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PATIENCE WORTH

. . . *Temptress*

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PATIENCE WORTH

TEMPTRESS

By

R. F. MALONE



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Works referred to :

The Case of Patience Worth. By DR. W. F. PRINCE, Ph.D. Published by The Boston Society for Psychical Research.

Patience Worth: A Psychic Mystery. By CASPER S. YOST.

The Sorry Tale. By PATIENCE WORTH.

Hope Trueblood. By PATIENCE WORTH. Published by Henry Holt & Co., New York.

Foreword

Here is presented—shaped at the outset as a fairy tale—the story in miniature of a personality and of a phenomenon judged to be, in the words of an American professor of English literature, “without precedent in all recorded history,” as “the outstanding phenomenon of our age, and, I cannot help thinking, of all time.” Other authorities of unquestioned weight have ranked it as “of transcending importance to humanity,” and as “affording convincing proof of immortality.”

In most of the commentaries upon *Patience Worth* and her works stress is laid less upon her personality than upon the character of the literature torrentially poured out by her and the incredible conditions of its production. It has been described as “containing passages of bewildering beauty, of high spirits, of pathos, and all in a language of indescribable simplicity and felicity,” as “containing nothing spooky, no hint of the weird, no trace of the uncanny; instead, a sweet and gracious spirit, wise withal and winning.”

“Literature,” says another, “is something real and tangible—something we can lay hands on, so to speak; it is, in a sense, physical—it can be seen with the eyes; and this literature is the physical evidence which *Patience* presents of herself as a separate and distinct personality.”

One of the masterpieces of literature given to the world by *Patience Worth* was her *HOPE TRUEBLOOD*, a tale with its setting in mid-Victorian England, which was hailed as having qualities reminiscent of the *Brontë* sisters and their work. One wondering reviewer asked a question which many readers of these pages may well feel impelled to echo: “Can it be that this is some *Brontë* from Spirit-land who has found a tiny aperture through the bleak wall of death to which she has pressed her lips?”

"For me the thunderbolt has fallen. . . .
If you will let me use the language of the
professional logic-shop, a universal proposi-
tion can be made untrue by a particular
instance. If you wish to upset the law that
all fairies are bad, you mustn't seek to show
that no fairies are bad ; it is enough if you
prove one single fairy to be good. My one
good fairy is Patience Worth."

PROFESSOR WILLIAM JAMES.

(Audaciously paraphrased).

PATIENCE WORTH

. . . . *Tempress*

CHAPTER I

Patience Arrives

Never a siren sang with more desire to tempt
than I,
For I am a lurer of men : I am a temptress.
Behold,
I make my songs like loving arms and scarlet lips
Warm of that ecstasy which is the wine of love.
Yea, I sing as a siren upon the shore of Eternity,
Tempting men to forget the day and know Him.

So sang Patience Worth, the fairy of our
tale, now about to make her bow to new
friends.

This is her story.

One summer's day, in the year 1913, a strange little visitor made an uninvited and unexpected call upon a lady named Mrs. Pearl Curran at her home in the middle west of America—away in the Mississippi Valley. She said that her name was Patience Worth, a singer of songs and a teller of tales—a fairy dame—and, then and later, that she had come from England, from Dorsetshire, in or about the year 1694. She had come to stay with the Currans and to “bake her bread” at their hearth.

Now, there are limits to what even a fairy story may tell, especially in America, where most people do not believe at all in fairies: even Americans who have come from a country which used to be alive with fairies known as “the good people,” until the scent of petrol and the screeching of the saxophones sweeping over the fields and woods drove them away. But, like ordinary folk, these fairies were a mixed lot, good and bad, the bad ones being known as “phookas.”

Some of the people who got to hear the wonderful things told about Patience wanted to make out that, if she were a real fairy, she was sure to be a very bad kind of fairy, pretending to be good. The first four lines in the verse we have just read would certainly make it look as if she herself was making the admission that she was a pretty bad lot: what some would call a brazen hussy. But in the two last lines she makes a sudden turn the other way. A clever trick for an innocent fairy!

The news of her coming soon got about, giving rise to lots of argument and dispute between people who believed and people who didn't; between those who thought she was good and those who thought she was bad, and the whole affair came to be called the Riddle of Patience Worth, all sorts of guesses being made at the answer. Some who believed could not see how any question of a riddle could come in. If any readers of this story think that there is one, they can enjoy the fun of trying to find the answer,

right up to the last page—and maybe after !

