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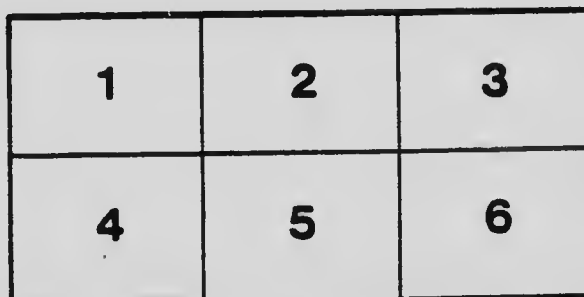
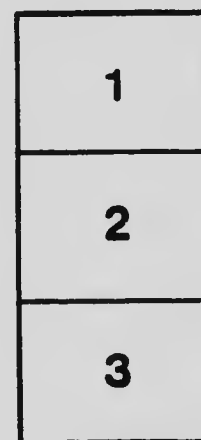
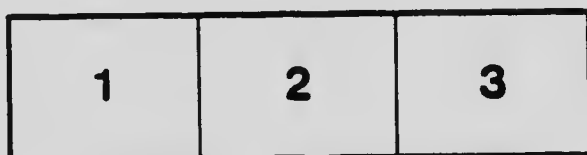
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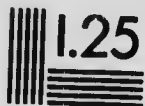
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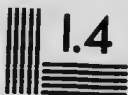
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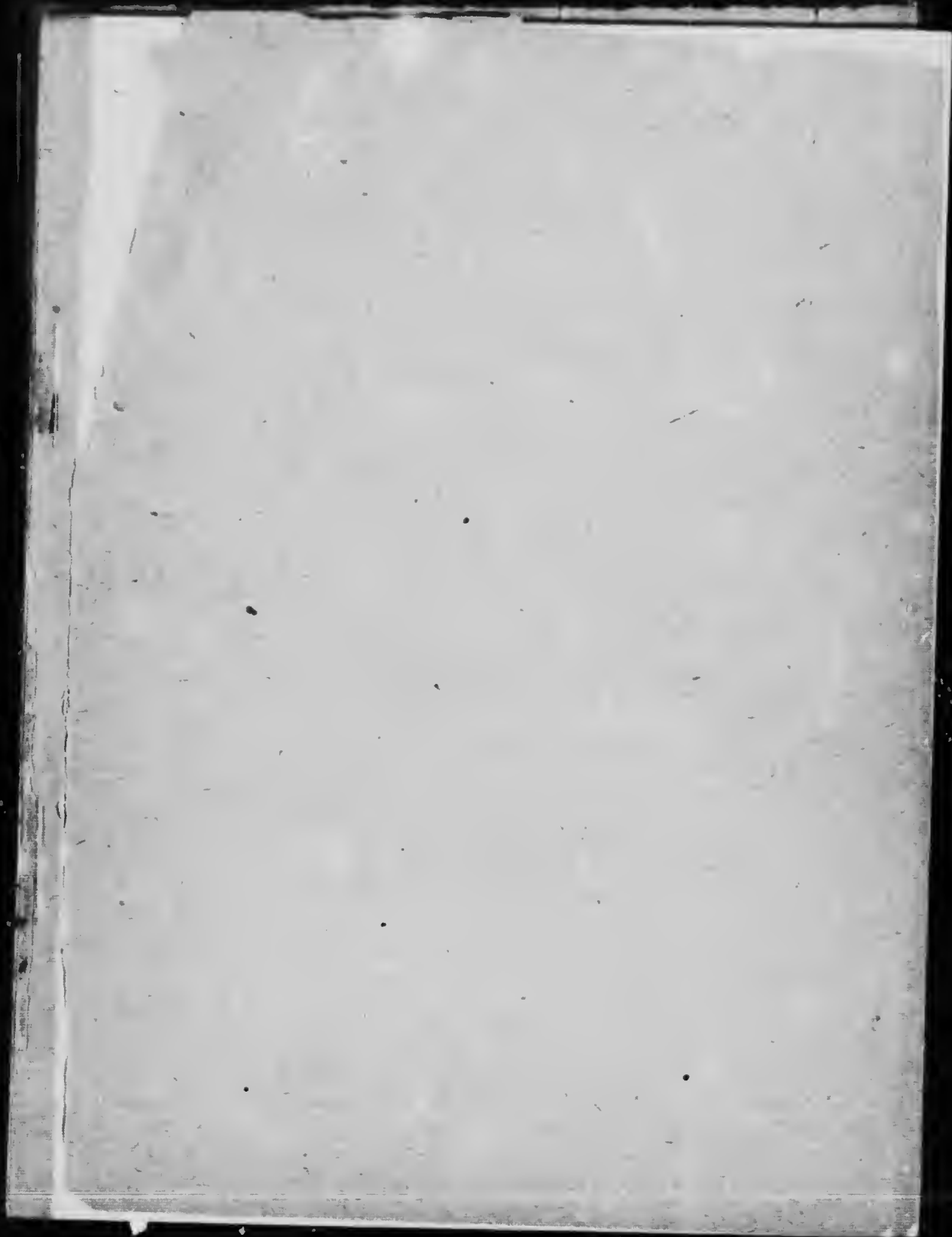
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THE GOSPEL PLAY:

WILSON
JONES
PUBLISHERS

A Story of the Days
When Christianity was
In Its Infancy.

Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada in the year 1901
by D. McEdwards, M.D. at the Department of Agriculture.





THE GOSPEL PLAY :



A Story of the Days
When Christianity was
In Its Infancy.

