous monument; the lightnings of Heaven had hewen it from the primeval rock, and the fragments cleft from it were grouped in boulders around its base. From the foot of the Cross flowed a fountain of the purest water, which

nourished and kept in perpetual bloom innumerable white and scarlet Passion-flowers that grew in the interstices of the rocks. That inexhaustible spring streamed in rills towards those monuments which stood nearest and served to keep alive the *immortelles* which clung lovingly around pillar and archway. These last were built mainly of granite which lay plentifully around—some entirely so; and they shewed no signs of decay, nor did they contain any fossil remains. I became so absorbed in this wonderful sight that I could think of nothing else. I marvelled how it came that I had not perceived that Cross from the level country; but I suppose the glitter of the marbles grouped in front of it distracted the eye. What power was in the spectacle I know not, but it seemed to lift me out of myself. The hopes and aspirations which had so lately been everything to me, receded to an immeasurable distance, like a dream of many years ago. Here was soil in which to grow my seed; here was stone of which to build my dwelling; here were tools laid aside by the now fossil hands that once had used them. But how would my poor cottage look beside those lordly relics? What company was my poor seed for the blooming *immortelles*? I wandered about among the monuments like an uneasy ghost, till the heavy night began to fall; then I clambered up



the granite mound, and laid myself down to rest at the foot of the Cross.

When I awoke next morning, I perceived the dark Cross standing out against a halo of light which surrounded it as with a glory. I arose to a kneeling posture, and clinging to the mighty shaft in order to support myself, I looked out over the prospect. Above and beyond a sea of black fog which seemed to fill the middle distance, and was thickest and highest over the marshes which, on that side, skirted Sapless-land, arose a vast Mountain of Light. Its upper part was lost to view in a veil of golden mist; its base, also, was invisible from where I stood, because of the black fog. But on the middle slopes I could discern, through the bright haze, shining palaces and pinnacles; below these, a belt of waving palms, and below these, again, what seemed to be white, glistening tents, as of a great army; the whole surrounded by a turreted and embattled wall built upon the solid rock.

Surely I had before seen the outlines of those turrets and battlements! Surely I had a dim remembrance of those waving palms! Instinctively I looked in the direction of the bleak moor I had left endeavouring to locate the point from whence I had perceived those very outlines through the dense fog which, as I now saw plainly, arose

from the unhealthy swamps of Ignorance and Prejudice that surrounded Sapless-land. Could *this* be that awful City of Terror, the dread and abhorrence of which was the primary article of the Sapless-land Creed? What had the whole Earth to offer that might compare with the hope of one day reaching it? And it did not seem so far away. Could I but find the means of descending from my present altitude, nothing should stop me. I would tear through the jungle with my bare hands. Oh! that Chance would shew himself again! I would go and look over for him.

With this intent, I slid my hand down the shaft to steady myself among the boulders; and in doing so, I rasped against what seemed a cord, fastened securely to the Cross. Feeling carefully around this, I found that the end dropped over the abrupt precipice, on the opposite side from where I had ascended. I seized the cord; it did not waver, but remained quite steady as if weighted at the lower end by some heavy object. Moreover it was knotted at short intervals which rendered descent by its aid an easy matter. I did not hesitate a moment, but slid down to the foot of the precipice, where I found the other end of the cord secured firmly to a ponderous anchor. By means of this, I found myself, to my great joy, on a narrow but solidly-built road leading straight

through the jungle in the direction of the shining mountain.

Being now on the low lands, it is not surprising that the wide-spreading mists from the swamps should gradually obscure my vision of the City of Terror, the obscurity increasing as I approached the swamps, which lay to the left of the road I was following. But I did not for a moment lose heart or wander from the way; my steps being guided and my courage sustained by a clear, star-like light which I had observed suspended, as I imagined, over the gate of the City, and which penetrated the fog with great brilliance and steadfastness. The way was long, however and the sorry daylight of the levels was waning, when I observed a man on the road advancing towards me. Not unwilling for company, even in passing, I made haste to gain up to him. It was Fairheart!

#### CHAPTER IV

"Hallo!" I cried, "how do *you* come to be here?"

"I was sent out to meet you," replied he, with a smile. I thought that strange, and was about to ask who sent him, when he took up the parable himself.

"How did you fare on the Hill?" I then gave him a full account of my adventures.

"Ah!" said he, "others besides you have descended by that Cord from the summit of Fame, and left their monuments untenanted. It is well for them to-day that they did so. They have attained a nobler immortality."

"No one ever ascends by it, I dare say?"

"You are mistaken. Self-sacrifice often ascends by it to plant fresh Passion-flowers around the Cross. Did you notice how the Cord is knotted?"

"I noticed that it *is* knotted, but I did not pay much attention to the *how*. By the bye, I did remark that the first knot—that is, the highest—is larger than the others."

"It is. Then follow Five; then, at a greater interval, Seven; then Fifteen; then Thirty-three."

"Is there a reason for that?"

"Yes; perhaps I may one day explain it. Meanwhile, where are you bound for?"

"To the City of Terror," I answered promptly.

"That," said Fairheart,, "is my home. I will take you there. But after you are within its walls, you will learn to call it by another name. You will no longer call it the City of Terror, but the City of Peace. See these poor people " he added, pointing to a considerable concourse of men, women and children, who were approaching by the

branch-road that led to the City of Mammon, or were already passing down the road in front of us; "they have finished their day's-work in the City, or on the Common; and at evening they return to rest in that happy and hopeful abode. Is it any wonder they plod contentedly through the working-hours, and despise the Hot-Coin and mud-majesty of yonder wretched town?" As he spoke one considerable party passed us, and among them I recognized the poor woman with the horny hands, and several others I had seen on the Common, as, also, some I had seen gathering the silver-bits of Industry and Prudence. I also observed several persons attired as was Fairheart who were closely followed, each by a small group, apart from the bulk of the pedestrians. I inquired of my companion the reason.

"These," he said, "are new-comers like yourself, and require guidance. The rest know the way."

Entering within a lofty palisade which extended on each side of the road as far as the eye could reach, we now beheld before us the City of Terror, and could plainly perceive the vast Rock on which it was built, as well as the illimitable Sea from which the mountain arose. Quite a long stretch of rough road still lay before us, with extensive deserts of dry sand to the right, and to the left. I saw a

great number of people roaming aimlessly about among the sand; and I also saw, with extreme surprise, several persons who were on the road drop out of their company, and deliberately step off the path, and wander away over the sand. I asked Fairheart why they did so.

"All these people," he explained, "once belonged to the City we are going to; and to outsiders they seem still to belong to us, for they are within the palisade. But they have lost the Countersign."

"Do we require a Countersign?"

"Certainly; it will be given to you at the Gate."

"And how have these persons lost it?"

"By straying into the Grove of Dissipation, or by paying court to the goddess of Intemperance, or by laying their gifts on the Altar of Fortune; or perhaps they have been carried away by the charms of Hot Coin."

"And will they be refused entrance into the City?" I asked.

"They can only be re-admitted if they cross by the Stepping-stones, and that is precisely what they are unwilling to do."

"What advantage do they gain by wandering off into the sand?"

"None at all, except that they find it soft under their feet. If they wander far enough, they

will get into the quicksands, or the tide will overtake them."

We were now arrived at our journey's end, and what I saw there explained Fairheart's remarks. A narrow but deep channel separated the Mountain from the shore on which we stood. The road by which we had come traversed this channel, but in a three fold manner, and towards a triple entrance, the gates of which, my companion told me, were never closed, but stood open day and night. What seemed to be the main approach was in the middle, and made straight for the middle entrance. To the right, the road led on to a level and fairly broad ledge of natural rock, the water that covered it being only deep enough to wash the dust from the feet of those who crossed by it. The greater part of those who were returning to the City crossed by this ledge and entered by the side gateway.

"That," observed Fairheart, "is the Gate of Prayer. Our faithful citizens return home by it, and will leave by it in the morning when the bells of the City of Mammon ring out the hour of labour."

I now turned my attention to the left, where the road ended abruptly; and looking closely, I perceived, at a couple of feet below the channel, detached, equi-distant pieces of rock, which, Fairheart told me, were the Stepping-stones. I shud-

dered at the sight, and felt little surprise that some shrank from crossing by them. But Fairheart drew my attention to one who, more resolute than the rest, was preparing to do so; and I saw that another habited in a tunic like that of my friend, and wearing the same peculiar head-covering and a little silken yoke around the neck, had given the poor man his hand, and, himself walking on a narrow plank clear above the water, was leading him over by the Stepping-stones.

"You have never been here before, so we, must take the middle entrance," said Fairheart, drawing from his bosom a similar small silken yoke which he put around his neck. "Take good courage, now, and give me your hand."

As I did so, I saw that another plank communicated with the centre entrance, and that Fairheart was about to cross upon it. I also saw, with some tremor, that the path gradually dipped as it neared the other side. I held fast by the hand extended to me, and gave it an extra grip as I felt the waters of the channel close over my head. Another moment, and I was standing with Fairheart on the lowest step of a great stair cut out of the solid rock with the wall of the City arching overhead; and around my neck was suspended a beautiful White Stone whereon was engraved the Countersign.



"Take care you don't lose it," said my friend, as together we ascended the stair, adown which streamed a mellow light which Fairheart called the Light of Faith. "Take care you don't lose it, or you will have to come back by the Stepping-stones."

We soon reached the top of the stair, and the sight I beheld fairly ravished me. We had left deep, dusky twilight down below, and behold! we found the so-called City of Terror bathed in a flood of the mellow Light that streamed down to the entrances, with the Mountain of the Golden Mist rising in the midst. Fairheart noted my astonishment, and smiled. "Here," he said, "it is perpetual Day. *There is no night here.*"

There was so much to see! I felt as though I could gladly spend a lifetime in looking about me. The comparative level on which we stood, immediately under the wall of the City, was of vast extent, and fairly dotted with the innumerable tents of the inhabitants. It seemed to completely encircle the mountain, of which, indeed, it was the lowest part, and, like the Hill of Fame, was terraced as far as the Belt of Palms. Flights of broad steps led from one terrace to another, each step finished off at both ends by a little Cross. Some of these crosses were *fleurées*, but others were severe in form. Every terrace was

covered with tents, and countless streams of the purest water trickled down the slopes into beautiful fountains, and thence flowed in every direction, nourishing such a growth of verdure, flowers, and fruits as I had never before seen. But the amazing populousness of the City struck me more than anything, except perhaps, the wonderful activity and life. A vast number of the inhabitants of both sexes wore what appeared to be uniforms of various kinds, as though they were the regiments of some great Army; and as was to be expected, all who wore a like uniform kept and worked together. That is, in Companies. There were many companies of each in different places. Some wore tunics and hoods of a brown colour, with a cord encircling the waist; others had white mantles and hoods over the brown tunics; others, again, had black mantles, with robes of pure white underneath. Many were altogether in black, and certain bands of lovely maidens were in spotless white, having a little silver heart suspended round the neck, while other bands wore similar robes of snowy white, all faced with brilliant scarlet. Some of the veils were white, but most were black. All were as busy as could be. Some of those in the dark robes were occupied attending to the wants of the men, women and children who had returned, as before-

mentioned, from their tasks on the Common or in the City of Mammon, to rest in this blissful abode. They, alone, reposed; if, indeed, such distinction can be drawn where the very spirit of repose seemed to rest upon even the busiest. The gentle attendants fed them with the Bread of Instruction, the wine of Consolation, the delicious fruits nourished by the streams of Grace; and in their loving care for the poor, tired, hungry multitude, they were freely assisted by the other companies. Then, whole bands were occupied in planting seed; others in gathering fruit and flowers others in trimming the great lamps that burned in the turrets of the City-wall—an eloquent appeal as well as a beneficent assistance to such of the wanderers as had still the heart to retrace their steps. (These, by the way, must have been the lights I saw from Sapless-land). Again, many were almost wholly occupied in mixing Cement. This last occupation, which was so universal that everyone seemed to take a hand in it whatever his or her other employment, astonished me greatly because I could not imagine what it was for, as I could see no building going on—nothing but Tents everywhere. I must not omit mention of the numerous members who were habited as was my friend Fairheart. These, who seemed to outnumber all the rest, did not preserve the same regi-

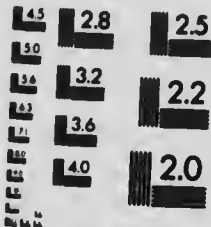
mental order; they were here, and there, and everywhere, aiding, directing, and superintending generally. Yet they, too, were a mighty regiment; and their officers, who could be easily distinguished by their beautiful purple garments and other insignia, appeared to be looked up to with filial reverence by all, and to exercise a universal jurisdiction. This was pre-eminently, the case with one who seemed to be the Supreme Chief over all. Even those in the purple garments—his own were white—paid him profoundest homage. These rulers wore crowns of peculiar shape, but that of the Supreme Chief differed from the others. As may be imagined, I did not note all these things in silence, but plied my good friend Fairheart with questions.