There are two kinds of story readers : those who keep young only while they are growing up, and others who stay young all the time they are alive. This story is meant to suit both.

Other books have been written about Patience, although not exactly as fairy stories. There is one in particular—a very big book of over five hundred pages—written by an American professor, Dr. W. F. Prince, who became a great friend of hers. It tells what was said by some of the hundreds of people who knew Patience, talked and joked with her, and even cried with her. For instance, Mrs. Curran once shed tears over the sadness of some verses of hers about the day's sorrows being made up for by the night's happy dreams, but Patience didn't like to see her crying ; so, all at once, she made up a funny rhyme that made her laugh.

There will be lots of things in this book very hard for some folk to believe ; so,

before going any further, we will let them see what other people more important than we are have said about Patience ; we will not ask anyone to take our word only. Who these were, and all about them, can be found in Dr. Prince's book. We are not giving their names—only saying what they were.

An Editor :

“ Beyond dispute, a remarkable mind and personality.”

A Professor of Philosophy :

“ In wit, spirituality, wisdom, reasoning power, in apparent divination of human hearts, she is prodigious.”

Another :

“ One thing is certain : that this evening you have been in the presence of one of the greatest minds you will ever meet.”

A Professor of English Literature :

“ Must be regarded as the outstanding phenomenon of our age, and, I cannot help thinking, of all time.”

An Editor :

“For resourcefulness in debate I have never seen or heard anything like that of Patience Worth—ranging from piety to clever wit, and often scalding sarcasm.”

A Clergyman :

“Full of bright humour and friendly charm.”

An Author :

“Keen, swift, subtle, profound. . . . Intellectual power, spiritual significance, beauty and depth.”

A fine collection of big words! Too big, really, for a fairy story; but they are put in to make some of the never-give-ins sit up and think twice before throwing the book away.

It will not be possible to make this story as simple or as easy as, say, those our younger ones can hear at the B.B.C. Children's Hour, but those are only make-ups; not true, like ours. The B.B.C., it is said, has a mortal

dread of fairies like our Patience, with their microphones guarded by never-sleeping watchdogs who can scent them a mile away. One, however, did manage to slip in during Easter holiday week last year, but was caught and given the works before getting as far as the red light. Their Brains Trust, too, feels that way. Some of the Brains-trusters think that such fairies, if they really exist, never speak anything but utter drivel. One of the most popular Wise Men in England—Professor Joad—has laid it down that “they certainly can have no brains,” thereby showing that Professors, as well as Doctors, may differ; but, if only half what our Professors as quoted here have said is true, it is clear that Patience must have a lot more brains than all the Brainstrusters rolled into one!

Anyhow, all that is a matter for the grown-ups, and, before the youngsters get crowded out, we will let them have something special for themselves in our next chapter.

CHAPTER II

The Fairy Godmother

We are told that Patience was simply cracked about children, especially babies; that "It is on the infant that she bestows her tenderest words," and that her love for childhood "is shown in many lines of rare and tender beauty."

Here is a little verse, one from scores of her poems which had childhood for their subject :

A LULLABY

Dream, dream, thou flesh of me ; dream thou
 next my breast ;
 Dream, dream, and coax the stars to light thee
 at thy rest.
 Sleep, sleep, thou breath of Him who watcheth
 thee and me ;
 Dream, dream, and, dreaming, coax that He
 shall see.

And another :

I wonder if Mary, the Mother,
 Jealous of all childhood, keeps not
 The vigil of the night, lighting
 A tiny taper for each soul that seeks
 The eternity of dreams ; croons not
 Through the long hours and intecedes
 With God through her motherhood.

Certain people may be likely to greet these lines with a cynical snort—but we need not bother about that just now.

On one occasion she gave quite a long sermon about there not being enough babies in the world ; and she wrote a lovely long story all about a poor little orphan girl, a homeless waif, loved by nobody and wanted by nobody. Hope Trueblood was her name, Sally Trueblood her mother's name ; and folk, supposed to be good people, called the little child "Sally Trueblood's brat."

Patience could, of course, as easily have written about fine lords and ladies, with a princess for her heroine ; but it shows how

little she cared for creatures of that kind when she chose instead a homeless little beggar girl.