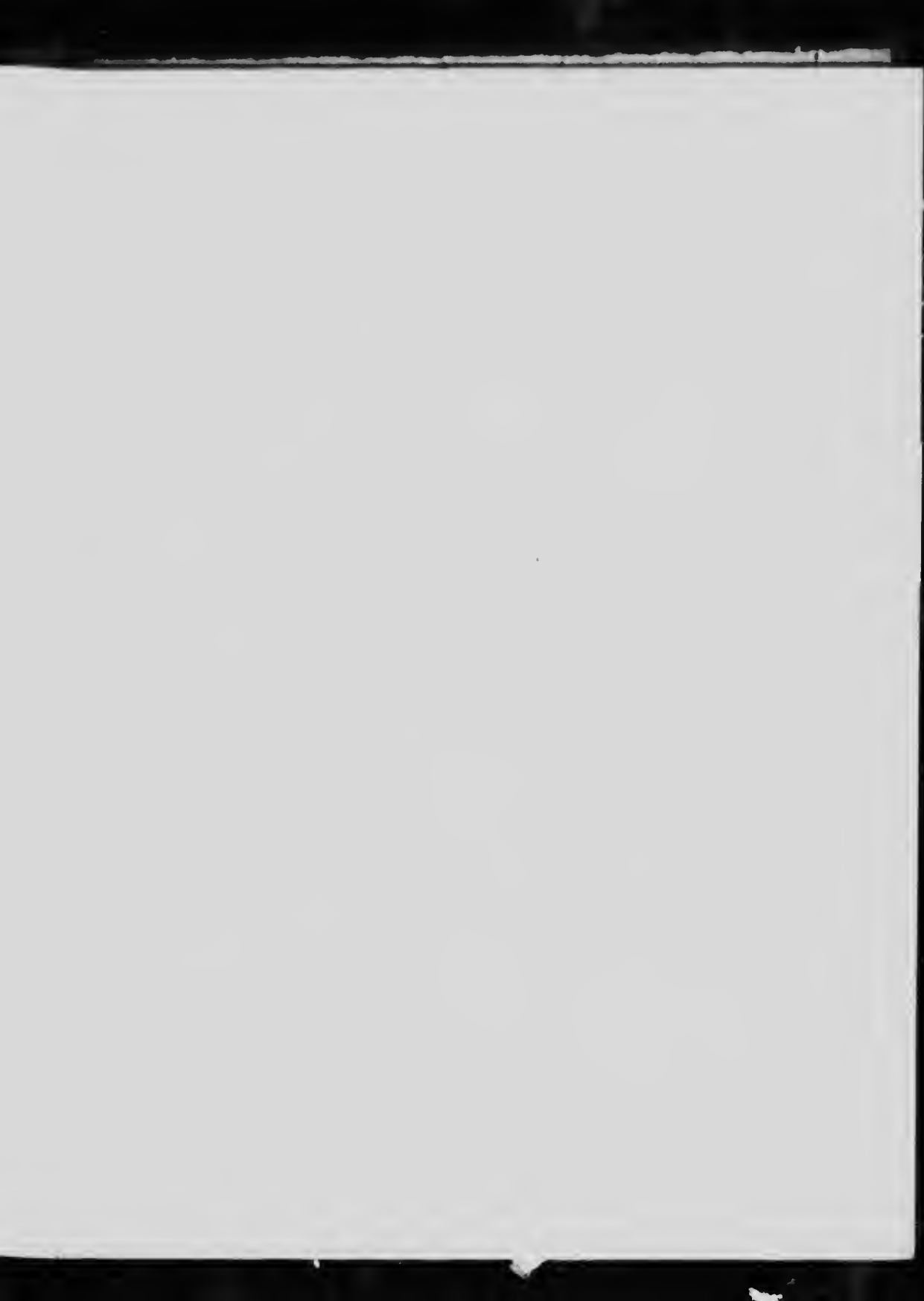
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THE GOSPEL PLAY.

A Story of the Days when Christianity was in its Infancy.

GIVEN IN FOUR ACTS AND FIVE SCENES.

PERIOD, 70 A.D.

CAST

VESPASIAN—Emperor of Rome.

TITUS }
DOMITIUS } Sons of the Emperor.

ANTONIUS }
AGRICOLA } Generals of the Roman Army

JASON, Merchant of Rome.

AUGUSTUS, Saint of Christendom.

TACITUS, A Roman Lawyer, Counsel for Jason and Cecilia.

PLINY, Prosecuting Attorney.

VIRJINIUS, Magistrate of Rome.

RUFUS, Crier for the Senate.

VARRO, Jailor.

FLAVIA, Empress,

PENELOPE, Princess, Daughter of the Emperor.

CECILIA, Daughter of Jason.

TERESA, Saint of Christendom.

Citizens and Soldiers, Gauls, Britons, Spaniards, Italians,
Germans, Greeks, and Jews.

ACT I.

SCENE—A street in Rome.

ACT II.

SCENE—The Royal Palace.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Court room in Rome.

SCENE II.—Jail.

ACT IV.

SCENE—A street in Rome (same as first.)

1st ACT.

Scene—A street in Rome.

OPENING CHORUS.

O, we are Romans bold
Our fame we will uphold.
To fight with might, to fight for right,
Our motto will ever be.

Behold the city Rome
The Emperor and throne,
To guard them well, to you we tell,
Our motto will ever be.

The country East and West,
To win we slew the best ;
The conquered foe to us must bow,
Our motto will ever be.

O, we are Romans bold,
Our fame we will unfold ;
To fight with might, to fight for right,
Our motto will ever be.

1ST SOLDIER —Here comes Domitius and our brave Generals,
Antonius and Agricola.

ANTONIUS.—Brave soldiers and citizens of this mighty state,
I've come to introduce to you Titus, the son of our beloved
Emperor.

CITIZENS.—Welcome, Titus, welcome, Titus.

ANTONIUS.—Behold in him the greatest soldier of Rome. He
it was, that our Emperor trusted with the capture of Jerusalem, that
holy and ancient city of the Jews, and well did he accomplish it.
Here him tell his tale.

TITUS.—

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, O! how I love that name ;
Its heroic defenders, were numbered with the slain.
With sorrow and with heavy heart, to you I'll tell, not boast,
Of how the noble city was captured by our host.

The Jews they fought, and bravely stood with faces to the foe,
And baffled all our attacks, and did us courage show,
But who could stand our determined band, when ordered to advance.
The enemy broke, they fled before our awful lance.

Three times sought us these gallant men, to yield and save their lives,
Their city with the temple, their daughters and their wives ;
But no, each time the answer came, in God we put our trust,
And know that He will do what He thinks right and just.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, oh how I love that name ;
Its mi'ion souls who perished beneath the sword and flame.
Could I but call them back again, but no they are better gone,
No care no sorrows know they in that great beyond.

ANTONIUS.—Make room, here comes our most high and excellent Sovereign, with the Empress, Princess Penelope and train.
Give them a chorus of welcome.