"He in the white garments and Triple-crown," responded Fairheart, "is indeed, as you call him, Supreme Chief, but only in a secondary sense. The Prince, only Son of the King of the whole country, who has received from his Father all the plenitude of power and authority, has deputed that Chief officer to govern in His name until the day—known only to Himself—when the last of us shall have crossed the Belt of Palms. There, on the mountain, He reigns in His Own Person, without employing the medium of any Vicar or Deputy; but here it is different. The preserva-



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tion of discipline, and, indeed, security of every kind, demand that the Supreme power and authority should be held and exercised by visible hands, so long as we are in a state of Probation."

"The Belt of Palms—it does not seem to be very far off. Yet I can see nothing beyond it but bright mist. It skirts the base of the mountain I suppose?"

"Not exactly. It skirts the Sleeping Lake which surrounds the Mountain. When those who are sent for reach the shore of that Lake, if they have been assiduous in gathering stones—"

"Stones—you don't mean little bits like we gathered down there?"

"To be sure I do."

"And do they gather them here also?"

"Certainly—bagfuls of them. And if they have been industrious in that line, they are carried clear across the Lake to the Holy Mountain. But if they have been negligent, their boat must sail round and round the Lake, till the King shall send them permission to land."

"Not a very hard punishment, I should say, with the Mountain of Light continually in view."

"That is just what makes it so *very* hard," answered Fairheart. "Did you ever suffer from Home-sickness?"

I glanced back mentally at Sapless-land, and shook my head vigorously.

"Well, I have," continued my companion, "and except, perhaps, remorse there is no suffering on earth may be compared to it. I have sat on yon crag, on the dismal old moor, and looked over to this place through the mist till my very heart was breaking. This was *Home* to me; and yet, though I could *see* it in a glimmering sort of way, I could not *reach* it. I have some idea what sailing round the Sleeping Lake means. And by the bye, have you those stones you gathered?"

I dived into my pocket, and brought out the handkerchief knotted as it was; in truth, I had completely forgotten all about it. Fairheart untied the knot, and to my amazement, some of the little stones were shining and sparkling.

"There," said he, "that variety of Amethyst is called, in this town, an *Act of Mortification* or of *Humility*. That sort of Emerald we call an *Act of Faith*. That Ruby is an *Act of Conformity to the Will of God*; these Diamonds are *Temptations Resisted*. The virtue of the Water through which you have just passed has polished and glorified them. Here are some which we call *Common Acts*, alias *Daily duties*. These, you see, are not much changed; they require to go through an extra process."

Saying which, he led the way to a beautiful



fountain, whereon were engraved the words —  
“*Holy Intentions.*”

“Dip them in,” he said. I did so; and behold! the entire handful came out radiant, the little common bits showing the lovely trceries of the semi-transparent Agate.

“Now, give them to your Guardian Angel,” said Fairheart. And then—oh! Land of Mysteries! I beheld, standing by my side, a majestic and beautiful being who regarded me with a most benign expression. He smilingly held out his hand which I tried to grasp; but I found that although distinctly visible, he was impalpable to the touch. But the strangest thing of all was the feeling which took possession of me that *he had been beside me all the time*. This conviction involuntarily framed the first words I almost unconsciously uttered—and they were to Fairheart.

“How is it that I never saw him before?”

“Because you are only now beginning to see things in the Light of Faith. You have many wonders yet to see. For instance, look there.”

He stretched his hand out over the busy town, and there I beheld every man, woman and child, whatever his age, costume or employment, closely attended by a being as beautiful, as ethereal, and as unmistakably *real* as my own newly found Guardian. There was, in fact, a second

population, one which required no standing-room, and from whose majestic wings showers of the golden mist seemed to fall all over the City. I turned and looked at Fairheart, for I could frame no words to speak; and then I saw that he, too, was attended in like manner. Meanwhile, my Angel was patiently waiting.

"Give him your stones," said Fairheart. I dropped the stones into the still-extended hand, and watched to see what he would do with them. He spread his wings, and sailed away towards the Holy Mountain, where I observed a stir in the Golden Mist, as though a breeze were agitating it. Then, point after point of dazzling light appeared; then countless pinnacles and colonades as of purest alabaster, thronged with radiant inhabitants, some winged like my Guardian, others robed as those round us, but all shining in the Light of Glory; then multitudes of superb edifices in course of erection for which the winged messengers were carrying loads of cement *from our own part of the City!* Now I knew what the cement was, and why nearly everyone took a hand in making it. On reaching the mountain, which he did with the rapidity of thought, my Angel made for a spot where a splendid palace was being built. A group of shining figures stood by it, in the midst of whom was a Royal Lady whose beauty

and magnificence words have no power to tell. Her robe was of purest light, and on her head was a crown of twelve stars. My Angel knelt before this lovely Queen, and placed in her hand—my precious stones.

Then the Queen approached the unfinished building, and pressed each of the stones into the cement, where it, sparkled and shone with unspeakable brilliance. Presently the Golden Mist gathered again, and the Holy Mountain became as before.

"Now," said Fairheart, "who do you think that palace is being built for?"

"For the Royal Lady," I promptly replied, although, indeed, I marvelled that she condescended to employ *my* stones in its adornment.

"Guess again," said Fairheart, shaking his head. "*Her* palace is far, far up the Mountain. Guess again."

I thought over the glorious forms I had seen beside the Queen, and indicated several, but Fairheart still shook his head. Then it flashed upon me.—

"It is for my Guardian Angel."

"Wrong again, although a little warmer." And Fairheart looked at me so steadily that my very heart stopped beating as I faintly gasped.—

"Surely not for me?"

"Yes indeed," answered he, grasping my hand, with tears in his eyes. "For you, and no other, provided you keep the Countersign till you cross the Belt of Palms."

"Can we lose the Countersign here?" I asked.

"Only by stepping on the City Wall," replied my friend.

"As you see, it is composed of sixteen Ramparts, with a watch-tower between each. Ten of these ramparts are hewn out of the solid rock, while six of them are masonry. But it is equally forbidden to tread them underfoot. Whoever tramples on these walls loses the Countersign."

"And can he ever recover it?"

"The moment it is lost, the loser finds himself outside the City, and swelling the crowd upon the sandy flats beyond the Channel. To outsiders he still seems to belong to us, because he is within the Falisade; but practically he does not. If he regrets his loss, and resolves upon obedience for the future, he must return by the Stepping-stones. Till then, he will not be received at the Gate of Prayer; and no one can enter a second time by the middle entrance."

"And no one puts him out? He just finds himself there? That sounds very strange; it is—it is so *shadowy*—it savours of the Supernatural."

"Of course it does. You are come into the

region of the Supernatural—or rather, to the region where the Natural and Supernatural meet. The Countersign bestowed as you emerge from the Channel waters, the Angelic Guardian, the Future Home upon the Holy Mountain, are not these all Supernatural? Yet they are the true Realities; and the many details which partake of their supernatural character, are no less real. What are called Realities down there," and he pointed back whence we had come, "these are the veritable Shadows. Take them on their own showing, and what else are they? Where is the solidity of mud-majesty? You are on the Platform to-day, in the Mire to-morrow. How long does Hot Coin last? Only long enough to burn to the bone. The so-called delights of the Forbidden Valley, do they not presently pass away in something much worse than smoke? And do not the absorbing pursuits of the masses leave the poor scrambler up the Hill of Fame with none but himself and the biting winds of envy to recognize his successes? These are all called Realities, but they are worse than Shadows; they pass, like the Ghosts they are, but leave behind them the residuum of a wasted Life. Here, in the City of Faith, nature and time begin to enter upon relations with the spiritual and the Eternal; and it is *only* here—in the City of Faith—that they

can do so with safety. For there is another Spirit-world with which we here have nothing to do, but with which some of the back settlements of Sapless-land are endeavouring to make an undesirable acquaintance."

I now dropped a hint as to the line in which my energies were to be employed.

"That," said Fairheart, "must be as the King of the whole country shall appoint. He may wish you to dig for Daily Bread on Poverty Common, or to gather the modest doles of Prudence and Industry in the City of Mammon, or to fight the Forest Fires of Rapine and Anarchy, under the Flag of Obedience; always remembering that here is your Home, and returning to its rest when Daily Labour is over. Or He may wish you to plant and cultivate that bagful of seed here, in the City of Faith; or again, to trim the Lamps in the turrets or to feed the multitude. Or He may employ you at my work."

"What is that?"

"Trying to induce those outside to settle in our City. I and many others go every day to the Common, and rarely return without some new acquisition."

"Where does the King dwell?"

"His Palace is on the summit of the Holy Mountain. We shall not see Him till we cross

the Belt of Palms. But the Prince, His Son, into whose hand He has committed all power, has made for Himself a Tent where He dwells among us, and permits us to visit Him as often as we will. And as we could not look upon His Glory in our present state, He covers Himself with a White Veil. I will take you to Him."

"Then we cannot see His Face through the Veil?"

"If *Love* touches your eyes, you can; but not unless."

Fairheart now led me to a part of the City where the Golden Mist of the Holy Mountain descended in a broad shining ray, clear across the Belt of Palms, and rested upon a little Tent which stood within a wide amphitheatre. It was in this amphitheatre, Fairheart told me, that he and all his comrades and officers had their home. It was filled with their tents, and thronged with black and purple tunics; and the shaven heads of other companies were numerous. Conspicuous among them was the Triple-crown of the Supreme Chief who stood near the little Tent. As we approached the low parapet, Fairheart, pointing to a shallow and pelucid stream that flowed between, said:

"Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground." Thus we

passed through the little stream. Then Fair-heart, leaving me at the parapet, entered bare-headed into the amphitheatre, and covering his dark robe with a beautiful white garment, and placing around his neck the silken Yoke, he advanced, prostrated himself, and then drew aside the curtain of the Prince's Tent. As he did so, all present prostrated themselves and uncovered their heads, laying their crowns on the ground. Then I beheld the King's Son upon a Throne, enveloped in a White Veil.

And behold! as I knelt before Him, He arose, and advanced towards me, and touched my eyes; and my vision was strengthened so that I could discern His Countenance through the Veil. Then I knew that He Himself was *Love*. Then I knew that the Light which had penetrated the thick mist, filling my heart with hope and courage, had beamed from that Divine Countenance. Then I knew that the grey and sombre twilight which passed for Day in the regions I had left, was but a faint and sickly reflex from the Holy Mountain—so near, and yet so far! from the glory of the misconceived, maligned, fog-enveloped City of Faith, and Light, and Peace!





# St. Philomena

## CANTO I. The Vigil

My father, ho! my father dear,  
Rest thee one minute now,  
And with this brook's water clear  
My hand shall bathe thy brow.  
Fear not the tread of hostile feet,  
The bloodhound's yell, the war-drum's beat  
Shall break upon our lone retreat  
Beneath this cypress bough.

" See! fast each dark and heavy cloud  
Is drifting from the moon;  
So shall the tempest fierce and loud  
Drift from our pathway soon,  
And fairer far than yonder light,  
The smile of heaven's refulgence bright  
Shall turn the darkness of our night  
Into a summer noon."

" Oh! Philomen, my own loved child,  
My heart is sick with care.  
Will Persecution's fury wild  
Never its victims spare?"

Must thy unhappy father see  
This barren rock, that moaning tree,  
Curtain, and couch, and canopy  
For thee, his daughter fair?

" Look out, my child, on yonder dell,  
And say if yet thine eye  
The ruins of our home can tell,  
Drawn on the moonlit sky.  
Oh palace of our ancient name!  
How is thy glory turn'd to shame!  
Like thy poor master's tottering frame,  
Thou in the dust must lie."