“Ye see,” she said, “I have witched them by strumming the tenderest chord in woman-kind—the mother chord. You see, I have witched them by a wee lassie who lived laughing through woeing.”

When the Hope Trueblood story was printed in England, people thought that Patience Worth was just a common flesh-and-blood, common-or-garden authoress. Her name was new to nearly everybody in England, and the critics wrote about the book, not knowing anything about the authoress.

We may let some of them speak for themselves—to back up anything we can say about it.

Here are some of the things they said :

“This is a novel which will stand as a landmark of fiction by a new writer who will take a place among great writers.”

“A strangely memorable book, written out of the author’s heart, with, at times, extraordinary power.”

“A very strange and delicious experience it is to find such a book in the ranks of later-day fiction. The writer harks back to the time in which the Brontës wrote in order to portray in so exactly a form the biography of a brat.”

“*Hope Trueblood* is one of the most powerful and gripping stories of English life : one of the most powerful character studies I have ever read.”

All these big words again ! We meant to save them for the grown-up end of our story, but, by putting them in now, they may help to keep certain people sitting up, and reading on in spite of themselves.

The selling of the Hope Trueblood story made some money, of which the Currans were to have a share ; and they were planning the spending of it when Patience sprang a surprise upon them by telling them that the

money did not belong to them, but to God, and that they should "seek a wee babe who had nothing, nothing," and take it and care for it! "I am a weaver of cloth," she said, "and the cloth I weave is not for him who hath. Thou shalt seek a wee babe who hath naught, and deliver the goods of me into its hand, and shalt speak its name 'Patience Worth.' Ye shall whisper sweets unto it and tell unto it of a fairy dame who shall minister unto it, and of Him who sent her."

The Currans asked "Why a girl instead of a boy?" and were answered: "Ye see, a man laddie hath a man's cunning; but the wee dames—ah! I know."

As the Curran household, although without any children, was well stocked with relatives, the idea of the suggested addition was by no means welcome; but Patience insisted, and was given her way.

Then began a long and unsuccessful search for the necessary baby, in which many false clues were followed up. When in one case

they were on the point of succeeding, at a home for poor babies, the lady in charge sent them about their business on learning that the child was to have—a fairy godmother!

At length it happened that a friend of Mrs. Curran's told her of a homeless and friendless young wife who was going to have a baby. Her husband had been killed in an accident, leaving her destitute.

In due time it came to pass that a legal document was executed, giving the Currans the right to adopt the child in the event of the mother's death, and some weeks later the child—a girl—was born. Four days later the mother died.

The little one was christened Patience Worth Curran; Mr. Casper Yost—editor of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* and writer of the first book written about Patience—acted as godfather.

According to Mrs. Curran, "the babe was a weakling at first, and it was predicted we

would never raise it. Early in its life we had trouble with its food, and the family doctor advised lessening it. Patience dipped in at this moment and told us it must have ‘pap, more pap,’ and, when we called in a specialist, he began to fill it up with pap, and it soon got all right.”

It thus became evident that the godmother-ship of Patience was not going to be one in name only, as is mostly the case with common-or-garden godmothers. To quote Mrs. Curran again: “At another time, when some trouble was on, Patience told us to ‘herb it with catnip and fennel.’ We sent for some, and, when the doctor came, he laughed and told us he had brought a bottle of it along.” It is also told that Patience used to tell the doctor whenever Mrs. Curran disobeyed his instructions. She liked to fondle the child, and could not bear to hear it cry. The doctor thought that a baby ought to cry a certain amount, and Patience would tell him every time Mrs. Curran

quieted it. She believed that “a babe without a wail is like a dog without a tail!”

She had, too, some very decided opinions and prejudices on the subject of dress—in favour of a very plain style somewhat on Puritan lines; and one of her first orders was that the child should be dressed plainly, with no ribbons or frills, and that around her neck should hang “the sign of Him.” And her likes and dislikes as to personal decoration led her to fall foul of both Mr. and Mrs. Curran and to give them a piece of her mind.

It was on the occasion of a trip to New York, when Mrs. Curran sported “a new hair-switch” and Mr. Curran a swallow-tail coat.

“Such a trumpery,” she said to Mrs. Curran. “There be nay swine who would borrow his brother’s bristles! I woe me o’er the follied top—but when I think of the heart within her!”