Mighty monarch we welcome thee,
To our gathering that you see.
Always loyal to the core,
We will defend you from shore to shore.

We are happy with you in sight,
Trusting you in the cause of right.
Let no traitors dare to say,
That our empire is bound to decay.

Mighty monarch we welcome thee,
To our gathering that you see.
Always loyal to to the core,
We will defend you from shore to shore.

VESPASIAN—

Most faithful subjects
To my person and my crown,

I hold my sceptre
By the choice of men renown,
My thanks I express
For your hospitality.
My life I will spend
To guard you where'er you be.

CHORUS.

Our laws, the products of many ages,
Are made to be just to ever nation ;
Selected and compiled by our sages,
And will last to the end of creation.

A servant I am
To all people that I rule.
A master to those
Who think I am but a fool.
Our laws are for all
Be they Christian or Gentile.
All must obey them
Be they Romans or exiles.

CHORUS.

An honest trial
We will give to every one,
Whether a Roman
Or a saint of Christendom.
Then always do right,
Is my earnest desire,
That we may prosper
And honor our empire.

CHORUS.

DOMITIUS—Most gracious Emperor, I have caused the arrest
of Jason and his daughter Cecilia on a charge of high treason.

VESPASIAN—What ! Our merchant prince, Jason ?

DOMITIUS.—The same. His property and wealth shall be con-
fiscated to the state.

VESPASIAN—Has he committed that unpardonable offence, one
that is punishable by death ?

DOMITIUS—He has, by becoming a Christian.

VESPASIAN—Surely not, you are only jesting.

DOMITIUS—It is quite true.

VESPASIAN—Where are they confined?

DOMITIUS—In the prison across the street.

PENELOPE—That low dungeon, only fit for the lowest of our race

VESPASIAN—Your words fill me with pain. Jason, always known for truthfulness and honesty, led away by such an ignorant, low, degraded people. Bring the prisoners here at once. It surprises me that a man of such intelligence, gifted with so many talents, should be influenced by those mean, prejudiced and narrow-hearted Jews.

PENELOPE—Father, they are not Jews, but Christians.

VESPASIAN—They are all alike, traitors and conspirators against my peace and crown.

DOMITIUS.—Here comes the prisoners.

VESPASIAN.—My dear Jason, I sent for you as soon as I heard of your arrest to hear from your own lips if you were guilty of treason

JASON—From what I understand the word treason to mean I am not guilty.

VESPASIAN.—Unfa ten and relieve them of those chains. I knew you cou'd not be guilty.

DOMITIUS.—But he is guilty. I have evidence to show that he is a Christian, and a Christian is a traitor.

VESPASIAN.—What is your answer to that?

JASON.—As to being a Christian I will not deny. That how a Christian is a traitor and guilty of treason I cannot understand.

VESPASIAN.—Enough, enough! Take them back to prison. You will have a fair trial.

CECILIA.—Dear Emperor, do not send my father to that cold, damp dungeon. You see, he is not strong and it may be the death of

him. Please give him his liberty until the day of trial. I am young and strong. I will be a hostage for his appearance at the trial. Send me there, but do, I pray, give him his freedom. Will you not?

(Turning to Penelope and Flavia) Can you not plead for me? Please, oh, please help me.

PENELOPE.—

O, rulers of this land, that here around we stand,
Have you not pity? Can you no mercy show,
To see before your eyes, two lovely, lovely lives
Asking lenient treatment from their foe.

CHORUS.

O, Father, mother and my brothers dear,
Hear your sister's pleadings not in vain,
Relieve the old man and the kind daughter's fear,
By giving them their freedom again.

Can you look upon that form, so humble and so torn,
By grief and trouble at her father's fate,
Be merciful, I pray, and disappoint to-day,
And give them back their freedom and estate.

FLAVIA.—My dear daughter, you cannot expect one law for friends and another for enemies. Rome expects all in authority to do their duty, so do not pain your friends by appealing to their sympathy.

DOMITIUS.—Noble sentiments, mother. Take the prisoners back to prison.

PENELOPE—No, never!

DOMITIUS (addressing the officers who attempt to seize Cecilia and her father, but are prevented by Penelope.)—Do you understand your orders?

TITUS—Do not dare to lay a hand on my sister.

DOMITIUS—But the law must be carried out, and the prisoners must appear for trial, and how can we be assured of their appearance before our courts unless we commit them to prison.

VESPASIAN—If the prisoners furnish satisfactory bondsmen for their appearance at court we may allow them their freedom.

PENELOPE—Who will be their bondsmen?

TITUS and ANTONIUS (stepping forward)—We will be their bondsmen.

2nd ACT.

SCENE—The Royal Palace.

VESPASIAN—Would you please ask General Agricola to come in. I want to speak to him.

(To General Agricola) Could you amuse the empress and Penelope by showing them some of the natives of our distant states.

AGRICOLA—Certainly, your majesty. Bring forth our slaves from Spain.

SONG BY SPANIARDS.

Dons, dons, you know us by our dress,
We were taken from our dear Spain,
Our liberty we try to impress
Is what we are bound to regain.

CHORUS.

We would like to see our city Taracceo,
Along with the beautiful river Douro,
And the mountain range so high of Toledo,
With the valley that is an Eldorado.

We care not for death nor for life,
When honor or pride is at stake,
Revenge is sweet, we use the knife,
And make our enemies quake.

CHORUS.

Our best sport is a big bull fight.
How grand to see them paw and gore!
The pleasure fills us with delight,
And we feel as in days of old.

AGRICOLA—Our Slaves from Greece.

GRECIAN ATHLETES.

AGRICOLA—Our slaves from Germany.

GERMAN BAND (BRASS).

AGRICOLA—Our slaves from Gaul.

FRENCHMEN.

O we are gentlemen of France,
Our ambition is to sing and dance;
We care not for country or state,
But we must have our pleasure up to date.

CHORUS.

Then four jolly Frenchmen are we,
Out for a good time, do you see;
We are looking for the girls, we are looking for the whirls
That intoxicate us with ecstasy.

Our thoughts are all on dress and style,
To be gay and graceful we think not vile,
We lead the world in sensations,
And few can resist our fascinations.

CHORUS.