" Lament not thus, my father dear,  
Though great thy sorrows be,  
Yet through the gloom heaven's pathway clear  
The eye of faith can see.  
Poor are the spoils which in a day  
An earthly hand could sweep away.  
Treasures more glorious than they  
Our God hath stored for thee.

" Well dost thou know, the Carpenter,  
Blest Mary's lowly Son,  
Cast not His Eyes save from afar  
Palace and prince upon.  
But to the mountain bleak and drear,  
The houseless Saviour might draw near,

And with His Sacred Presence cheer  
A couch that was His Own."

" True are thy words, sweet Philomen,  
And comfort thus I take;  
Yet, if my griefs no outlet gain,  
This aged heart will break.  
Why must the noblest of the land  
'Neath Persecution's bloody hand  
Be ever crushed? Shall sword and flame  
Ever pursue the Christian Name?

" Oh foul oppression! To the skies  
Your voice for signal vengeance cries;  
Yea, justice from an earthly throne  
Might follow, were your blackness known.  
Come Philomena—daughter, come;  
Why do we linger on the way?  
Is not the toilsome path to Rome  
Illumined by a hopeful ray?  
Arise, my child, to-morrow's sun  
Must see our journey well begun.  
Nay, speak not to restrain me, sweet;  
What hindrances there be,  
Oh! name them not, if at thy feet  
My corpse thou would'st not see."

" Yet, father, rest thee now, I pray,  
Awhile beneath this shade;

And then, when break the beams of day,  
Be it as thou hast said.  
Love hath my sire these three nights kept  
Watching, while his daughter slept;  
Be it mine, the watcher's turn  
Till the early dawn return.  
'Tis not with exhausted strength  
Thou canst face that journey's length.  
Sweetly will the moonbeams shed  
Light around thy roofless bed.  
Fear not I will fail to wake thee  
Should the threat of foes o'ertake thee.  
Safely rest thee, father dear,  
While thy daughter watches near."

Oh! fitfully the night-wind sighed  
Around the slumberer's head,  
Stirring the mantle long and wide  
Which, from her own fair form untied,  
Above him there, from side to side  
His daughter's hand had spread.  
Ah, melancholy watcher! say,  
What keen regrets, what deep dismay  
Speak through thy mournful eye,  
As oft thou turnest round thy head  
To catch the distant foeman's tread,  
Or list the bloodhound's cry?  
What thought of vanished splendor brings

Its sad, regretful whisperings?  
What mental contrast drawn between  
Thy silken couch's broidered sheen  
And thy lone vigil of to-night?  
Those fairy halls whose golden light  
At eve o'er gems and flower-wreaths shone,  
And forms as lovely as thine own,  
And this sad task of anxious care  
Upon the mountain bleak and bare?—  
Not on the splendors of the past  
A tearful glance doth mem'ry cast;  
No vain repinings darkly roll  
Their tide o'er Philomena's soul.  
The gems upon her brow that glowed,  
The worshippers that round her bowed,  
The marble palace of her sires  
Now blackened by devouring fires,  
The native land she soon must leave,  
Nor sigh, nor thought from her receive.

What can she lose of rich or fair  
That with her Lord she will compare?  
What bond so dear that for His sake  
Its quivering links she will not break?  
Yet does her heart with terror thrill,  
And through each vein the blood flows chill,  
As o'er and o'er she sadly ponders  
The hopeless journey of to-morrow.

“ Alas! my sire, thy reason wanders,  
Whelm'd by a mighty load of sorrow.  
How could'st thou, else, resolve to bring  
Thy wrongs before a Pagan king,  
To whom no sweeter sound is known  
Than a poor Christian's dying groan?  
The Cæsar fierce! The Christian's scourge!  
How shall two houseless beggars dare,  
Without a friend their suit to urge,  
To offer at his throne a prayer?  
Will the proud emperor descend  
One momentary glance to lend?  
Rather, my father, he will make  
Of thee and mourning Philomena  
A bloody offering at the stake,  
A pageant in the dread arena,  
Oh! that our Lord would, of His grace,  
Blot from thy memory  
This hopeless errand's every trace!  
Or, if it so must be,  
Then, to His Will let mine give place.  
I bow to His decree.”

While musing thus, with anxious heart,  
Her eyes glance keenly round,  
And sharp her ear is on th' alert  
To catch the faintest sound.  
But nought disturbs, nor sound, nor sight,

The heavy stillness of the night,  
Saving the streamlet's waters bright,  
That o'er their rock-bed bound.

She casts upon the slumberer nigh  
One sad, one loving look;  
Then scans once more, with faithful eye,  
Pathway, and mound, and nook.  
She hears—O God!—the tread of feet!  
Hark! They approach her lone retreat!  
Where shall she turn to? Whither flee?  
It is a foe—no friend has she!  
One vain attempt she strives to make  
Her slumbering parent to awake—  
The accents on her lips have died,  
Her hand drops powerless by her side;  
Spell-bound, she sits as in a trance,  
Waiting that footstep's dread advance.  
Nearer it draws. Now, through the gloom  
She sees a form appear;  
Not as on hostile errand come,  
With buckler and with spear;  
Weary his step; and poorer, far,  
Than e'en her own, the garments are,  
Which round his drooping figure cling;  
While his pale countenance displays  
To Philomena's awe-struck gaze  
Deep shades of soul-felt suffering.



Nearer he comes and yet more near,  
While throbbings of unearthly fear  
The trembling maiden's bosom fill.

Again she strives to speak,—again  
To rouse her parent, but in vain.—  
Is it a mist upon the hill  
That shrouds all objects from her eye  
Saving that form approaching nigh?  
What holy, sweet, mysterious feeling  
Comes softly o'er her spirit stealing?

What influence her soul hath crost,  
That thus, uprising from her seat,  
And bending as at regal feet  
Before that Form—the hour, the spot,  
Father and vigil all forgot—

She kneels, in contemplation lost?

Maiden! let thy soul's devotion  
In a tide of transport pour,  
All unchecked, thy Lord before!  
Though thy heart's intense emotion  
On thy lip hath placed a seal,  
Yet the rapture thou dost feel  
Finds its meetest utterance  
In that mute, ecstatic trance.

Oh happy maid! Oh glorious night!

Was summer sunshine e'er so bright?  
Was sceptred monarch ever graced  
The joy of angels thus to taste?  
Were thunders through the sky to roll,  
Thy deep tranquility of soul  
    Would undisturbed remain;  
Though on the night-wind fiercely rose  
'The conflict of unnumber'd foes,  
    'Twould mock the tumult vain.  
Yet can that Voice, so sweet, so low  
Deep through thine inmost bosom go;  
That gentle Hand upon thee laid,  
    One whisper by those dear Lips spoken,  
And, while the words scarce yet are said,  
    The spell is in an instant broken.  
" Daughter, look up." At once the maid  
All-trembling the command obeyed.  
How chang'd the Vision! He is there,  
Not the pale wanderer crushed with care,  
But all in glory glistening bright,  
Bathed in a flood of radiance white,  
Through which a thousand cherubs shine,  
Wreathing around the Form Divine,  
Whose brightness, like the noon-day sun,  
Illumines all it rests upon.

" Chosen daughter of the Lord,  
Follow where thy sire shall lead thee.

An ineffable reward,  
Purchased thus have I decreed thee.

" Fear not when thy pathway lowers,  
On each side beset with danger;  
Fear not when Rome's marble towers  
Meet thine eyes, poor helpless stranger.

" Lo! a crown supremely fair  
Rests therein, thy brow to grace it.  
Lo! a spouse shall meet thee there,  
On that brow elect to place it.

" Follow, then, predestined Bride,  
Though unnumbered those who hate thee,  
By the Tiber's rolling tide  
Regal triumphs shall await thee."

Like dew upon the fading rose  
Each accent of the Saviour flows  
O'er Philomena's heart,  
And freshened life, and deep repose  
Those accents blest impart.  
Where is the drear, the darkling path  
That at His word she will not trace?  
In midnight's gloom, in tempest's wrath,  
In perils by the land or sea,  
The memory of this moment's grace

Her priceless amulet shall be.  
 Look up, sweet maiden; look thy last;  
 Is not the Vision fading fast?  
 Already to thy sight is lost  
 The Form Divine; the angel host  
 Whose beauty, like the stars at night,  
 Begemmed that halo's silvery light  
 Hath vanished too. Now all is gone,  
     And on th' horizon grey  
 Glimmer the tints of early dawn,  
     The harbingers of day.

**CANTO II: The Palace**

Oh! many a night, and many a day  
 Have rolled their suns and moons away,  
 And morns have dawned, and evenings died  
 Since on the lonely mountain-side  
 Her vigil Philomena kept  
 In transport, while her father slept.  
 Where shall we find the maiden now?  
 Again upon the midnight brow  
     Of lone and barren hill?  
 Or doth she brave the blaze of day  
 Upon some stately Roman way?  
 Or tread, with slow and weary feet,  
 Th' inhospitable city's street,  
 Wherein her destiny to meet,  
     Her mission to fulfil?

'Twas evening. From the western sun,  
In golden garments all arrayed,  
A brilliant farewell rested on  
The Tibur's waters, and o'erlaid  
With kisses bright each colonnade  
And arch, and tower, and palace-home,  
The glory of Imperial Rome;  
While each majestic, lordly pile  
Put on, in turn, its brightest smile,  
As if with welcome meet to grace  
The parting planet's warm embrace.  
How beautiful to mortal eyes  
Those towers irradiated rise  
On hill, and slope, and by the river  
Whose wavelets in the sunset quiver!  
Yet splendors which are but the veil  
That hides Corruption's livid face  
To charm the thoughtful heart must fail.  
Beneath the grandeur and the grace  
She sees the shudder, hears the wail  
That mark it Bloodshed's dwelling place.

Lo! yonder, by the river's shore  
A palace fair doth stand,  
Within, without, bedecked all o'er  
With treasures from each costly store  
That wealth from distant lands e'er bore  
At Luxury's command.

See! though its walls a despot's be,  
Fair sunbeam, we will steal with thee  
The richly curtained window through,  
And gaze upon each fairy hue  
Whose tints, o'erspread by one deep flush,  
Beneath thy glowing aspects blush.  
The gilded ceilings radiant are  
With tints of scarlet cinnabar,  
While curtains of the Tyrian dye,  
Heavy with rich embroidery,  
Half-shade the pillared windows o'er,  
And sweep the tessellated floor.  
Amid their folds, each form of grace  
The Grecian chisel loved to trace,  
Peeps forth in snow-white loveliness,  
Or holds within the mimic hand  
Bright lamps of silver richly wrought;  
Vases from fair Etruria's land,  
With buds of sweetest perfume fraught,  
Around, in silent homage stand,  
Like messengers from Fairyland,  
Commissioned from its bowers to bring  
An odoriferous offering  
To one who sits all silent there,  
With downcast eye, and troubled air.

Not in the garments rich and gay  
Meet for that hall of luxury

Is she, its beautiful inmate,  
Attired in fair patrician state.  
Rich silks are there, and jewelled braids,  
Among the group of wond'ring maids  
Who stand respectfully apart,  
Yet whispering low, as oft they dart  
Inquiring glances upon one,  
A stranger from a distant land,  
Whom, at their despot king's command,  
Their pride must stoop to wait upon.  
But she—the spoils of Shiraz rare  
Shrine not her figure young and fair;  
Her waving locks no pearls bedeck;  
No diamonds cluster round her neck;  
Her humble robe embroid'ry scorns,  
No golden spangle-work adorns  
With starry sheen the long, white veil  
That shades her countenance so pale.  
Yet is she fair—oh! beautiful  
As some pure, stainless lily flower  
Upon whose leaves is basking full  
The beauty of the moorlight hour.  
Yes, she is fair. The brightest dame  
Whose loveliness the lips of Fame  
Proclaim throughout the empire wide  
Might veil her face that maid beside.  
It was not that her head was borne  
With lofty air, or glance of scorn;

'Twas that humility's sweet grace  
Had of such mien assumed the place;  
Nor was it that her brow of snow  
More spotless was than theirs—ah! no;  
'Twas the inspired, the trance-like look,  
Which made it like some holy book  
Upon whose page lay all unfurled  
The secrets of the Unseen World.  
Oh! she is fair! No glistening eye  
Of wild gazelle with hers could vie.  
It was not in the languid ray  
Or azure hue its glory lay;  
But through its darkling depths there shone  
A light to earthly eyes unknown—  
A beam to angel aspects given,  
Enkindled by the Fire of Heaven.  
Oh! she was fair! What frozen glance  
Could rest upon that countenance  
And love it not? Could mortal ear  
That voice's gentle music hear,  
And not be ravished by the sound?  
Proud monarch of the empire's bound,  
Reply, for 'tis by thy command  
She now is here, amid that band  
Of fair attendants wond'ring, all,  
What madness doth their king enthrall,  
And glancing with suspicious air  
Upon their new-made mistress there.