Mr. Curran fared no better. "Every donkey wondereth if yon lady upon the roadway hath seen how his rump shineth!" was the rebuke he got.

It may be thought that Patience cannot have been a very respectable or polite sort of fairy to use such rude words to a nice lady and gentleman, but it must be remembered that Patience belongs to the seventeenth century—a time when the like was done by the very best people; even Shakespeare himself never thought twice about calling a spade a spade.

Patience was asked if the child would be something out of the ordinary, and she said that was not her hope: "that if it would grow to shed one pure ray of God's light," she would be satisfied; and "these wee ones are lost on the torrent-swept seas of earth's day, without one beam or broken spar to bear up their frailness. Behold, this babe is the very dregs of sorrow, yet, now clothed in love, look upon her! Nothing that contains

the fire of love can be called a poor task. I say that those who live on earth are loath to take these babes; then behold, these hands shall lay hold on flesh and minister unto it, even though no man seeth their workings."

To a girl who was holding the child she said: "Wrap thine arms around this wee small flesh, and let thy love clothe her warm. The Earth hath a rich store of loves, but the hands of men have locked up the store, and it takes the hand of a babe to open it."

On the christening day she gave this prayer to God: "From out the white lilies clothe her. Out from its stored and glistening gold give her treasure. Pluck from the deep blue, the steadfast sky, the opening unto depths that may be hers. Yet leave her sorrow. Make full her cup, that she may know Thy heights and depths. Open up her heart, and write there no promise of some golden price, but write Thy words and teach her lips to kiss them!"

There is very little told of "Patience Wee" beyond the stage of her infancy. Among some casual incidents it is related that a lady visitor from London saw her at two years old "with mentality positively astounding, singing songs to a banging accompaniment on the piano and talking much," and at three years "saying everything she hears, and putting sentences together in a startling, original way." Still later she was pictured as "a fine girl of twelve years, sitting still as the proverbial mouse, and loving to be present when the messages were coming through."

And now the time has come for us to take our leave of Patience Wee and to listen again to the fairy godmother, who has quite a lot to say about herself and the "bread" she means to bake. This will bring in a flood of big words which only the grown-ups could understand, and they will take away some of the fairyishness of our story; but they have to come in to help to knock certain silly ideas out of the heads of the foolish grown-ups,

who talk nonsense about mysteries and about riddles to be answered. That lot will argue and dispute to no end as to whether Patience was a good or a bad fairy—or even a fairy at all; but not so you youngsters, who now know enough about her to be certain that she is a fairy, and a really good one. It would be an insult to your intelligence to suppose that any of you could be stupid enough to think anything else.

So now we must move on to the next part of our story.

CHAPTER III

Patience Talks

“Many moons ago I lived. Patience Worth my name. Wait, I would speak with thee. If thou shalt live, then so shall I. I make my bread by the hearth. Good friends, let us be merry. The time for work is past. Let the tabby drowse and blink her wisdom to the fire log.”

It was with this strange and cryptic utterance that Patience announced her presence at the Curran fireside on that July evening in 1913, as reported by Mr. Casper S. Yost in his *Patience Worth, a Psychic Mystery*, where the story of her advent and the reactions to it of her host for many years to be are told in fullest detail. He tells that “thus began a series of communications

that in intellectual vigour and literary quality are virtually without precedent—conversations, talks, dramas, all the way from sportive to religious, and even prayers, a verbatim report of which has been made right from the very first.”

Her claim to have lived “many moons ago” was her way of breaking the news that, as well as being a “fairy dame,” she was a ghost of some two hundred years standing!

It is not intended to discuss the pros and cons of that claim, nor the worthiness or the wickedness inspiring her torrential outpourings. It will be for each reader to work out for himself his answer to the “Riddle of Patience Worth.” Ample material for the task will be provided by the selections given throughout these pages—a choice wide and varied enough to give an insight into the depths of her mind and heart, even though the relevance of some of them may not be apparent on the surface.

In our opening pages we have had

quoted something of what observers and others said and wrote about her work, but nothing of what she said about herself or her work. In fact, she was very sparing as regarded references to her past, but quite otherwise as to her intended work, as we shall see presently.

“About me you would know much,” she said on one occasion to an inquisitive inquirer. “Yesterday is dead. Let thy mind rest as to the past.” To another she said: “Ask the cat: she dieth oft!”