They say we are fickle and vain,
Our principles we change for paltry gain;
This life is short for us at least,
So let us make it but one merry feast.

CHORUS.

AGRICOLA—Our slaves from Italy.

ITALY (STRING BAND).

AGRICOLA—Our slaves from Britain.

BRITONS (HIGHLAND DANCING).

Jews—

Sheenies, Sheenies, so the people call,
When they see us passing on the street,
Thinking thus to insult one and all
Of the Hebrews they happen to meet.

CHORUS

Rags, bones and bottles is our cry
To the people as we pass by.
We are never shy the gentiles to guy,
If they only come our way.

Long noses, a distinguishing mark,
By which we recognized each other,
And whiskers black and small eyes so dark,
That none will take us for another.

CHORUS.

Gold, precious gold, and diamonds rare
Are what we work and for what we pray;
We also hope for a king to share
Our earthly gains on a future day.

CHORUS.

VESPASIAN—Very good, we are delighted. But have we none of the Christians in our city? I would like to hear some of their talent.

AGRICOLA—These Christians can only speak of Christ. They have no talents I think that would amuse you.

VESPASIAN—Well, I would like to hear or even to see some of them.

AGRICOLA—They are very few and hard to find. You understand their meetings are secret since you issued your decrees forbidding them to worship. But here comes Domitius. He knows more about them than I.

DOMITIUS—Why all so serious and quiet? Are you expecting any one?

AGRICOLA—The emperor asked me to bring some talented Christian here, so as to amuse him by displaying some skill or talent. Do you know of any?

DOMITIUS—Why, I just passed Cecilia, the daughter of Jason. Will she do?

PENELOPE—We do not want to hurt her feelings.

FLAVIA—I do not think it would be wrong to see what she could do. She may be able to sing or dance, or probably she may be an athlete, like our Grecian friends. (Turning to Vespasian) Ask her to be brought here.

VESPASIAN—I think it will do no harm.

DOMITIUS—She will be here presently.

TITUS—Probably she may not be so amusing

DOMITIUS—Here she is.

CECILIA (turning to Titus)—Why have you brought me here? Are you tired of being my bondsmen? Fear not, I will not betray the trust you imposed in me.

TITUS—No, fear not, lady; it was not I that sent for you—it was the emperor.

CECILIA (to Emperor)—I am at your service, your majesty.

VESPASIAN—We have been amused by the natives of the different countries that make up our empire. As Christians are becoming numerous, I thought I would like to hear one of them; so if you would please her majesty by singing, dancing, or in any way you wish, we would be delighted.

CECILIA—Have you not made it the law that any one professing a belief in Christ shall have their life taken? Then by obeying would be my conviction.

VESPASIAN—We will make an exception in your case and hear you.

CECILIA—

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, look with pity on me,

Shew mercy to your children that on earth you see,
Compelled to rebuke sin, and in its presence scoffs to bear.
Help me, my Saviour, and with me my troubles share.

The Emperor and his family are with us to-day,
Deal gently with them and their eyes open, I pray,
That they may receive the Gospel, and its pure pleasures know,
Its soothing power and to wickedness a foe.

Teach them that unto the people of God there is a rest,
Not for a short time, but forever with Christ a guest.
No pain nor sorrowing is known in our heavenly home,
Peace, peace is always found around that mighty throne.

Our Saviour, meeting death for us, Himself a martyr made,
That we through faith may reap pleasures that never fade;
Give them that faith and trust that leads to honor, peace and rest,
And to mingle with those whoever will be blest.

If at my trial for heresy the sentence should be death,
Help me to keep silent even to my last breath,
That I, like our Saviour, met death without a sigh or tear,
And bore his fate meekly without a care or fear.

DOMITIUS—Come, why all look so sad. Surely you are not so weak as to be moved by the song of a woman. Woman, woman! deceitful woman! Do not the Jews themselves tell us that by the temptation of a wicked woman man fell into the miserable state we find him. Does not this same woman practice her deceit upon us, pretending to be sorrowful, while in her heart plotting schemes by which she and her followers may rid the world of us? Her beautiful face and form, together with a well-trained voice, make many victims. She is only one of many engaged in the same art. The empire of Rome will soon be one of the past if this work is to continue. The Christians are growing in numbers right under our very eyes. We see to-day one of the most powerful causes, the voice and tongue of woman.

FLAVIA—Noble sentiments and true ones.

PENELOPE—Mother! Mother! how surprised I am, and you a woman! How dare anyone question the sincerity of that young lady. Who can look upon her and doubt her honesty? She may

err in judgment, but her purpose is an honest one. Who of us need wonder, surrounded by wickedness as we are, that apostles of purity and morality should rise up among us. None can safely walk the streets of Rome without being subjected to insults. Drunkenness, rioting, murder and theft are increasing every year. Laws are made to prevent such, but with little effect. If, as Domitius tells, woman is the chief promoter of reform, then let heaven help the women.

3rd ACT.

SCENE—Trial.

MAGISTRATE (Virginus)—Jason and Cecilia. Please stand. You are charged with being a Christian. Are you guilty? or are you not guilty?

JASON—I do not quite understand the meaning of the word Christian, so that I do not wish to answer until such is explained.

MAGISTRATE (Virginus)—It is well-known by every child in the land what a Christian means. You must know, and I command you to answer.

JASON—Well, I suppose, then I must plead guilty.

MAGISTRATE (Virginus)—And you (turning to Cecilia)

CECILIA—Guilty.

JASON'S lawyer (Tacitus)—Your honor, would you allow me to make a few remarks before sentence be passed in way of explanation?

MAGISTRATE (Virginus)—Certainly.

JASON'S lawyer (Tacitus)—In the last session of the Roman Senate, an act was passed punishing believers in Christianity by death, but this act was modified considerably in reading it in full. It reads thus:—Any person or persons believing in Christ, or accepting the teachings of Christianity, which are, first—that allegiance must be paid to none other than Christ, and second—that all other rulers are mere usurpers of his crown, and guilty of treason. What I ask you to understand, your honor, is—that a person before being guilty of the crime charged by this act, must not only be guilty of being a

Christian, but also proclaim the Emperor of Rome a usurper, and no right to rule. I voluntarily am here to-day to defend the prisoners, but when the plea was guilty, I had nothing then for the defence; however, I will draw your attention to facts that are worthy of consideration.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY (Pliny)—There is no use wasting the court's time in listening to my learned friend as the prisoners have already pleaded guilty.