Poor Pbilomena! not alone  
In their proud breasts suspicions rise;  
An anxious boding fills thine own;  
For though thy steadfast faith relies  
With confidence upon the Hand  
Which will thy destiny control,  
The breath of Grief thy brow hath fanned,  
The grasp of sorrow wrung thy soul.  
Thou hast stood, a stranger poor,  
At the World's unpitying door;  
Thou hast knelt, a suppliant sweet,  
At the Pagan Cæsar's feet,  
For thy father old and weak  
Justice and redress to seek.  
Thou did't hear, with anguish mute,  
The tyrant scorn thy father's suit;  
While he, that father old and grey,  
Long, long by aching sorrows worn,  
And now, 'of e'en this last hope shorn,  
Fell, as by unseen brand down-borne,  
And passed from Earth away!

Alas, poor maid! When consciousness  
Returned, with memory's clouds to grieve thee,  
Yet with the light of faith to bless,  
How did the aspect of thy doom,  
Though cleared from every trace of gloom,  
Serve with its splendors to relieve thee?

Inmate of that luxurious hall,  
 And tended by those beauteous strangers,  
 Still does thy fancy paint them all  
 But veils to cover nameless dangers.  
 Though of thy sire, alas! bereft,  
 Though human hands that bond could sever,  
 Faith, still, and Hope to thee are left.  
 Cling to these bulwarks now, if ever!  
 Cling, Philomena, to thy Lord,  
 Nor think thy sufferings vainly plead.  
 Whate'er thy doom, 'tis His award,  
 In mercy and in love decreed.  
 Woe's heavy rod o'erruled by God  
 Is but a wand Heaven's path to show,  
 Even as each thorn for Jesus worn  
 Brighter than all Earth's gems doth glow.

Harken! the marble vestibule  
 Re-echoes loud a heavy tread!  
 But Philomina's heart is full;  
 She hears it not, nor turns her head  
 Until within the portal wide  
 (The purple curtain drawn aside)  
 He doth advance in regal state  
 Upon whose word depends her fate.  
 The circlet round his temples bound,  
 The mantle sweeping to the ground,  
 The cincture richly gemmed, which holds

Restrained his tunic's silken folds,  
 The sandals braced with golden band,  
 The jewelled rings on arm and hand—  
 Yes! 'Tis the Emperor—'tis he!  
 What wants he, Philomen, with thee?  
 And why does his imperious brow  
 Wear a more gentle aspect now?  
 Wherefore across that face of gloom  
 Do gleams of tenderness now steal  
 Like sunbeams o'er a blackening tomb—  
 If tenderness that soul can feel?  
 He will not leave thee in suspense—  
 Grace, and the Faith be thy defence!

" Oh! beauteous maiden, dry thy tears,  
 Suppress thy sighs, dismiss thy fears.  
 Hath grief's rude chalice been thy lot?  
 'Tis passed for ever; heed it not.  
 Of Roma's lord the chosen bride,  
 All earth to thee shall homage pay;  
 And at thy feet, and by thy side  
 That Lord himself shall own thy sway."

The monarch paused; while sore amaze  
 The maiden's modest face betrays,  
 As from the Cæsar's ardent gaze  
 She turns her eyes away  
 To seek a memory cherish'd still—

The vision on the moonlit hill.—  
Can this unlooked-for offering fill  
That vision's prophecy?  
A moment does her troubled spirit  
Commune all silently,  
While painful recollections stir it  
As tempests toss the sea.  
" Ah! surely, it could never be  
Rome's liadem He meant for me!  
Such as its splendors are, they lie  
Beneath a crust of bloody dye.  
And surely, gems of earthly shine  
Could never by His lips divine  
Be called supremely fair! Ah! no;  
Far other gems my crown must show.  
And oh! my father, shall I dare  
To wed thy ruthless murderer—  
The pagan fierce whose impious hand  
Would sweep our altars from the land?  
No; sooner would thy daughter sleep  
Beneath that river cold and deep,  
Than thus before the face of day  
Her father and her faith betray!"

" Monarch," she said, " your words recall.  
Your gilded promises revoke.  
On Philomena's heart they fall  
Like dew-drops on the flinty rock.

When I had wealth and luxury,  
When many my commands obeyed,  
Those flimsy grandeurs were to me,  
When with the soul's true pleasures tried,  
As cobwebs in the balance weighed  
The mighty Apennine beside.  
And now, shall these temptations vain  
A harbor in my bosom gain?  
When all the loves, so dearly cherished,  
That lighted up my earthly home,  
And made it home to me, have perished,  
Shall my poor heart, think you become  
Degraded thus to seek its joys  
'Mid treacherous shadows—painted toys  
Contemned before? No! Rather let  
My spirit rise still higher yet,  
And soar above e'en those dear ties  
Which made this world a Paradise.  
My heart, from Earth's affections riven,  
Pants for the peerless joys of Heaven;  
Rising beyond the starlight dim  
That cheer'd my path with kindly ray,  
To that full noon of Love—to Him,  
The Sun of that unclouded Day."

Fierce as the tempest-clouds that loom  
Around the summer sky,  
Are the dark passions, fraught with doom,

Now gath'ring o'er that face of gloom,  
Now flashing from that eye,  
Quickly the threaten'd thunders burst.

" Scorned by a Christian! Scorned by thee,  
Oh! daughter of a race accurst!

Hath the world's master sued to be  
Rejected? By the Furies dire!

Each Christian heart shall writhe beneath  
The weight of my revengeful ire!  
The sword, the torture, famine, fire,

Among their ranks shall scatter death.  
And thou!—and thou!—a shroud shall be  
Thine only robe of royalty,

In thine own blood dyed red;  
The crown shall be of glowing iron  
Whose close embraces shall environ  
Thy rash, presumptuous head!"

Fierce rage his utterance repress,  
Knit were his brows, and heaved his breast;  
While o'er the maiden's face there stole

A smile all heavenly bright,  
As if a glimpse of some far goal  
Were slowly breaking on her soul  
Like dawn on darksome night.

But now the smile hath quickly passed,  
While humbly are the eyes down-cast,

And bent the lovely head.  
" The Lord of Heaven, of kings the King,  
Will His protecting mantle fling,  
And out of darkness light will bring."  
'Twas all the maiden said.

Strong as the earthquake rending  
Some great volcano's crest,  
The passions wild contending  
Within the monarch's breast.  
Now, jealous fury prompts to deeds  
Of swift and merciless revenge;  
Again, the softer passion pleads,  
And threats to supplications change.

" Oh! maiden, say thou wilt be mine,  
And all thy scorn I will forget.  
Trust me, thy beauty shall be set,  
Like some fair gem of matchless shine,  
In wreathings of imperial gold.  
Turn not away thine eyes. Behold!  
He to whom all men bend the knee,  
Himself a suppliant, kneels to thee.  
The monarch of Earth's furthest land,  
The Cæsar proud, great Roma's Lord,  
Sues for the grace he should command.—  
Cast thou away that Faith abhorred  
Whose votaries blind have deified

A malefactor crucified,  
And—”

“ Stay the impious word!” she cried.  
Thy hand to touch, thy throne to share  
A Christian maiden may not dare—  
What! Trample on my holy Faith,  
Sole rest in life, sole hope in death,  
And draw from Heaven a thousand woes  
Upon its mourning sons and daughters!  
Oh! Tiber, ere that instant, close  
Above my head thy chilly waters!”  
Upward the kneeling monarch starts,  
While bursts his heart with rage redoubled.  
Flashes of import dire he darts  
On Philomena’s face untroubled.  
“ Under the river would’st thou sleep;  
Then sleep thou there, beneath the river. —  
Slaves! Are ye deaf? Ho! To the deep,  
Cold caverns of the Tiber give her!  
Maniac, adieu. No more we meet.  
Whose is it, now, the scorn to fling?  
Which of us two may now entreat—  
The captive, or the king?”

Wildly away the monarch rushed,  
His countenance, by fury flushed,  
Deep in his mantle buried,  
While two dark mutes of Lybian birth,



By his impassioned voice called forth,  
    Into the hall have hurried  
And seized the helpless Philomen  
Whose looks for pity all in vain  
To those proud Roman dames appeal.  
There's not an eye can joy conceal  
Thus to behold a rival bright  
Torn rudely from their jealous sight.—  
Now, a small door-way swiftly passed,  
They reach a labyrinth long and vast  
Through whose dim corridors no ray  
Of fading twilight finds its way.  
Thence, to a steep and winding stair  
The slaves their fainting burden bear,  
    And down its black descent  
Deeper and deeper still they go,  
Till by the low brow'd arch below  
    Their giant forms are bent.  
'Tis a dark cave. A gurgling sound,  
That mourns with smothered wail around,  
    Tells of the deep flood nigh,  
And now, the narrow path beside,  
Swiftly the yawning waters glide,  
    Appalling to the eye.  
Oh God! They hurl her from the brink!  
In the black pool behold her sink,  
    Then to the surface rise!  
While the dark current swift and strong

Bearing her helpless form along,  
Sweeps it a distant archway through!  
Ah! To all human aid adieu!  
Down the cold Tiber's bosom wide,  
    Unwept by earthly eyes,  
Far does her corse already glide  
    Beneath the darkening skies!

**CANTO III. Moonlight.**

What reck the Cæsar's lofty halls,  
    In vast magnificence outspread,  
Whose countless gilded capitals  
    And pillars fair of porph'ry red  
On every side, through glades of light,  
Reveal new splendors to the sight,  
Whose circling dome, by pencil rare  
Adorned with fancy's offspring fair  
In rainbow hues—a mimic heaven—  
    Spreads its protecting shadow o'er  
The tribute which a world hath given  
    A despot's dwelling-place to store;  
Whose perfum'd lamps in thousands play,  
Reposing as with lunar ray,  
On sculpture's snowy victories,  
The breathing statue, urn and frieze,  
Or sparkling through the jets that mount  
From marble and from jasper fount,—  
What do they reck of murderous wave

Embosomed keep in darkling cave,  
Though straight, perchance, beneath their pride  
The cavern and the wave may hide?  
What heeds the guest who, at the board  
Outspread by Rome's imperial lord  
With viands rich, and costly wines,  
Upon his silken couch reclines;  
With indolent, luxurious gaze  
Out-singling from a golden vase  
Some luscious fruit, or idly bending  
The jewelled goblet to demand  
    From the fair slaves who, watchful, stand  
Around; a languid ear now lending  
To the rich melody ascending  
From many a curtained minstrel-band;  
Discerning now with outstretched hand  
One from the distant groups who tread  
    To each sweet strain a graceful measure,  
Musing, the while, on pastime red,  
Where hireling gladiators shed  
    Their life-blood for a master's pleasure;—  
What do these sons of luxury dream  
Of corpses in the cold, dark stream,  
Of souls that up to Heaven's Gate bear  
A fearful tale, for record there?  
Yet on the Cæsar's darkened brow  
A heavy cloud is resting now,  
And from this festal scene away

Far do his gloomy musings stray,  
Though splendor here with splendor vies,  
Naught can arrest his wandering eyes,  
While strains the choicest Earth can hear  
Serve but to vex his sated ear.  
The viands rich before him placed  
Unheeded tempt his kingly taste:  
Only the wine cup does he drain  
To its last drop, then sinks again  
Back to his troubled reverie.—  
What can the lofty project be  
Which thus absorbs his every thought?  
Or hath some web fantastic, wrought  
By guideless reason, won away  
His soul from luxury's baser sway?  
Or hath some miracle imparted  
Even to the despot iron-hearted  
That on the earth such things there be  
As sickness, age and poverty,  
Claiming from wealth and power a care?  
Ah! no. He hath no thought to spare  
For trifles such as these.  
Were not the world and all things fair  
Created but to please  
The needy Sense, the Pride most meet  
Of those who sit on splendor's seat?  
No idle cares for vulgar dust  
Oppress to-night the monarch's soul,