Nevertheless, she did condescend at times to reveal some little odds and ends. Upon a visitor happening to express the opinion that “the personal things were of very great importance.” Patience said: “My petty-skirt hath a scallop. Maybe that will help thy history!”

Mrs. Curran then said: “The little villian! She has caught on to the fact that we are planning to put her in a book!”

Patience went on: “Yea, and tell them of my buckled boots, and add a cap-string. Hast thou the measure of my tongue?”

Among the exceptions to her rule of silence was her story of certain childhood memories of her church-going, and of a certain Parson Pritchard.

“The good man often denounced sin and fearsome flauntings, but lawk! he squinted a whit. I had a silver buckle on my boot, and no man knew it, save the good man. He looked soberly, with the soberness he turned upon the Word, at the buckle. Aye, and thy handmaid sent him up a wee upward look; aye, and he rubbed his chin and coughed mightily.”

She spoke of her mother as one “filled of righteousness and emptied of mercy,” and of her Puritan folk as having “drunk not truth, but sent a-coursing through my veins naught but chaff.” Of the women of her day: “Chattles, beasties, verily! Ye should see my mither’s thumbs, flat with the twisting

of flax, and me in buskins a-lookin' at the castle and dreaming dreams!"

Throughout her recorded conversations we find many gay touches in sharp contrast to the deadly seriousness of other of her outpourings; and, to the reader who may be painting a mental picture of the sprite upon whom he is sitting in judgment, they may call for an extra tint for his palette. We may give a few selections before passing on to more solid material.

Upon Mr. Yost saying to her, "Patience, I'd like to put my arms around you and kiss you . . . I'm going to do it sometime if I have to chase you all over heaven," she replied: "Tarry, brother mine! I tell ye I shall down my bonnet's curtains! I warrant a spinster be pledged even though she be thrice thy grandsire's age."

Asked her opinion of the girls of her day, she said: "A silly lot, as these of thine."

And as to what Mr. Curran and some friends were seeing at the time of a visit to

the theatre: "Ne'er a timid wench! My pettiskirt ye may borrow for the brazens—a sorry lot. Not harmful, but boring."

Her reaction to modern music and the simian antics of its devotees was expressed in no uncertain fashion.

"Stop the dinning! Stop the motley laughter! Aye, and the garish musics where dead spirits play in living flesh!"

Of the doctors of her day she said: "A sorry lot, eh! Aye, and they did for to seek of root and herb—aye, and play 'pon the wit or the lacking o' it!" And to a doctor present: "Stand before God at the end of thy wisdom and bow."

Of the flapper: "They dare what the past hoped for."

Upon a visitor remarking, "Patience, you talk like Lucifer," Mr. Reedy (a St. Louis editor) interposed, "I was under the impression that Lucifer was a figure of speech," getting the reply, "So am I, if you and some others are right."

Here are some more exchanges in lighter vein :

Mrs. H. : " She must have been wonderful at repartee when she was young."

Patience : " Am I not young ? "

Mrs. H. : " Then, what is your age, Patience ? "

Patience : " Seven is odd. 'Tis so my age. 'Tis odd, I forget it."

Mrs. P. : " She will not betray her age. It is when we begin to get old that we are touchy about it."

Patience : " Let the cat have its nine lives."

Mrs. H. : " Can you give me some message, Patience, for Miss R. Perhaps you were a bride yourself."

Patience : " Ye gods! Let bygones be bygones."

Mrs. H. : " Is it possible you were a maiden lady ? "

Patience : " A maid may surely see the folly of over-married hussies."

Mrs. H. : " Now, I am sure she was a spinster, or she would not be so touchy on the subject."

Patience : " In ye days of better times a maid dare not to ask a man."

Mr. K. : " She never says anything nice to me."

Patience : " Ah! and thy damie beside thee! She should know that a spinster may not brush a man's breeks. Lor! I hae seen the duckin' for less! "

It was admitted as beyond question that Patience exercised the power to read the inmost thoughts of those about her, their characters and activities, and could discern at once the mental attitude of each towards herself, and, naturally, the compliments or otherwise dealt out by her were coloured accordingly. " I be a dealer o' sweets," she said to one, " and I be a dealer o' souris if I choose! "

Her "sour," however, were few, and never over-sour, and were mostly aimed at the men. We already have told of one instance, when she gave both Mr. and Mrs. Curran a fairly sharp taste of one with reference to his swallow-tail coat and her hair-switch.