LAWYER FOR THE DEFENCE (Tacitus)— appeal to your honor to hear me.

MAGISTRATE (Virinius)—Go on, I will listen.

LAWYER FOR THE DEFENCE (Tacitus)—The belief of the Christian is found in these pages. It is not held secret, but all may read. Allow me to read some of Christ's teachings. This is from his sermon on the mount. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through or steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Is there any treason in that language? Again, reading on, I find that when Christ was offered a coin bearing the image of Cæsar, he said—"Render unto Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God, the things that are God's." Was this not an acknowledgment on His part that He owed tribute to Cæsar. The same homage Christ paid to Cæsar, the Christians are willing to pay to Vespasian. Again, I read—"But I say unto you which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you; bless them which curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again; and as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise; love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again." I am sure there is no treason in these words, then why accuse the prisoners of such a crime. In answering guilty, they did not understand the question. They would prefer death rather than deny Christ, but to have any design on the Empire, is far from their thoughts. Postpone the sentence, I pray, for your consideration. I appeal to you in behalf of the prisoners who are friendless, and who are surrounded by men anxious for their death.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY (Pliny)—Your honor—In all the cases I have been engaged, this one presents peculiarities that have never before occurred to me. After the prisoners pleaded guilty my learned friend tries to make it appear they are not guilty, and in proof of his contention, reads extracts from their book of faith and teachings. It is a very simple matter to select passages here and there to prove such, but as I have also studied their teachings, I shall endeavor to show you that there are doctrines in this book that smack very much of treason, and anyone believing its pages, are most assuredly guilty of that crime, and should be punished as our laws direct. We will first take Christ's sermon on the mount, which my learned friend referred to in his address. He says: "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate one and love the other, else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." We have only one master, our Emperor, him we serve. These people have only one, Christ, and Him they serve. Again, we read: "Finally my brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" You hear what this book teaches, and then my learned friend states there is no treason in the belief of Christians. I ask for speedy sentence. Allow no sympathy to interfere with justice, and do your duty to the State and Emperor.

MAGISTRATE (Virginius)—To prisoners. Please stand up. Have you anything to say why the sentence of this court should not be passed?

JASON—Gentlemen of the Court, my age and my weakness prevents me from saying much. I am very thankful to my counsel for his able address in my behalf. May he still search the Christian book, and find that peace to his soul that is only known to those who read and believe what is written there. I will also thank the opposing counsel for his advice to the magistrate to have the sentence a speedy one. It makes but little difference to me, as I have not long to live. My time is short here at most. Do not think that the cause of Christ will suffer by my death. Christianity will flourish long after the Roman Empire is forgotten. By my death many will be strengthened in this faith. You cannot stop the progress of truth and

righteousness ; but the young woman, my daughter, I pray, give her a chance to live. She is young, and has a future before her. She ever is true to her father. From her I received the knowledge that has been my comfort in this trying time. How can you look upon her, and then sentence her to death. She has done no wrong. Never has she uttered one word against the Emperor. Spare her for her youth's sake. Let my life be sufficient to atone for both. Death then would be welcome. Free from earthly troubles and trials and forever. (He reels and expires.)

MAGISTRATE (Virginius)—The circumstances have been such that I will defer sentence until some future time.

DEATH SONG.

Sleeping, only sleeping, nestling for a while,
From earth's stormy journey, and its weary toil,
Waiting for the wakening, waiting for the dawn,
Of the resurrection, and its glorious morn.

Sleeping, only sleeping, resting for a while,
From all thoughts and actions that sometimes beguile,
Dreams no more disturb him, threats no more alarm,
He is resting quietly on his Saviour's arm.

Sleeping, only sleeping, resting for a while,
From all cares and sorrows, from weary turmoil,
Waiting for the wakening, waiting for the dawn,
Of the resurrection, and its glorious morn.

ACT 3RD—SCENE 2ND.

CECILIA—Soliloquy.

In prison, yes; but why should I complain,
For who are free, that in this world remain?
Are not men bound by chains that are as steel?
Few break them, and are held against their will.
The chain of wealth, how strong, how firm its links;
It stops at naught, treats friends and foes alike.
Its links are made by sacrificing all,
And as they fall the chain it stronger grows.
Prisoners held, they work both day and night,

And even in dreams they know no respite.
Desire for wealth holds many a man a slave.
He thinks, he toils, his reward but the grave.
No hope, no rest, no joy for him beyond
Where happiness for me, for all is found.
The chain of fame, the student knows too well,
His health, his sight, his very soul will sell.
His eyes he shuts, and to the world is blind,
To fathom depths that God alone can find.
The orator, with fiery eloquence,
Pursuades himself, but finds it mere pretence,
That to convince, he only need to tell,
That it is false to think there is a Hell
A Hell for him, he'll know when it is too late,
And pity those he guided to their fate.
The chain of drink, of strong drink, subtle snare,
That makes men think they're free from every care.
No thought of home, of children sick and weak;
But conscience drowned, lewd company they seek,
And at the bar, with glasses wish good health
To those they rob of honor and of wealth
How sad this tale of drink can tell,
It treads the path that surely leads to Hell.
The chain of lust, the strongest chain of all,
Most mighty men to this chain owe their fall
King and pauper it winds itself around,
And firmly holds each victim that is found
A prisoner, then why should I complain.
For all are such that in this world remain,
One chain alone comforts me in this jail,
The chain of love, its links of joy ne'er fail.
It does not hold, but leads to rest and peace,
Trusting Jesus, my troubles now must cease.

TITUS—I come to speak with the prisoner Cecilia.

JAILOR—She is not allowed to speak to any one without permission.

TITUS—Do you know who I am? Look, and recognize your future Emperor.

JAILOR—All right, my dear Titus, it will be as you wish. (Opens the door, and Titus enters.)

TITUS—

O, hear me in my tale of love to you,
Your image is ever before my eyes ;
No sleep of peace, no place of rest I know,
Until the day that you'll be mine.

While in my bed, I lay awaiting the morn,
Gladly I welcome the first ray of light,
That I may banish for a while the thought
That perhaps some day you'll be mine.