His troubles weightier, more just,  
Round a more worthy centre roll —  
His own imperial Self. For lo!  
The pleasures that around him glow  
Have glowed like this so oft before  
That even *their* witchery charms no more.  
And many a laden argosie  
Hath wafted from beyond the sea  
Costly delights, temptations new:  
But these, alas! have sated, too,  
And left the empire's haughty lord  
By pleasure and content ignored.  
Say, does he now, though late, repent  
Of hours and efforts vainly spent?  
Or does he mourn, with selfish pain,  
Enjoyment by Indulgence slain?  
Far other thoughts his mind enchain—  
Untutored by experience past,  
Fancy proclaims as found at last  
The one desire yet unfulfilled  
Which seems, in longing eyes,  
Promise of lasting joy to yield.  
What is this peerless prize?  
What treasured ore? What priceless gem?  
What mighty nation's diadem?  
Is it or Love's or Victory's wreath  
Which can such flattering promise breathe?  
Poor Philomen! Were there no maids

In bright Italia's sunny glades,  
In Rome no ladies fair and high,  
That thus the Cæsar's wayward eye  
On *thee* should light? What was the charm  
Which could so proud a bosom warm?  
Was it thy beauteous form? The grace  
That mantled on thy heavenly face?  
Ah! 'twas a rarer charm than this,  
'Twas—*that thou never couldst be his*.  
Here was the touch from magic wand  
Which made thee worth all else beside.  
That thou wast placed his grasp beyond;  
A something e'en to him denied.  
And now, though all that art can weave,  
Nature bestow, or mind conceive,  
Is lavished round him, still does he  
Yearn, unconsol'd, for thee—for thee,  
Not as his youth's companion dear  
Whose true affection well might be  
His solace in adversity,  
His one pure, stingless pleasure here;  
But as a toy whose beauty lives  
In the bright halo distance gives,  
And all whose glory would be gone  
Soon as he clasped it for his own.

“ Oh! Philomen, if thou wert here  
With thy soft voice my soul to cheer,

With thy dark eye's enchanting ray  
To charm my spirit's gloom away,  
How blest might even an emperor be!  
But light is darkness without thee.  
Cold as a lake by chill blasts frozen,  
Why dost thou scorn my proffered love?  
Surely, could'st thou the pleasures prove  
Encircling round the Cæsar's chosen,  
Quickly thy stern resolve should be  
To wild winds given. Nay, could'st thou see  
This gorgeous festival, I ween  
'Twould win thee yet to be its queen.  
Ho! lictor, go; with service quick  
The captive Christian maiden seek,  
And hither bring."

Th' astonished guard  
With terror hears the wild command;  
And, pale as though Death's voice he heard,  
Unheeding the impetuous hand  
Whose gesture would enforce the word,  
Kneels prostrate there before his lord  
Who, conscience-struck, anticipates  
The tale his trembling guard relates.  
Now baffled passion fiercely raves,  
And, though all self-accused, doth seek  
A victim on whose head to wreak  
Its vengeance. "Ha! the murderous slaves!  
Tortures unheard of, woes unspared

Shall be their portion who thus dared  
Fulfil my threat with haste accurst,  
Nor paused to know my pleasure first!  
But—it may be—thou liest, slave!

Shame on thy false ungrounded tale!  
They have but placed her in some cave.

'Twas meet she should her scorn bewail.—  
How! From the watch-tower did thine eye  
Her form upon the tide descry,

Nor come it in thy craven thought  
To cast thee headlong from the tower,  
And save her from the Tiber's power?

By all the gods! thy life is naught,  
If here, ere morning's earliest beam.

The Christian maid thou dost not bear,  
Uninjured even in one bright hair.  
Speak at thy risk of grave or stream.  
Begone!—"

With sinking limbs and heart

The soldier turns him to depart,

And traverses each glitt'ring hall.

How menac'd death hath chang'd them all!

The scene that late so glorious shone

Before his youthful eyes

Sickens him, now, to gaze upon,

When forth in mocking contrast drawn

With dread realities.



Oh! vain temptations of the world!  
If but Death's shade draw nigh,  
Then, from your place pretentious hurl'd,  
What worthless things ye lie!  
So felt that soldier young and brave,  
Quitting your coveted domain  
To enter on the task so vain  
Which ends, for him, but in the grave.  
How shine your mimic glories now  
On that pale cheek and haggard brow?  
When ev'ning fell, he priz'd them all;  
And high his hope that from the throne  
Imperial, he might one day call  
This painted Paradise his own.  
Now, from its gaudy witcheries  
He turns aside his dizzy eyes,  
And pants for but an instant's view  
Of the fair sky's ethereal blue,  
Of the far home on vine-clad hill  
Which nurs'd his youth—which nurses, still,  
Each pure affection of his heart.  
What agony from these to part!  
From childhood's cherish'd loves—oh, grief!  
From proud ambition's op'ning path!  
Down-trodden like some with'ring leaf,  
The victim of a tyrant's wrath!  
The halls of regal pleasure pass'd,  
In the cool breath of night he stood

And gaz'd upon the moonbeams cast

In silver brightness o'er the flood  
Which lay so tranquil and so fair  
In all its treach'rous beauty there.

" Oh! Tiber, if a god thou art—"

Thus did he cry—" hear, then, the pray'r  
Outbreath'd upon thee from a heart

Tun'd to the echoes of despair!  
Oh! if beneath thy sacred wave  
The Christian maid hath found a grave,  
Restore her, now, to life and me,  
And from impending death set free  
A vot'ry who may one day bring  
Full many a costly offering  
To mark thy clemency this night!  
Come, Father Tiber, prove thy might;  
And win new honours to thy water  
By yielding up the sul-starr'd daughter!"  
Soon o'er the river's surface bright

A bark glides swiftly on,  
Now glancing in the mellow light,  
Now hiding from the fair moon's sight,

Then, like a cresting swan,  
Springing again before the ray  
With which it seems to sport and play.  
Nought does it tell, the gladsome bark,  
Of blighted hopes, of bodings dark,  
Of fate impending over him

With whom its light spars gaily skim  
The glist'ning wave. The gloomy rowers  
In sullen silenee ply their oars,  
While, on each side the anxious eye,  
Striving some vestige to desery  
Which may the threaten'd doom avert,  
Mirrors the guard's despairing heart.  
Onward more swiftly still they glide,  
And soon the city's marble pride  
Leave far behind; yet vainly o'er  
The quivering flood, the slumb'ring shore  
Ranges his aching glance; despair  
Itself can find no vestige there  
To tell if yet the maiden lives,  
Not ev'n one floating garment gives  
Its feeble elue; no flutt'ring shred  
Upon some distant bough outspread  
Bespeaks her near, alive or dead.—  
Yet onward, onward still they glide,  
While broader from the western side  
The deep'ning shadows lie,  
As steadfastly the sun's fair bride  
Sinks in the western sky.  
The soldier notes the waning moon,  
And knows the hour approaching soon  
When, by the emp'ror's stern command  
Instructed, that unpitying band  
Backward to Rome with him will hie,

There for his murd'rer's crime to die.

“ My country's gods! Where do ye hide,  
That pray'r nor vow may reach your ears?  
How oft shall I invoke thee, Tide  
Deem'd sacred through unnumber'd years?  
Where is your virtue? where your pow'r  
To aid in desolation's hour?  
I ween, to punish ye are brave;  
Wherefore so slow or weak to save?  
Ye do but mock my soul's despair.  
Mock on; I scorn you and your care.  
God of the Christians! if there be  
A Pow'r Beneficent on high  
Ruling man's changeful destiny,  
Reveal it now; to Thee I cry.  
And if from this impending doom  
Thou a poor suppliant wilt deliver,  
I swear upon my father's tomb  
Thy servant to remain forever.”

What tuneful and delicious sound  
Comes faintly floating o'er the tide,  
Like ev'ning zephyr breath'd around?  
No longer is the fleet oar plied.  
But slowly drifts the bark along,  
While they who guide her rapt remain  
All listening to that wondrous song.

Upon the ear it dies; again  
It swells melodiously and clear,  
As from the eastern shore. More near  
The bark approaches. Now it rings,  
Not as from countless choral strings,  
But two sweet voices softly blending,  
Each to the other richness lending.  
On by the river's windings borne  
A headland round, upon the shore  
A glist'ning ray, like dawning morn,  
Shines their astonish'd gaze before.  
'Tis not the moonlight on the hill,  
But something whiter, purer still,  
Nor does it beam from orient skies,  
But to the water's brink the eyes  
Of all enchains. No earthly fire  
Can to its silv'ry blaze aspire—  
And hark! 'Tis thence those tuneful notes  
Are wafted! Nearer, nearer floats  
The bark. Why rest they on the oar?  
Three strokes would bring her to the shore.  
But see!

It was not until now  
That bending o'er the galley's prow  
They saw, encircled by that light  
Three forms of wondrous beauty shining.  
One in a white veil wrapt, reclining

As if in slumber on the sand,  
Lay like a pearl on Indian strand,  
While her companions, still more bright,  
Smooth'd with their hands her long fair hair,  
Singing the while, in accents rare——

“ Oh! lily pure and fair,  
Of Tiber's yellow wave  
There's not a drop shall dare  
Thy golden locks to lave.  
Its waters cannot spare  
For Philomen a grave;  
She is a gem too rare  
To deck its richest cave.

“ Oh lily pure and white!  
Thine angel playmates we,  
Nurs'd in the nameless Light  
That fills Eternity.  
Soon shall our joyful sight  
A glorious triumph see  
When to that region bright  
Our choirs shall welcome thee.”

“ 'Tis she!—it is the Christian maid!”—  
Each boatman grasp'd the ready oar,  
And, ere the breathless words were said,  
Sprang the fleet galley to the shore;

When, as by rude intrusion banish'd,  
Instant the angel watchers vanish'd,  
Instant the luminous glow was gone,  
And Philomena lay alone  
Upon the strand. Nor did she fear

When, waking from her holy sleep,  
She saw dark faces low'ring near.

Ah! no; the angel guardians keep  
An unseen watch around her still,  
Body and soul to shield from ill.  
How, else, should 'fear, strange, undefined,  
Fetter the rudest arm and mind  
Advancing now towards her? Why  
Upon the ground rests ev'ry eye?  
And why—oh wonder! he who late  
Sought her with ardor desperate,  
What miracle hath o'er him passed?

In frenzied attitude he stands  
Between her and the boatmen cast!—

“ Hold! To the emp'ror's murd'rous hands  
We will not bear her. Stand aside,  
Nor dare to touch Heav'n's chosen bride.  
God of the Christians, glorious, dread!  
Where shall I hide my thrice- doom'd head,  
If by a deed so foul I dare

Return Thy clemency? Oh! Grave,  
Thy worst make ready; I can spare  
Myself, this holy maid to save.”

In wonder paus'd the ruffian band.  
"Think'st thou," they said, "thus to withstand  
The emp'ror's will?" Then, with the word,  
Two cast them on the struggling guard  
With grasp resistless, while two more  
Back to the bark the maiden bore;  
Then, by their comrades join'd, the boat  
Into the stream all quiv'ring shot.  
Far from the pow'rless soldier's reach,  
And left him on the lonely beach.  
'Twas dawn ere yet the galley kiss'd  
    Again the Cæsar's palace-stair.  
    A muffled form received it there,  
Nor captive hail'd, nor guardsman miss'd.  
But turning to the boatmen, said —  
While each profoundly bent his head —  
"Lo! 'tis the Cæsar's royal will  
That she, your captive, shall fulfil  
Three days of durance in the cell  
Beneath th' arena; then to swell  
The ranks of the condemn'd who be  
Up-treasur'd for its festal glee."

Low bow'd they all; then, through a door  
Of darksome portent swiftly bore  
The maiden. Still that dark one stood,  
And with his eyes their flight pursu'd.  
"Oh! Tiber, hath thy conscious tide



Thus to my arms restor'd my bride?  
 'Tis meet thy sacred flood should lend  
 Its aid the Cæsar to befriend.  
 Yet do I fear her stubborn will  
 Merits a pow'rful lesson still;  
 So, in the dungeon let her lie  
 Until three summer suns fleet by.  
 Then, by its goblin-fears o'ercome,  
 And blenching from the woes of death,  
 Forth I shall bring her, by each breath  
 Hail'd Mistress of Imperial Rome!"