Here is a little mixed bag of her sour and sweets: "Sawdust would build thy head and fill thy crannies, yet ye feel smug in wisdom."

"Were I to wish thee justice, 'twould be vain; should I wish thee understanding, 'twould be the same."

"He yonder hath much aneath his skull's cap that he wordeth not."

"A man loveth his wife, but ah! the buckles on his knee-breeks!"

This one, to a doctor, was more complimentary:

"Aye, but he ahere hath a wise pate. Aye, he seeketh, and deep athin the heart o' him sinketh seed o' the word o' me."

And, now, to see how the ladies fared:

"I shall set thee a wishing on thy path. That the sprite of happiness shall follow thee, and, when thou wouldst sorry, tickle thee!"

"She be a star bloom that nestleth in the soft grass of the spring, but ah! the brightness cast to him who sinketh aweary!"

"And lo, She standeth head ahigh and eye to sky and faith astrong; and foot abusied still travelleth rugged fields."

Upon Mrs. Curran showing signs of impatience at the length of one of her discourses, Patience said: "Ah, weary me, weary me, from treading the long way to thy heart. Wilt thou not let me rest awhile therein?" And again: "She doth boil and seethe and bake and brew, and yet I have a loving for the wench."

The passage broken into by Mrs. Curran was part of a discourse upon Love, and is worth quoting here:

"Unto all of you there be a brother; and would each man take unto him one

brother—look ye, there would show no hunger nor woe, and Earth should be wrapped within a cloth wove by the hands of all men; and this cloth would be love. Hath a man much, then should he deal unto the man who needeth, little of his much. Hath a man less, he should deal unto one who needeth of his less. And this goeth on and on, even unto him who hath naught save a smile.

“Think ye, men who from out Earth hath plucked her stores; what may ye buy? Gilded stuffs, gauds, bubbles, when ye might see some dull eye open and look on high—some darkened one whose in—man lieth cast unto the depths. Think ye on it!”

To a clergyman who had been entertaining the idea of giving up the ministry by reason of a wavering faith, Patience gave this word-picture of his ordeal:

“Thine eyes have looked upon His wonders and known them; then thou knowest that no thing is without Him. Yea, thou knowest,

for thou hast seen thy very faith take wings and fly unto bright lights wherein thou didst lose its small winged form; and thou didst wait, and behold, it came back unto thee, unhurt, unafraid, whole, speeding safe unto thee, for with thy faith that thou didst send forth, didst thou send thy love, its fender!”

Here we have some passages more in the first person:

“Oh, think upon it, beloved: out of chaos He hath called thee and me: I to sing and thou to listen!”

“Thy handmaid be as disseminate as atoms, as universal as light, yet as concrete as he who kens her will allow. I be like the wind who leaveth not track.”

“’Tis ahind a cloak I stand, that this word be, and not me.”

“Dusts o’ me do spray ’pon airs, and yet I be.”

“My tongue was loosed while thine was yet to be.”

“For thy handmaid came back with but her song and His lute, and nay hand that might strum it.”

“I weave not, nay, but 'neath these hands shall such a word set up that Earth shall burn with wonder.”

“Ye should see the wee grey dame! Such an mothie, that spinneth beauteous web.”

“There be much ado, and yet I say me unto thee that it shall be that this barque shall sail upon clear seas unto the day, and no man shall know from whither, but men shall seek and take of her store.”

A special interest lies in statements of a more intimate kind made by Patience concerning her relations with Mrs. Curran, to whom she referred as her “harp”—“my harp—a bit away—but my harp withal.” “Save that I find a harp to lean on, I am mute,” she said, “it be a trick o’ throbbin.” “The wench be attuned unto the throb o’ me,” and she described her finding of Mrs.

Curran as the result of a long and weary search for one attuned to her “throb.”

We can picture some of our readers saying: “Such a silly story!—a funny kind of fairy hunting for a properly tuned-up harp!” We know that the like was said long ago by people who thought that there was no such fairy as Patience, but only Mrs. Curran fooling with some awfully clever kind of juggling; but we know, too, that their theory was shown to be utterly and grotesquely wrong. It was demolished (at great length) in the works of Dr. Prince and Mr. Yost, where anyone can read his fill on the question.

