

There had whispered a voice,
'Twas the voice of her God,
I love thee, I love thee,
Pass under the rod.

"Chet would be sorry if I gave up to idleness and despair, when there is so much to be done in the world," she had said, and bravely strove to do for others, hoping that in thus doing she might find a panacea for her own bleeding heart. Homesick and heartsick oftentimes, she remained in Utah until late in the winter, when hostilities became so open that her gentle friends urged her to go at once. Bab and her mother felt sure that most of the trouble had originated with Julia, who was jealous because the "fine lady," as she called her, was so friendly with them; and deep was their grief at the parting.

"You will write to me, Bab?" Nellie said.

"If I can; but I doubt their letting my letters go out or yours reach me."

More than a year elapsed after the departure of Miss Swinton before the death of Mrs. Leslie, and not one word had Bab received from the former. Several times had she written, but in vain. They were suspected and watched, evidently.

"Six weeks to-night since my poor mother died," mused Bab, one evening as she sat by the window of her little room, watching the last rays of sunlight on the mountain peaks beyond the beautiful Salt lake. She was fond of being alone now, and spent many hours watching those same mountains upon which for years her mother had gazed, oftentimes through blinding tears.

"Where are you, my own sweet mamma? And can you see your lonely Bab?"

Then she thought of her friend, somewhere out in the world, in the world of which she had scarcely a more definite idea than she had of heaven. How she longed to get away, to be free. Despite her father's promise, she felt insecure. She knew he had already received several offers for her hand, and that if an advantageous one presented itself Julia would urge him to sacrifice her. Money was needed in the family; her father had ever been a poor financier. She knew her beauty would command a high price. No wonder the future looked dark and threatening. Of two things, however, she felt certain. The one, that her father would try to compel her to marry; the other, that she would die rather than break her promise to her mother. She had been taught from infancy to hate the accursed system that had blighted her mother's life; yet, at the same time, she had learned to be quiet and dissemble her feelings. Perhaps a little of her father's craftiness was hers by inheri-

ance. It was the one thing for which he was noted. The trial came sooner than she had expected.

"Barbara, my child, you are lonesome here, and ought to have a home of your own," he began one evening in his most persuasive manner. "You are old enough to marry. Let me see, you must be seventeen, and I have had a number of good offers; but yesterday I got one entirely too good to ignore. You may feel yourself highly favored to be chosen at last by an elder, and one so wealthy and influential as Brother Dunham."

"Brother Dunham! Good heavens!" The words burst from the quivering lips with passionate, surprised emphasis.

"Yes, to be sure, and it is something for a poor girl like you to be thankful for, to be sealed to one so high in the church as he."

"But you promised mother that I need not marry unless I wished, and I do not wish."

"Now see here, Barbara, you are a sensible girl—too sensible, I am sure, to have any nonsense about this. To be sure, I promised Elenor some such thing, just to relieve her mind and help her die easy. I could not well do otherwise; but a promise made under such circumstances can not, of course, be considered binding. She was not herself when she requested it. It was a mere whim."

Bab had risen during the foregoing harangue, and stood with white face and eyes full of horror and dread. This, then, was the end. She knew him so well; and then, a man who could thus set aside a vow he had called on Heaven to witness—what had she to hope or expect from such an one? She did not, could not, speak; but with unsteady step left the room. It was several days before the subject was again referred to, and meanwhile the girl had done some deep thinking.

"Barbara, Brother Dunham is coming here to-night to see you; and you understand that it is my will that you treat him well and make no trouble."

"Father, if I must be sold to this creature, you will at least let me have my way in one thing?"

Delighted with what seemed an easy victory, he kindly told her that any reasonable wish would be granted.

"Then, I am not to be sealed until Christmas, and meanwhile he is not to come here."

"Pretty hard lines for so ardent a lover, but I will see him, and if he agrees, all right."

"How many wi—?" but she could not ask the question, and burst into hysterical weeping.

"Let 'er squall; it 'll do her good," said Julia, coarsely.

Vainly Clara tried to comfort her. "Don't cry so, Bab; I wouldn't feel bad. You'll live in a fine house, and have servants and a carriage, and be the favorite.