Still latent in my mind, lie thoughts of you,
Even in my most busiest hours,
That the least stimulant brings back to mind,
That perhaps some day you'll be mine.

Believe my words, why hide your face from me,
I am honest, although you are in doubt,
Pure and sincere love knows no social scale.
Can you trust me, will you be mine.

Forsake the prospects of my future fame,
Forget the rank and honor of my birth,
Can you ask any more ? then here I stand,
Demand, I'll obey, if you'll be mine.

TITUS (continues)—Speak, why are you so silent to my entreaties?

CECILIA—I am silent because I am sorrowful.

TITUS—Be mine, and sorrow will vanish. You will some day be an Empress.

CECILIA—That can never be.

TITUS—Why? Please tell me. I will remove all obstacles.

CECILIA—There is only one that can remove them, and that is my Father who is in Heaven.

TITUS—Well, I am sure your father will remove them, because was a friend to him while on earth.

CECILIA—You fail to understand me. Sit down and listen. Everyone that is born in this world is born in sin. Their natural desire is to sin. You understand me.

TITUS—Yes, I believe that part of your story; go on.

CECILIA—God, the creator of all things, sent His son into this world to die for us, and that through his death we might be saved.

TITUS—What do you mean by being saved?

CECILIA—Saved from punishment after death, and to have everlasting life in Heaven.

TITUS—Now, I always believed that the death of a person in this world was not the last of him. I was never taught this, but something told that there was a future in store for me. So I am somewhat of a Christian, and did not know it. Well, I must say, I would like to join you on your trip heavenward.

CECILIA—I would like to have your company.

TITUS—O, how happy you make me feel. (Moving closer.)

CECILIA—Not so close. Those words are applicable to all Whosoever will may come.

TITUS—How am I to commence to have this everlasting life? What must I do?

CECILIA—Believe what this book says, and you will be saved. You will read. "He that heareth my word and believeth in Him that sent me hath everlasting life." Now, if you believe what is written in this book is of God, and believe that He sent His son, Jesus Christ to die for you, then you must have everlasting life.

TITUS—How am I to know that I have this everlasting life?

CECILIA—As I said before, your disposition is to sin, when you believe, your disposition changes. Old things pass away, all things become new. You think with a different mind. Things that were a pleasure, are distasteful to you now. You speak with a different

tongue, and see with other eyes. In fact, people will say that you are a changed man.

TITUS—How am I to know exactly what to do, and who is to be my guide?

CECILIA—In this book the life of Christ, our Saviour, is given. He will be your guide. When you are going to do anything that you are in doubt whether right or wrong, just ask yourself would Jesus do such. Then you will never do wrong.

TITUS—Must I then forsake all my pleasures to become a Christian?

CECILIA—Search the word, and if you think that Christ would forsake them, then do so. Do not believe anything I say, but take this home, read it, study it, and believe it, that you may have that peace only known to those that accept its words.

TITUS—I will, I will.

EMPRESS (Flavia)—Here I am in prison to be revenged on that Christian vixen. I, the Empress of Rome, the greatest Empire that ever existed since the world began, to be made a catspaw by that miserable, deceitful, contemptible wretch. She, a mortal of low birth, reared in ignorance, and her womanhood polluted by low associates, to seduce my children, no, never, while this right hand can hold a dagger, and this heart give me nerve. I, myself, Flavia, the Empress, will act as judge, jury and executioner. O! it is hard, but my children, for their sake, I must do it. I cannot trust a man. She will make a convert of any I ask. No, I shall do it myself.

SONG.

SONG—By Flavia.

Revenge, I say,
I've come to-day,
To seek it is a pleasure;
To me at most,
I must not boast,
But prize it as a treasure

To throw away,
I must say nay,
A chance like this, no never.
Her cunning part,
With my son's heart,
I'll now forever sever.

She may repent,
On her knees bent,
And beg for mercy, kneeling.
Her life alone,
Must now atone.
I'll answer her with feeling.

Men may recant,
For there's a want
In all their protestations;
But womankind,
Will never mind
To do their machinations.

Steady this hand,
At my command,
And do your work with keenness;
And let my smile,
Bewitch and guile
My son with its sereneness.

FLAVIA (to JAILOR)—Unlock this door. Prisoner stand up and know your fate. (Prisoner stands.) I am going to kill you (shewing the dagger.)

CECILIA—For what reason may I ask?

FLAVIA—Were you not convicted of treason along with your father? Well I am here to carry out the law.

CECILIA—Will you allow me to pray first?

FLAVIA—No, I will not. There is no time.

CECILIA—I will not be long. If you do, I will unbare my bosom so that the knife may find the fatal spot more easy.

FLAVIA—Go on, I shall give you a few moments.

CECILIA—Most gracious and indulgent Father, look down upon this woman, and stay her hand from this vile sin. She does not know what she is doing, and the consequence of her sinful act. My work is not done here, and if it be thy will, spare me, that I may spread the Gospel of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. My heart is in this work. My life is consecrated to thy cause. Thou hast given me strength and shielded me from my enemies. Please be with me to the end. Make me strong to bear my fate.

EMPRESS--The time is up. Make bare thy bosom. I am ready, and my mind is clear. Come, unbare thy bosom as you promised. (Cecilia prepares for death.)

CECILIA—Go on, I am ready. “As thy arms, O, Jesus, were extended on the cross, so with the outstretched arms of thy mercy, receive me, and pardon all my sins”

FLAVIA—You viper and destroyer of my peace, take this.

TITUS—Stay, mother, would you be guilty of murder? (Flavia swoons—Titus and Cecilia escape. The jailor attends Flavia.)

FLAVIA—What is this, is it a dream? Am I insane? Give me water or I shall die. Thwarted, but yet I shall be revenged. Titus, my son. He shall pay for this. Where is the prisoner?

JAILOR—Gone with Titus.

FLAVIA—I shall stay here. Call the Emperor, and tell him the prisoner has escaped (Jailor goes) Titus, my son! Titus, my son! No true son would act like this. I shall see that he is disinherited. But his father loves him; I must try and make him hate him. O, here they come. My husband and protector, see what your favorite son has done to me. Escaped with the prisoner, and left me in her place. Can you still call him your son and heir? Will the citizens of Rome sanction this action?