**CANTO IV. Triumph.**

Eternal city, lo! we quit  
 Thy palaces in moonlight sleeping,  
 Where seems the shade of Peace to sit  
 On each fair tow'r, sweet vigil keeping.  
 Leave we, likewise, the glowing streets,  
 Where thousands idly lounge, or hurry  
 Deep in the world's empoison'd sweets,  
 As in a grave, their souls to bury.  
 Leave we the squares all glitt'ring gay  
 'Neath luxury's unchalleng'd sway,  
 The freaks and pageants that call forth  
 Loud plaudits from unthinking mirth.  
 Bid we farewell to that soft ray  
 Which shines upon the seeming Peace  
 More false, more treacherous than they.

Hush we the breath; the whisper cease;  
For lo! that flimsy frost-work bright  
A secret dire enfolds to-night.  
Oh! palace of imperial name,

Where dwell the mighty and the proud,  
Canst thou, without one flush of shame,

Beneath thy marble dare to shroud,  
Veil'd by the signs of worldly bliss,  
A darkling labyrinth like this--  
An endless waste of windings drear  
Wherein the bravest heart might fear  
The dreadful path to follow on,  
Nor blush its quickest throb to own?  
The roof, low-arch'd, whose echo moans  
Despairing answer to the groans  
That, tremulous, and faint, and low  
Murmur above, around, below;  
The famish'd tiger's distant howl  
Blent with the lion's angry growl,  
Which to the captive's frenzied ear  
Bespeak the dread arena near;  
The slimy walls which, through a gloom  
Deep as the darkness of the tomb,  
Now flash the flaring torch-light back,  
The doors which on the smoky track  
Of the red blaze, relentlessly  
Frown, like grim warders of the way,  
Guarding its secrets dire from all, --

Such sights and sounds may well appall  
The spirits of the shivering pair  
Who to explore its depths now dare.  
One strides with quick, unsteady pace,  
As hurrying through th' unholy place,  
Fearing to turn his head, lest he  
Some vision of remorse should see,  
Some spectre from a bloody tomb  
Come to pronounce his own dark doom.  
His trembling comrade near him crouches,  
Holding aloft the torch, whose glare  
Reddens the roof it almost touches,  
And shows the shiv'ring figure there,  
Whose tott'ring steps can scarce pursue  
Their path that hideous labyrinth through.  
Oft does he shrink, and would flee back  
But for the Dark One on his track;  
Then strives, in agony's excess,  
Close by that dark One's side to press.  
Now, with white lips he seems to seek  
Or voice, or words, or strength to speak,  
Still ceasing ere he half begins,  
Till fear, at length, the vict'ry wins.

“ Emperor—hear—oh! let me live!  
Daring poor counsel thus to give!  
Emperor—hear me—oh! return,  
Nor draw on Rome unsparing doom!

In judgment's flames she soon will burn,

    If here, within this living tomb,

Thou shalt attempt yet further harm

To that fair Christian maiden's form.

When late in passion's accents thou

    Our band all hastily didst summon,

Adown the stream with speed to row,

    And bring thee back that wondrous woman,

Would that thine eyes had then beheld

The miracle unparallel'd

Which marked her the Elect of God!

Then, when the Tiber's shore we trod,

And saw her slumb'ring peaceful there,

Like some white bird of beauty rare,

When in our arms we dar'd to raise

    And bear her to the bark again,

No cloud, no shadow of amaze

    Dark'ning her face, so lovely then,

She sat, lost in a reverie

That strangely awed our souls to see!

With stealthy pace, and downcast head,

Along the galley's deck we tread,

The boldest comrade of our band

Whisp'ring his words behind his hand -

And now, within this prison den

Thy pow'r encircles her again;

Who—who shall say what fate may burst

Upon our heads, thus doubly curst!

Let not my counsel meet thy scorn;  
And when the night gives place to morn,  
A chosen band shall come with me  
To set the Christian maiden free——”

With pleadings wild, impetuous,  
His wav'ring lord he urges thus.  
An instant stands the monarch, mute,  
With glance and air irresolute,  
While the cold dew his pale brow loading  
Echoes the soldier's dire foreboding.  
But now the flush of reckless will  
    Across his face hath past;  
Transgression's cup resolv'd to fill,  
The pathway of his choice he still  
    Will follow to the last.

“ She must be mine—she shall—she must.  
    Coward! lead on, the way to shew,  
Or lo! this dagger's deadliest thrust  
    Thy blenching heart right soon shall know.”  
Onward they stride. At length they stop  
    Beside a low-brow'd dungeon-door,  
Where streams of oozing water drop  
    With mournful plash upon the floor,  
And where the savage monsters' cries  
Nearer in dreadful chorus rise,  
    Waking the echoes drear.

Hearken! A cry! 'Tis not the yell  
Of desert panther, known so well.  
It broke from human lips! With hand  
Upon the lock th' intruders stand  
Chain'd by resistless fear,  
And, breathlessly expectant, strain  
Their ears to listen. Hark! Again  
That cry, so woeful, yet suppress'd,  
As if the suff'ring soul distress'd  
Would fain its agony subdue.  
Now, from the prison-vault within,  
Faintly some smother'd accents win  
Their way, the yet clos'd portal through.

" Thy will be done! Yet hear, oh! Lord,  
Thy servant's agonizing pray'r.  
Merciful! Holy! breathe the word,  
And this last bitter anguish spare.  
Remember, when Thy goodness call'd  
My spirit forth from Pagan gloom,  
By threaten'd vengeance unappail'd,  
Untempted by the world's gay bloom,  
I joyfully Thy voice obey'd,  
And earthly friends and favor laid  
An off'ring at Thy feet. And when  
My father, to my fond pray'rs giv'n,  
Was, for Thy faith most holy, driv'n  
Far from his home, by cruel men—

When unbefriended and unknown  
We wander'd houseless, and alone,  
Yet not so lowly but that we  
Struck by pursuing death might be—  
When—of those sorrows all most dread—  
My father oft, by grief made wild,  
Would with reproaches load my head,  
And call me—Philomen, his child—  
The author of his ev'ry wrong!  
Oh! my dear Lord, Thou know'st how long,  
How patiently I bore it all,  
For Thy dear sake, at Thy dear call,  
Nor offer'd from its weight to shrink.  
Bid me not, then, this chalice drink.  
Yet woe is me! Why do I plead  
These few light sufferings,  
Nor to His mercies great take heed?  
Alas! the world still flings  
Its mist unholy o'er each scene,  
And keeps, poor heart, thy sorrows green.  
Its vapors false thine eyes still hold,  
And gild the dross, and dim the gold.  
He cast thee from thy lofty state,  
Where knelt the world, as at a shrine,  
For that its glitter, idly great,  
Incrusted o'er destruction's mine;  
And from thy home, that thou might'st trace  
His footsteps through the wilderness;

And took thy jewell'd garb away  
    (By eyes immortal unesteem'd)  
To robe thee in the poverty  
    At Heav'n's bright Court so glorious deem'd.  
The sorrows that would claim thy sighs  
Are mercies in a mournful guise.  
God owes thee nought for suff'rings borne,  
But thou to Him a meet return  
    For love unfathom'd shewn—  
Then come, to-morrow's mortal pain!  
Wilt thou refuse the draught to drain?  
His Holy Will——”

Hark! 'Tis the rav'ning tiger's yell!  
    The bloody hour draws near!  
Fearfully rings the signal fell.

“ 'Tis Philomena's funeral knell!  
    Oh Life, to nature dear!  
Part we midst agonies like these,  
    By savage fangs asunder torn  
Gazers more savage still to please?  
    Must the proud Roman's mirthful scorn  
My parting spirit's requiem be?  
Hark! 'Tis their shouts I hear! And see,  
They ope the portal of each den!  
Each famished monster bursts its chain,  
And forward rushes! Save me, God!



My flesh—my eyes in rage they tear!  
Th' arena flows with blood—with blood!  
The current rises—spare, oh spare!—  
Alas! alas! Poor raving one,  
Where have thy wandering senses gone?  
Shall plaints like these from lips like thine  
Rise to thy Master's Throne Divine?  
He whose omnipotence can make  
The martyr kiss with joy the stake  
Whose flames his quivering limbs consume,  
Can He not make death's agony  
The same bright festival to thee,  
And change to bliss thine awful doom?  
Hail, trembler, hail to-morrow's sun!  
Not on dismay its beams shall shine.  
A martyr's triumph shall be thine.  
God is with thee; His will be done!  
“ Yet how with martyrs shall I dare  
My own frail weakness to compare?  
Where is my strength? My courage, where?  
How have I earned the priceless grace  
Which bore them to their resting-place?  
Where is the faith so firm, so bright,  
Which ever on the Blest One leant?  
The toilsome day, the wakeful night  
In fervent adoration spent?  
A servant profitless am I,  
Scarce fit to live, less fit to die.

My wayward thoughts forever stray  
To scan each coming agony.  
Perchance some sin yet unforgiven  
May bar, e'en now, my path to Heaven.  
If it be thus—oh, dark despair!—  
    Tempter, begone! It is not so.  
Jesus, where art Thou? Mary, where?  
    Leave me not in this hour of woe!  
The darkness of these prison-walls  
Deeper around my spirit falls,—  
The past, the present densely shrouds,  
And wraps the future in its clouds.  
Where is thy hope, oh! Philomen?  
Who shall thy fainting soul sustain,  
Or soothe thy sufferings? What shall be  
Thy portion in eternity?  
Thy childish griefs thou can'st not plead,  
Nor can'st thou as a martyr bleed;  
Nought thou can'st urge may win to save  
Or soul or body from the grave.  
Yet God hath to His faithful given  
A changeless promise, signed in Heaven  
And sealed on earth. Repose thee here,  
    And death and hell thou may'st defy.  
With Jesus and with Mary near,  
    Can it be terrible to die?  
Father! I rest Thy love upon,  
Nor life beseech, nor sufferings shun.

Even now, all trembling and dismay  
Are fleeting from my soul away,  
And deep unutterable rest  
Falls sweetly on my troubled breast  
Now, breaking through the darkling gloom,  
Heaven's opening glories meet mine eyes;  
Their beams my prison-walls illum—  
"Oh, bliss! Behold my sacrifice!"

Softly away the whispered words  
In dulcet music fade—  
Music celestial, breathed from chords  
By angel fingers play'd,  
Whose sweetness through the cavern drear  
No earthly echo wakes.  
Mutely the monarch, pale with fear,  
A hurried signal makes,  
Which bids his trembling comrade turn  
The ponderous key. The hinges mourn,  
And creak, and groan, as backward swings  
The heavy door which wide he flings.  
Lo! bursting forth, a blaze of light  
Dazzles his fear-bewildered sight?  
Is *this* the black abode of night?  
The dungeon-safe where hate lays by  
Victims to gloat death's hungry eye?  
They enter. From his powerless hand  
Th' attendant drops the flaring brand,

And prostrate falls up on his face.  
Well may he thus. Beyond this space  
Which lies between them and the wall  
Farthest removed—an interval  
Now glorious as the sun,—a flight  
Of glittering steps, as marble white,  
Rises aloft, till mortal sight  
Hath lost it in a flood of light ;  
Upon each step an angel stands  
On either side, within his hands  
A harp of soft melifluous sound,  
Whose fairy breathings whisper round  
Above their heads, bright garlands shorn  
From Eden's fairest bowers are borne  
By clouds of smiling cherubim  
Who chant proud triumph's joyful hymn.  
Beneath, upon the lowest stair,  
Between their ranks, a litter fair,  
Shining as dews of early morn,  
Is waiting, ready to be borne  
Up the bright way to Heaven by those  
Attending angels who repose  
Close by its side. Upon the ground,  
Her soul in blissful rapture drowned  
The captive Philomena kneels,  
No mortal sees, nor suffering feels.  
The garments that around her flow  
'Neath that mysterious radiance glow

White as the snows of Apennine  
When dazzled by the noonday's shine.