The name of Shakespeare—as well as those of many other great writers—may be found cropping up frequently in the comments and controversies circling around Patience and her work, and in this particular case a certain striking inference has been drawn. It may be shaped thus: On the assumption that our fairy, Patience, did really and truly

make the search for, and finding of, Pearl Curran in the manner described, and did use her as a means of giving to the world her *Sorry Tale*, her *Hope Trueblood*, and all the rest, who could deny the possibility, at least, of some other fairy or fairies having in like manner used William Shakespeare for the launching of *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, and much else? Without, or even with, his knowledge? Many years ago the famous Mr. Donnelly succeeded, to his own satisfaction and to that of many others, in demonstrating that Shakespeare could not by any possibility have been capable of producing works that bear his name. Bacon, he contended, was their real author.

Anyhow, this fairy tale of ours is being put together to tell of doings actually recorded as facts, and not to deal with controversies as to what Patience called their "whys or why nots," for which she cared not; and, as this little digression has already carried us somewhat over our boundary line, we may

leave it at that, and listen again to Patience herself :

"What is my voice? A vague thing, carrying
naught but a song,
Some wisdom, little learning, keen atimes.
I have naught to entreat thee save that ye
would drink with me
A common cup of understanding.
Lo, I proffer thee the wine of my being, for I
have lived ;
I proffer thee wine which is bitter, for I have
wept.
I proffer thee wine which is sweet, for I have
loved ;
I proffer thee wine which is salt, for I have wept ;
I proffer thee wine rich in dreams, for I, too,
have dreamed.

"A phantom? Weel enough, prove thyself to me!
I say, behold, here I be, buskins, kirtle, cap and
pettyskirt
And much tongue! Weel, what hast thou to
prove thee?"

CHAPTER IV

Patience Sings

As already stated, the great bulk of the matter produced by Patience remained unpublished, stowed away in typescript, the portion given to the world at large appearing mainly in the works of Dr. W. F. Prince and Mr. Casper S. Yost, and in stray articles in sundry periodicals; Dr. Prince's *The Case of Patience Worth* being a book of 500 odd pages and Mr. Yost's—a smaller volume—*Patience Worth: A Psychic Mystery*.

Among the outstanding features of the work of Patience are its amazing volume and the incredible speed of production under seemingly impossible conditions.

In Dr. Prince's book is given a full-page record of the matter produced on thirty-five

different evenings between April 7th and June 29th, 1916, the totals working out thus:

Poems	.....	5,150 words
Talks	.....	16,590 "
<i>The Sorry Tale</i>	.....	26,850 (part of 325,000)
<i>Panda</i>	.....	13,300
<i>The Merry Tale</i>	.....	4,850
		<hr/>
		66,740

And, at a later period, a total of *three million words* was recorded, with more to follow!

Great as was this quantity, it was not in any way at the expense of quality. Dr. Prince quoted the recorded opinion of one witness—a lawyer—thus:

"There is no other person in the world who can, under such circumstances, even remotely approach this work in spontaneity, beauty, perfection of form, or in content."

Regarding the feature of spontaneity, he further says: "Suppose that any living poet you can name were to have more than thirty

subjects fired at him one after another in a single evening, and attempt to extemporise, with the result that he orally delivered 32 short poems and 7 more or less witty aphoristic remarks, the whole containing 1360 words! Is there one who would dare to be put to such a test?" After a recognised American poet—Edgar Lee Masters—had listened to the improvisation of a number of poems by Patience on subjects given, he was asked if he knew of any writer who could do the like, and he replied: "There is but one answer to that question. It simply cannot be done."

On one such occasion Dr. Prince himself asked for a poem "on the cocker spaniel dog."

"On February 13th, 1926, I asked Patience to give me a poem on the cocker spaniel dog: its love or faithfulness, or whatever she pleased. As most dogs are capable of love and faithfulness, I did not consider I was giving any points away. I had the particular cocker spaniel that was a member

of my family in mind, and, while I mainly wanted the poem for its own sake, I did wonder if there would be in it any of that knowledge of a sitter's mind which was so often referred to in the record. This is what I got!

A COCKER SPENIEL

"Is it the God within those deep, deep eyes?
 Could love express from human kind
 More than the tremble of thy flesh,
 The eagerness of thy desire,
 The leap of thy service?
 Once I have known thee, have I not known God!
 Have I not found Him in a newer way expressed?
 Companion, making one with my day
 A fellow, mute, yet eloquent!
 Can I forget thou art the game at my hand,
 And the servant at my feet?"