EMPEROR—I am too surprised to speak. There must have been some mistake; please explain.

FLAVIA—As usual, I came down to see the prisoners to advise and caution them kindly, not to be guilty of offences against the Roman Law. I went in to Cecilia's cell, and spoke kindly to

her, when your son and mine came in and took the prisoner out and left me here. Is that not so, jailor?

JAILOR—Yes, every word is true.

EMPEROR—Your words pain me, and I am sorry. I will see into the matter

DOMITIUS—

Titus is my brother,
But there stands my mother,
To her a duty I am bound to repay.
She nursed me when younger,
And helped me grow stronger,
So I will avenge her on this very day.

CHORUS.

I'm kind to your mother, be kind to her I pray,
No matter whether young, or aged and gray,
To her you are the nearest, the dearest and best,
So do not forget her is my only request.

Your mother, your lover,
Is always sure to cover
Your faults with a robe that is never seen through.
So never forget her,
But make her life better
By ever being kind, ever being true.

CHORUS.

Fathers may forget you
When trials beset you
Your mother will ever stand by you through all.
Her poor heart just rending,
With the love she is sending
To her suffering offspring, to soothe his downfall.

VESPASIAN (the Emperor)—Here comes Titus. I will hear him first (Enter Titus with Cecilia). Titus, explain your conduct to your mother. Why have you acted thus?

TITUS—What have I done, father?

out
see
EMPEROR—Allowed the prisoner, Cecilia, to escape, who was awaiting sentence, and leaving your mother in her place.

TITUS—The prisoner has not escaped, she is in my charge, and is now here before you.

EMPEROR—But your mother. Why have you treated her so? Explain! Explain! Explain!

TITUS—(Grasping the dagger from his mother, who had it concealed.) To prevent her from being a murderess.

THE CHRISTIAN MEETING.

SCENE—A STREET IN ROME.

SAINT AUGUSTUS—

It is love, it is love,
It is wonderful love,
Love that will never forsake you;
It is love, it is love,
It is most sacred love,
To a haven of rest it will take you.

It is love, it is love,
It is unchanging love,
Love that knows no ending;
It is love, it is love,
It is pure and true love,
To a home many souls it is sending.

It is love, it is love,
It is affectionate love,
Love that forever endureth;
It is love, it is love,
It is amazing love,
To an everlasting life it assureth.

(While singing, citizens and soldiers gather, the latter to arrest all taking part in the meeting.)

SERMON.

My Dear Friends—You are no doubt curious as to what I am going to do, and have gathered here to satisfy your curiosity. You heard the singing. It was all about love. What a grand thing to love and to be loved! I am going to tell you a love story that I hope will interest you.

In former days, when Alexander the Great was trying to conquer the world, Persia made the greatest effort to save herself from this foreign invader. Every available man was forced to take up arms and meet the enemy. A rich merchant of the largest city of Persia did not want to serve in the army. He had a large business to occupy his mind, also a wife and family that he did not care to leave. But the law of conscription was most severe and rigid. None could escape unless a substitute was provided. Money in abundance was offered for one. None seemed to want to risk their lives in fighting such an invincible foe. The merchant seemed depressed. His great wealth was of no avail. But at last relief came. A young Arab who had formerly worked for him came into his office and said I will be your substitute. The merchant ordered his money bags to be brought to him and commenced to count out the reward. The Arab checked him, saying I want none of it, and spoke as follows: I worked for you when a boy. You were kind to me. Yes, gentlemen, be kind to your servants, it will pay you. They are human just as you. They may not always be poor, and you may need their help some day just as this rich merchant. But, going back to our story, the young Arab said when I was a boy I worked for you and you were kind to me. I respected and loved you for it, and made up my mind that should opportunities present themselves I would repay you. Now the time has come. "Without money and without price" I am willing to lay down my life for you. That was true love.

Again, another story I will tell you. A young woman, who, by false promises of marriage and other entreaties, yielded to the temptations of her cruel and brutal lover, and fell from the path of virtue. Ladies, beware of the tempter. He seeks your ruin and will blight your whole life. Do not believe his promises. Marriages under such circumstances are rarely happy ones. Let his first temptation be his last. Avoid him as you would a rat-

lesnake. This young lady was driven from home when her condition became known. After her babe was born, she tried to gain a livelihood for both. But her health was shattered. She struggled on with pallid face and trembling limbs. Her employers one after the other turned her out. She appealed to them to retain her. Only one consented, but it was on condition that she should part with her child. She partly consented, but when she went to take a farewell look at her chubby boy, in marked contrast to her emaciated form, tears came to her eyes. The little one's eyes opened, and with a smile on its lips it reached forth its tiny arms to its mother. What a scene! It changed the mother's mind. She resolved, rather than part with her child she would part with her life. "I will arise and go to my father." He surely will not turn me out. He cannot forget his own. When she came to her father's house, the servant inquired of her her name. He then left her and conveyed her message to her father. She waited. The suspense was awful. What will my father say? How will he act? At last the servant came and told her that she was an imposter, as he had no daughter, and shut the door in her face. She clasped her babe tighter. It was cold and stormy. Night with its darkness was rapidly approaching. No home, friendless and alone with her child! But a thought came to her troubled mind. It was one of hope. She had a good kind friend who lived in a neighboring town, and a few hours walking would find her shelter there. So, with her child in her arms she started. The storm was still raging, but she walked on and on, her strength rapidly failing. The storm increased, and the snow made it impossible for her to proceed. She sat down to rest. The cold seemed to penetrate her shivering form. But her child must be kept warm. Disrobing herself of her garments, she protected her child from the cold with them—sacrificing herself for her child! In the morning, after the storm, a traveller found the two bodies. The one frozen to death, the other untouched by the cold. Was that not true love? Yes, a mother's love for her child.