What thinks he now, that monarch fierce?  
His eyes are dull; they cannot pierce  
The clouds of unbelief that lower  
Around his soul with fiendlike power.  
Nought does he see; the dungeon grim  
Is but the dungeon still to him;  
The prostrate guard, the flickering torch  
That lies, half quenched, within the porch,  
He sees them not. There is but one  
His frenzied eye hath rested on—  
The white-robed maiden kneeling there,  
Lost in her reverie of prayer.  
Upward she looks, with steadfast gaze,  
As if, beyond that vision's blaze,  
A vision still more glorious shone,  
Seen by her eyes alone.  
In vain the monarch speaks, in vain  
The pleading or the wrathful word;  
Fettered by Love's ecstatic chain,  
They fall upon her ear unheard.  
At length she murmurs, while new grace  
Irradiates her beauteous face—  
“*Master beloved! I come to Thee.*”  
Maddened by rage, by jealousy,  
Forward the furious king hath darted.

His dagger from its sheath hath started,  
And deep in Philomena's breast  
Hath sought and found a bloody rest.

" Hail, Philomena! pure as the morning!  
Bright be thy dwelling place, fair thine adorning  
Earth's mimic splendors steadfastly scorning—  
Virgin most holy, hail!

" Hail, Philomena! Now thy sword sheath it;  
Vanquished Temptation quivers beneath it.  
Raise thy triumphant head; laurels enwreath it.  
Martyr most glorious, hail!

" Hail, Philomena! Heaven's bells are ringing,  
Angels their festal day canticles singing,  
Thee to thy bright throne joyously bringing.  
Bride of the day-star, hail!

" Hail, Philomena! Never, oh! never  
Shall thy blest soul from its blessedness sever.  
In His bright vision repose thee for ever.—  
Hail, Philomena! Hail!"

Whose was the shriek that wildly rung  
The vaulted arches through,  
Echoed by many a goblin tongue,  
Mocking, yet fearful, too?

Not his, the trembling satellite  
Who now, with dew-chilled brow upraised  
Beholds, where late the vision bright  
In all its glory blazed,  
Nought but the bare walls, grim and black,  
Traced by the reptile's shiny track,  
And a white figure on the floor  
Seen by the torch's fitful glow  
In death's deep stillness lying low,  
Her garments stained with streams of gore.  
Nor was it hers, that awful cry.  
No, Philomena; thus to die  
Within the arms of that bright throng  
Who bear thee now, with joyous song,  
Up to thy Bridegroom's throne on high--  
This did not wring from thee a cry,  
But spread upon thy face so fair  
The blissful smile that lingers there,  
Daring death's shadow to eclipse  
Its radiance on thy stiffening lips.  
Whose was the cry? It broke from thee,  
Assassin of the innocent,  
Forth from thine inmost bosom rent,  
Thine own fell handiwork to see.  
Oh! maniac king, well may'st thou rush  
Far from these dungeon-vaults away,  
Lest underneath their walls they crush  
A heart more merciless than they!

Vainly thou fliest; by thy side  
The shadow of thy crime shall glide,  
    And hunt thee to the tomb!  
Vainly thou diest; thus to see  
The shadow of thy crime shall be  
    Thine everlasting doom'

Trembling soldier, bear her hence;  
Beauty, virtue, innocence  
Once within that corse abode,  
Loved by angels, prized by God.

Bear it tenderly away;  
Angels guard the breathless clay.  
Though the soul its shrine hath left,  
'Tis not yet of life bereft.

Still within that shrine there be  
Seeds of immortality,  
Planted by the living bread  
Which so oft these lips hath fed.

Bear her tenderly away;  
She in Heaven for thee will pray,  
Till the Christian's glorious name  
Thou triumphantly shalt claim.



When the martyr's circlet red  
Shall entwine thine own glad head,  
Joyfully thy voice shall then  
Bless the name of Philemon.

## Tom Tiller's Story

---

It was a sultry night on the Indian Ocean. The passengers on board the P. & O. Company's steamer had remained on deck later than usual, in the vain hope of "cooling off;" and when, at length, the greater number betook themselves to their cabins, there still remained three, not counting Tom Tiller, the deck steward to wit, myself, a brother-officer, and a young civilian going home to recruit. It was the kind of night when conversation, if not strictly limited to occasional remarks, becomes slightly irritating; more especially if it takes a jocular turn, and most of all if it becomes controversial.

There are people, however, whose specialty it is to sail in, on such occasions with one or both of these forms of sociability, and our friend the civilian was of the number. He tried the jocular vein for a time with but limited success; then, finding no one responsive, he started out on the subject of Eternal Punishment, espousing warmly the sceptical theories which were just beginning to come to the front. Besides that the subject was in itself far from enlivening, the ground which

the yoing man took, or endeavoured to take, rasped somewhat against time-honoured prejudices shared both by my comrade and myself. We therefore cold-shouldered his arguments, and let him do the talking, which he seemed to do chiefly for the pleasure of hearing himself speak. After a short time my attention became drawn to Tom Tiller whose grave and resolute countenance perceptibly clouded as the discussion went on. He began to move uneasily from one foot to the other, and every now and then cast troubled glances at the speaker. At length while our loquacious friend was endeavouring to recover his wind, —the sailor broke in with.

“And 'its begging yer pardon, misters, for putting in my lip; but I don't ever like to hear no one say as he dont't believe in Hell Fire, because, d'ye see, *I've seen it.*”

“Seen it?” we exclaimed in a breath. “How's that.”

Tom cast his eyes over the dark expanse of Ocean, as if looking for a suitable beginning to his story, and then replied.—

“Well, ye see, it war this way. Father, he didn't believe in anything, and mother, she believed in Little Bethel, and she used to go there of a Sunday night and take me with her. I war a small chap then. I hated Little Bethel, an'

I hated the minister. I'd ha' liked to go to sleep, but mother she'd nudge me an' say—'now, Tom, listen. I did listen, an' never a thing did I hear him tell about exceptin' Hell Fire. By his showin'; every single chap of us had to go there, no matter what he'd do, nor how square he tried to live, so be as he warn't elect. I told mother I hoped *he* warn't elect, so he'd be sure to go there; an' then mother cried, an' I didn't say it no more, but I thought it all the same. After mother died, I didn't go no more to Little Bethel; and by the time I was big enough to go to sea, I didn't believe in nothing, no more than father did.

"After I'd been to sea a great many voyages, an' was growed up a man, we went on a sperm-whale cruize to the South Seas. We put in for water at Hawaii, where there's a Burning Mountain they call Mauna Loa. I'd seen Burning Mountains afore; I'd seen Vesuvius, an' Etna, an' Stromboli; an' I know'd what they were. The captain gave us leave to go by turns to see Mauna Loa. My mate an' me we went in the first batch, an' a rough time we had climbing the mountain. What d'ye think we saw when we got to the top? *A Lake of Fire.* Its as true as I'm telling ye.

"'Bill! said I to my mate, 'that'ere minister was right after all, for there it is,—Hell Fire!

"'Hut!,' says Bill; that ain't Hell Fire!

" 'What' is it, then?, I axed, 'ain't it big enough, an' hot enough, an, handy enough to the Lord who made it, so be as He wants to put any one there?'

" 'That's so, said Bill. An' he looked scared."

" Here Tom Tiller paused in his narrative, "And was that all?" I asked, for something in his voice seemed to indicate a sequel which I was desirous of hearing.

The sailor hesitated, but only for a moment.—  
" No sir," said he; " That warn't all.

" We went on our cruize;" but I didn't forget what I'd seen. I used to think it over o'nights, when I'd be on watch; for I had a great fashion of thinking over things. My dead mother used to make me say some prayers at sleepin' time. I'd clean forgot all about them; but when I tried, they came back to me, an' I began to say them again as I used to, an' put in a word beside that the Lord would save us from Hell Fire. We finished our sperm-whaling, an' after my time was up, I shipped in a vessel going to Sydney.

" The day after we got into port was a Sunday; an' me an' another mate they called Larry got leave, with a lot of others, to go ashore an' see the town. Larry was a decent fellow; an' when he saw us make a bee-line for the tavern, he hung back, till he saw me going with the rest. It

warn't that I cared for the liquor, but just to be neighbour-like. The tavern was kept by a chap by the name o' Grogan; and what d'ye think I saw him do? He went to a cupboard, an' dropped something into the glass that was in his hand; then he filled up the glass wid rum, an' handed it to me. I took the glass an' slung the stuff in his face, every drop on it, an' set it down, an' said—

“Take that, by yer leave. It'll teach ye to put pison into my liquor.”

“Come away,” says Larry. An' he took me by the sleeve, an' we went out.

“Let's see the town,” says he.

“All right,” says I. So we walked on, up one street, an' down another, an' all round. By an' bye, says Larry—

“Its the Lord's Day. Don't ye think we might go to church while we have a chance? We don't often get one.”

“Just as you say,” says I; but I felt kinder, down-hearted, for I thought of Little Bethel. By 'n bye, we came to a big church with a steeple.

“There's a church,” says I. Larry sized it up a bit, an' then shook his head.

“It ain't the right sort,” says he. So we walked on. By 'n bye, we come to another I knowed it war a Popish Chapel, by the Cross over

the door. There war a Popish Chapel wid a Cross over the door near by to the court where father and mother and me lived when I was small. The boys used to pelt it wid mud; I've pelted it myself many's the time. The minister at Little Bethel said there was a Scarlet Beast an' a man-o'-Sin inside; that was why we pelted it, for, d'yc see, we war scared.

"'Sartin, yer not going in there?' says I to Larry, seein' he stopped dead short.

"'Yes I am,' says he flat, as if he knowed his own mind.

"'All right,' says I." I'm a man, now, and don't fear no Beast, whatever its colour. An' as for the Man, I guess I can lick him if he shews ugly.

"Larry laughed, an' in we walked.

"It war the beautifulst place I'd ever scen. There war picturs, an' flowers; an' candles a-burning, an' some little stucco angels, an' shiney nick-nacks an' the beautifulst music. There warn't no Beast, neither scarlet nor other; only, the minister as said the prayers wore the purtiest red thing a-hangin' down back an' front, an' I guess the fools mistook *that* for a Scarlet Beast. As for the man-o'-Sin. there warn't a man in the place worse nor ourselves; an' him as said the prayers, *he* war a long sight better, if his face spoke true. He put me in mind o' mother, an' I just felt like crying.

" Then after a while, the music stopped; an' him as said the prayers took off the purty red thing, an' hung it across a chair, an' went back up the steps, an' faced around, an' began preachin. I listened to every word as though it war the last I should ever hear. He said there war a heap as called themselves Churches, an' they warn't no Churches at all. (I knowed, then, why Larry wouldn't go into the big one with the steeple, an' I wished the Little Bethel man war only here to listen.) He said they war only set up by men like ourselves, an' that any man could set up sich same as he'd set up any kind on a shop. He said there was only one True Church, an' it war set up in the beginning by the Lord Himself. He said as how the others called it the Man-o'-Sin an' the Scarlet Beast (didn't I know that?), but that the Lord had said it would always be True, an' that He would be with it to the end of the world. An' he said a lot more.

" 'Be jabbers!' said I to Larry as we came out, 'if that there is the Man-o'-Sin, I'm with him from this out; an' I'll lick any man as says a word against him. But why does he turn his back to the people when he says them prayers?'

" 'Don't you see,' says Larry, 'he ain't saying them prayers to the *people*, but to the *Lord*



*a'mighty*. He speaks to the people when he's *preachin'*, an' then he faces round.'

"Which war true, an' all reasonable.

"Before another Sunday, we were out to sea, on the return voyage to England; but it seemed to me I carried away that Popish Chapel in my heart. I did'nt speak of it to no one—not even to Larry 'xceptin' once or twice; but I *thought*. Out on the dark sea at nights, an' standin' by the wheel, I thought round what I had heard and what I had seen, till I could see an' hear it all as plain as ever. It brought back to me what mother used to tell 'bout Heaven where they sent boys as were good. (The Bethel man never said nothing 'bout that.)

"As soon as we reached London, an' I war free to go ashore, I made a bee-line for that'ere other Popish Chapel near the old court, that we used to pelt wi' mud. It war a dark, rainy night, but I didn't care a whistle: and when I got there an' saw it war lighted up, an' the door open, I fairly danced wi' joy. There was a powerful lot o' people inside, some on them dirty enough. The priest he war up in the pulpit a *preachin'*. He said it all depended on a fellow himself whether he went the up-road or the down-road. He said we were all *elect* so long as we did what we knowed to be right, an' kept out o' what we knowed to be

wrong. He said it war often hard to keep straight; but that the Lord had left in His True Church a pardon for all such as humbled themselves to confess to the Priest. 'Now,' says he, 'if any on you have taken a glass too much, or got mad and knocked a fellow down, or got swearin' an' sich, *now's* your time. We'll be in these there Confession-boxes to hear you, till twelve o'clock this night.'

"Then he came down, an' most of the people went out o' the Chapel; I guess they hadn't done no harm. But some went up an' sat down on benches. For me, I follered that there priest into the little room where they take off their white things. When he seed me, he came up pleasant-like, an' axed what I wanted. Says I—

"'Well, yer honour, I done a heap o' things I'm sorry for; an' would it be axin' too much as how you would go to the trouble o' *pumpin' me?*'

"He looked at me steady, an' then said—

"'Are you a Catholic?'

"'No, yer honour,' says I; 'but I want to be.'

"'Since how long have you wanted to be?' he axed.

"'Since ever we were in Sydney,' says I.

"He thought a moment, an' then he took me to the door of the little room, an' pointed to the people sittin' in rows on the benches.

"'Do you see all those people?" says he. 'There's three dozen of 'em at the lowest count, all waiting to be "pumped"; an' it'll take us as hard as we can lick to get through by twelve o'clock. But come you here to-morrow morning at eight bells, an' I'll see you alone, an' we'll talk it over. An' take this to keep you in mind, in case you should forget.

"With that he dove his hand into his breast pocket, an' brought out o nick-nackety little bit o' white paper with a Heart printed red in the middle of it. My own heart jumped when he gave it to me; for I'd seen one like it wi' Larry, an' I said to myself.—

"'For sure an' sartin I'm going to be a Catholic now!"

"And did you go back next morning?" I inquired, observing Tom pause a second time in his narrative.

"I did, sir—thank God!" he replied with a solemnity of tone and look which gave a fitting and eloquent conclusion to his tale. As he spoke the words, his hand instinctively sought his brawny chest, where, I doubt not, the badge of the Sacred Heart still reposed.

When my companions had retired to their cabins. I lay down on the bench where I had been sitting, to rest if I could not slumber. After

a time, the helmsman thinking I was asleep, began crooning softly to himself. His chant—for it could not be called a tune—was evidently original, as were also the words. They seemed to embody a sort of graduated record of his experiences, and ran something like this, both rhyme and rythme being of the roughest.

There's some believes in religion, an' others deny  
it flat;

An' one takes stock in this Gospel-shop, an' ano-  
ther takes stock in that,

For this has stood for a hundred years, an' that  
has cropp'd up in three.

But I say, they needn't come trying their new-  
fangled fads on me,

For a fellow as wants religion he doesn't have  
far to search.

He'll find it sure an' he'll find it true in the Holy  
Roman Church.

I never thought much of religion; but often I've  
felt perplexed;

An' it was as though some one whispered—"What  
next, old boy? what next?"

Ay; Life to a roving sailor is a step inside Death's  
porch;

And I long'd to believe in *something*, if it were but  
the Popish Church.

There's some as calls it the Man-o'-Sin, an' the  
Scarlet Beast; but laws!

When I hear them talk like that, I think of an  
Eagle among jackdaws.

They scream and croak till their throats are sore,  
but never she quits her perch.

If there's anything grand on Earth, I trow, it is  
the Roman Church

'Twas Himself that built it long ago; 'twas Him-  
self that rigg'd it out;

And you don't tell *me* the Lord didn't know right  
well what He was about.

You don't tell *me* that He sent bad men to tinker  
the craft He made;

He knew it right well from stem to stern, *an'*  
*'twould never go down*, He said.

They talk of a Life Insurance, an' a handy fistful  
of pelf

To comfort those you leave behind; but what of a  
fellow himself?

Whilst it would never do to leave our dear ones in  
the lurch,

The best Insurance I know of is in the Roman  
Church.

I'll seek the priest this very day, an' with all my  
sins confest,

I'll start out on the Roman way, and strive to do  
my best.

Since Life to a roving sailor is a step inside  
Death's Porch,

I'll board the craft that never goes down—*the  
Holy Roman Church.*



## A Legend of San Jago

---

- " From what far country dost thou come,  
" Oh! holy pilgrim, say?  
" That thou hast wander'd far from home  
" Thy foreign looks betray  
" Nor Spanish tower, nor Moorish dome  
" Hath seen thy natal day "
- " I come from Grecia's distant shore " .  
The aged pilgrim said,  
" Where blest St. Paul in olden time  
" The true Evangel spread,  
" And where the world's black cup of crime  
" With martyrs' blood grew red."
- " And why, oh! holy father, say,  
" Why hast thou come so far,  
" Braving the perils of a way  
" Beset with blood and war;  
" Where danger lacks not night or day  
" A Pilgrim's road to bar?"
- " Through dangers neither light nor few  
" I come, by Help Divine,  
" San Jago's sacred church to view,



“ To kneel before his shrine,  
“ And blessings true, and blessings new  
“ To ask for me and mine.”

“ Then, pilgrim, may the God of Love  
“ Protect thee with all care,  
“ Each trouble from thy path remove,  
“ And hear thine every prayer;  
“ And may San Jago plead above  
“ The suit thou urgest here.

“ And if a kind word thou wilt say  
“ For other than thine own,  
“ Oh! then, for our poor soldiers pray  
“ That mercy may be shewn,  
“ And that his knightly panoply  
“ San Jago would gird on.

“ For six long months King Ferdinand  
“ Coimbra hath beset.  
“ He swore upon his royal hand  
“ It should its crimes regret.  
“ But vain the prowess of his band;—  
“ Closed are its portals yet.

“ And now hath Famine's ruthless sword  
“ Out-started from its sheath,  
“ While Pestilence hath on them pour'd

“ Its fell destroying breath;  
“ And well have these already stored  
“ The dark domain of Death.”

“ Right gladly I my prayers will lend,  
“ And Heav'n's compassion crave,  
“ That He whose mighty arm can rend  
“ Its victim from the grave  
“ Would of His endless pity send  
“ Your dying friends to save.

“ But of San Jago, sooth to say,  
“ In error great ye be.  
“ No belted knight, or gallant gay,  
“ Or soldier fierce was he,  
“ But a poor Fisher far away  
“ In distant Galilee.”

The setting sun's last glories through  
The deep-stained windows pour,  
With many a rich and varied hue  
Tingeing the marble floor;  
They gild the Cross-crowned shrine anew  
Far brighter than before.

Beside the Altar reverently  
The grey-hair'd wanderer kneels.  
His time-worn lineaments display

The holy joy he feels  
That thus the troubles of his way  
Such happy ending seals.

Pilgrims are there from every strand  
In worship bending low—  
The stalwart Norseman from the land  
Of icicle and snow,  
The Arab from the desert sand,  
Have quitted friend and foe.

The Dane hath left his forests green,  
The Swiss his mountains blue,  
The dark-brow'd African each scene  
His sunny childhood knew;  
And Britain's sons, full well I ween,  
Are neither faint nor few.

The king aside his crown hath laid,  
And on the drear way toiled;  
The aged monk, the youthful maid  
Have on its dangers smiled;  
The soldier hath laid by his blade,  
And kneels beside the child.

Who shall the sacred love declare  
Enkindling every breast  
Of all the hosts who worship there

The Lamb for ever blest,  
Enthroned upon the Altar where  
His martyr's relics rest!

Hush'd is the Anthem's solemn peal;  
The Vesper hymn is o'er;  
And priest and mitred prelate kneel  
Around the shrine no more,  
While the last ling'ring stragglers steal  
In silence from the door.

Gone is the radiance rich and bright  
The sunset's glorious beam;  
But the pale moon's reflected light  
Falls in a silver stream;  
It glistens o'er the pavement white,  
And makes it whiter seem.

One only figure still is bending  
On the cold marble stone;  
One heart-drawn voice is still ascending  
Unto the Heavenly Throne,  
Prayers for the wasted army blending  
With pleadings for his own.

Midnight is past, and still untired  
The Grecian pilgrim prays;  
His soul, with Heavenly strength inspired,

No fleshly weakness sways,  
But every energy is fired  
To supplicate and praise.

His last *Amen* was yet unsaid,  
When lo! a radiance bright  
Around San Jago's Altar shed  
A pure, unearthly light.  
Silent, the pilgrim bent his head,  
And wondered at the sight.

A voice of tone divinely sweet  
Fell softly on his ear.  
And now his wondering glances meet  
A figure standing near  
In knightly armour clad complete,  
With buckler and with spear.

White was the plume that nodded o'er  
His helmet's shining crest;  
A crown upon his shield he bore—  
A Cross upon his breast,  
The trembling pilgrim bows before  
San Jago's vision blest.

"Pilgrim," he said, "thine earnest prayer  
"Hath favour found on high.  
"No more shall death and famine wear

“ Spain's fainting chivalry,  
“ For I am sent their fierce despair  
“ To quench in victory.

“ To-morrow, ere the tierce-bells ring,  
“ My sword shall turn the scale,  
“ And wide Coimbra's gates shall fling  
“ The conqueror to hail.  
“ Sure is the promise which I bring—  
“ His word can never fail.

“ But first I come before thy sight  
“ Thus arm'd with mail and sword,  
“ That thou may'st know *I am a knight.*  
“ *The Champion of the Lord,*  
“ *Ready to arm, and mount, and fight*  
“ *And conquer at His word.*”

Scarce had the vision ceased, when lo!  
A proud and princely steed  
White as the pathless mountain snow  
Two angel pages lead.  
San Jago mounts,—the knight, I trow,  
Of JESUS CHRIST indeed.

Oh! wherefore peal the bells so loud  
From every town and tower?  
And whither streams that motley crowd

From cottage, hall and bower—  
The peasant rough, the baron proud,  
And beauty's fairest flower?

To celebrate Coimbra's fall  
Those ceaseless joy-bells ring,  
Those loyal hearts are thronging all  
To welcome back their king.  
Lo! within Compostella's wall  
The conquering host they bring.

Straight to San Jago's ancient pile  
Proceeds the armed array,  
For happy ending to their toil  
Adoring thanks to pay:  
And choir and transept, nave and aisle  
Echo their holy lay.—

“ Hail Supreme One! All-adoring,  
“ Lo! Thy servants bend the knee,  
“ Ev'n as late with voice imploring  
“ They besought Thy clemency.

“ Faithful art Thou, and unfailing  
“ Every promise by Thee given:  
“ While man's efforts unavailing  
“ Perish at the breath of heaven.

- " Long our wasted ranks were lying  
" 'Neath Coimbra's rebel wall.  
" Weary, hopeless, faint and dying,  
" Dark despair was over all.
- " Morn, at length, the tierce-hour bringing,  
" Call'd us to renew the fray,  
" Like a knell the trumpet's ringing  
" Broke upon our ear that day.
- " On we went with hearts despairing  
" To possess our gory graves,  
" Or once more, destruction sparing,  
" To submit fell Famine's slaves.
- " On we went, Coimbra nearing;  
" On we went, to bleed, to die;  
" When a white-plumed knight appearing,  
" Fixed each wondering heart and eye.
- " With celestial radiance shining  
" Golden mail his limbs arrayed.  
" On his breast a Cross reclining,  
" While a Crown his shield displayed.
- " Like the snow o'er desert driven  
" Spotless was the steed he rode,  
" And the majesty of Heaven  
" In his form and features glowed.



- " Bright he cast his glances o'er us,  
" Bright he waved his sword on high;  
" On! Coimbra falls before us—  
" God, San Jago be your cry."
- " Wail, Coimbra; crime unmeasured  
" In thy ruin meets its fate.  
" Retribution long uptreasured  
" Now hath laid thee desolate.
- " See! Two garlands freshly breathing  
" Home we bring with hearts elate;  
" PEACE be ours, while GLORY'S wreathing  
" To our God we consecrate.
- " Upward may San Jago bear it  
" At his Master's Feet to lay.  
" Glory's garland, who shall wear it?  
" He Whose Word is Victory."