But another story of love I will tell you—one that is greater than any you have read or heard. A mother may forget her child, and friend may forget friend, but this love is ever true. Let me tell it to you. In the world when it was new, God the Creator of all things placed Adam and Eve, his wife, into the garden of

Eden. The garden contained all trees and plants that were pleasant to the sight or good for food. He gave permission that they should partake of all except of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but should they partake of the latter they should surely die. But the devil tempted Eve—the same devil that tempts you and me to do wrong. She yielded, and partook of the tree of good and evil, and also gave her husband, and he did eat. When God called to them they hid themselves behind the trees in the garden. How often has God called on you? Ah, yes, and you know the voice, but where do you hide yourselves? Some go to wicked and careless companions, some to the bar room, to the pool-room, the theatre, the gambling house, some to the dance-house, any place to banish that voice that calls you to halt and consider your ways. “And the Lord God said unto the woman, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy husband shall rule over thee.” How well do the women know this, that sit before me. The troubles and sorrows they know can only be told by themselves. “And unto Adam he said, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow thou shalt eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground. For dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return. So he drove them out of the garden of Eden to till the ground and endure all the sufferings and trials of our race.

In this short story I have told you the origin of sin. From Adam we inherit the disposition to sin. God looked down from above and saw the state of his people and was sorry for them. He gave them laws that were hard to keep, and ceremonies that were hard to perform. So he said I will send my son, my only son, to die for them, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but shall have everlasting life. We are now introduced to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind. He suffered death on the cross for us. Greater love can no man show you than to die for you. He suffered death on the cross for you and for me. The Jews that hear me, remember the story of their countrymen when they were bitten by serpents. Let me read it to you. And the people spake against God, and against Moses; therefore, have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness, for there is no bread, neither is there any water, and the Lord sent fiery serpents among

the people, and many people of Israel died. Therefore, the people came to Moses and said we have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord and thee; pray unto the Lord that He take away the serpents from us, and Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put on a pole, and it came to pass, if a serpent had bitten any man when he beheld the serpent, he lived. How typical of the cross of Christ. There are some of you probably before me that saw or heard from those who did see, the crucifixion of Christ. The story is related in this book. Let me read again. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. How easy our salvation. It was not hard for the Jews to look at the serpent of Moses on the pole; there was nothing in it some would say, and died for lack of faith. Some will say it is too easy, I can't believe it. We have all been bitten by the serpent, the devil. There is only one way of escaping the poison, and that is to look at the cross. Too easy, too simple I hear again. Let me read Matthew's account of the crucifixion and then judge if our salvation was not accompanied by the most intense suffering upon the cross. "Pilate said unto them, what shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ. They all say unto him, let him be crucified. Then the soldiers of the Governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers, and they stripped Him and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand, and they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying 'Hail King of the Jews,' and they spit upon Him, and took the reed and smote Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, and put His own raiment on Him to crucify Him. They gave Him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, and when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink. And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots, and sitting down, they watched Him there, and set up over His head His accusation written 'This is Jesus, King of the Jews.' Then were there two thieves crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and the other

on the left, and they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying 'Thou that destroyest the temple and buildeth it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the son of God, come down from the cross.' Likewise the chief priests mocking Him with the scribes and elders said: He saved others, himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusted in God. Let Him deliver him now, if He will hear him. For he said, I am the son of God. The thieves also which were crucified with him cast the same in his teeth. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, my God, my God, why has thou forsaken me? And straightway one of them ran and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar and put it on a reed and gave him to drink. Jesus, when he cried again, with a loud voice yielded up the ghost."

Yes, it was easy for the rich merchant, but what about the substitute; easy for the child, but what about the mother; easy for you and me, but what about Christ. In this book you will find the story I have told you about Christ. Read for yourselves, and believe what you read, for outside of this, no peace or contentment can be found. I do not care what rank you hold in the army; what office you hold in the state; how rich you are, or how famous; how wealthy, or how handsome; how strong of voice, or strong of limb, there is no true happiness to be found outside of this book.

While I pass these books, Sister Teresa will sing "The Love of Christ."

SISTER TERESA—

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

In troubled times, when hearts are weary,
And all the world seems dark and dreary,
'Tis then to Christ I turn my pleading,
And find content while he is leading.

CHORUS.

He leads me, yes, He leads me,
By His hand of love, He leads me,
He leads me, yes, He leads me,
To Heaven above, He leads me.

In long, long days, in grief I'm sighing,
At my lost friends in prison dying.
To Him I look, in His eyes reading,
That He is near, and He is pleading.

CHORUS.

To you, my friends, that are receiving,
God's true Gospel by just believing.
He is love, and will hear your pleading,
And to your souls be always leading.

DOMITIUS (enters)—Why have you not arrested these Christians?
Are you not proving traitors to Rome?

AGRICOLA—We heard nothing treasonable in word or action.

DOMITIUS—I will have you reported to the Emperor. Your
commission will be taken from you, and you forever will be disgraced.

AGRICOLA—Disgraced! Di-graced! When commands to arrest
innocent people, then let me me disgraced. When love is shewn,
when hate is expected. Let me be disgraced. By being humiliated
and made low that I may rise. Then let me be disgraced, let me be
disgraced. (Enter Titus and Cecilia.)

DOMITIUS—Titus, Titus, my brother. Do you still persist in
keeping company with that woman? Have you no respect for your-
self or for your parents? [Enter Crier from the Senate and says,
"Vespasian is no more and the Senate have declared Titus emperor."]
(The Assembly all together.) Hail, Titus, our Emperor! Long live
Titus!

DOMITIUS—I suppose now you will marry the Christian?

TITUS—Hear me, my subjects, and give heed to what I say.
No. I will never marry Cecilia, because I am unworthy of her. She
has shown to me that her Christian faith is not only pure and virtu-
ous, but invincible to temptations, be they ever so strong. Though I
offered her a worldly crown, with all the pomp, glory and prestige it
brings she would refuse. Her faith in Christ, her earnestness in the
conversion of others, and her intense love for the souls of her fellow-
men almost persuades me to become a Christian. I have watched
the Christians very carefully and am now fully convinced that they

make the best citizens. They teach morality, honesty, love for one another and a constant desire to win souls in order to make better men and better women. To you then, Christians, I will give the protection of Rome. May God prosper you and may the world some day be convinced that where Christianity is, there also is the greatest freedom of thought, the greatest display of virtue, the greatest respect for one another, and the greatest safety of life and property.

CLOSING ODE.

Mighty monarch, we welcome thee
To our gathering that you see ;
Always loyal to the core,
We will defend you from shore to shore.