"Here is a beautiful and compressed characterisation of the cocker spaniel, true in every phrase. But here is what impressed me. Fifi's love and adoration for me, but still more for her mistress, is so marvellous that I have often said: 'It is awful—awe inspiring—beyond what human beings are

capable of. It seems cosmic—it gives me the feeling that I am witnessing the manifestation of a great force in the universe! And that is what is expressed in the first two and the sixth and seventh lines of the poem.”

Throughout all the recorded work of Patience there runs one dominant note—that of universal love: love of God, of humankind, of all created things, animate and inanimate, lovely and unlovely, down to “the creeping mite, the winged speck”; all this finding expression mostly in her poems.

Ah, could I love thee,
 Thou loveless o' the earth
 And pry beneath the crannies
 Yet untouched by mortal hand,
 To send them this love o' mine,
 Thou creeping mite, and winged speck . . .

We have just now seen how she dealt with the love of a little dog as her subject. Here is a portion of a no less notable companion

piece—a poem to a dead skylark—given at a moment's notice, unprepared:

Oh, wing that hath stilled
 Of beating the heavens and descended!
 Oh throat that is empty
 And song that is gone!
 Oh, eyes that knew with intimate
 Contact, the leafy glen
 And the shadow boats that swung
 Beneath the sunnied leaves!
 Oh, breast that panted of the joy
 Of Spring, and knew the thrill
 Of Summer's heights!
 Little companion of the heavens:
 What, hast thou fallen!

Ah me, ah me,
 When the Spring returns
 I shall hear thee,
 I shall see some be-blossomed spray
 To nod and see thee clinging there,
 Spraying her with thy song,
 Bathing the beauty of her blossoms
 With God's benediction,
 And when I look unto the skies
 I shall know that out,
 Out with the silver of eternity
 Thou speedest, with thy spirit
 Singing, singing!

Comparison has been made—more or less apologetically — between this poem and Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark*, and it has been said that Shelley's work excels in beauty of diction, but that of Patience in depth and profundity of thought. That may provide for many readers a little exercise for their critical faculties. Will many of them hesitate to give the daring opinion that in this particular case the work of Patience does not take second place in either quality?

Upon the same theme we find another poem as follows :

“ What do I hear ?
 A flooding song, as though the sun
 Had poured its golden wine,
 Earthward in cadences of beauty
 Hath Heaven loosed its bars,
 Letting the echo steal earthward ?
 What do I hear ?
 Is it the pent-up agony
 Of my heart which has borne fruit
 In song ? Is it, mayhap,
 Half-laughing melodies so sweetly
 Reminiscent of a thousand instants
 I have cherished ? Or is it——
 Ah, it is !—a lark,
 Beating heavenwards, lifting its song
 From earth's contamination.”

Dr. Prince gives a considerable amount of attention to comparisons made between the work of many famous poets and that of Patience—in which some of them certainly cut a poor figure. It would appear that it has been more or less definitely suggested that some of her work is just a re-hash of theirs. Many of these comparisons are as far fetched as if one were to say that when Patience wrote that “ Earth be a home of sorrow's dream—'tis death that setteth free ” she was endeavouring to paraphrase Shelley's lines :

Peace, Peace ! He is not dead, he doth not
 sleep,
 He hath awakened from the dream of life !

The three following selections (all abridged) are addressed to the “ weary and heavy-laden ” :

Ah, emptied heart ! The weary o' the path !
 How would I to fill ye up of love !
 I'd tear this lute, that it might whirr
 A song that soothed thy lone, awearied path

From out the wastes o' earth I'd seek
 And catch the woe-tears shed
 That I might drink them from the cup
 And fill it up with loving,
 From out the hearts afull o' love
 Would I to steal the over-drip
 And pack the emptied hearts o' earth . . .

And age-wabbled brother,
 I do love thee for thy spending,
 And I do gaze in loving at thy face,
 Whereon I find His peace
 And trace the withered cheek
 For record of His love.
 Around thy lips doth hang
 The child-smile of a trusting heart ;
 And world hath vanished
 From thine eyes, bedimmed
 To guard thee at awaking :
 Thou, too, art of my song of love.

Is here thy path along the hard-flagged pave,
 Where, bowed, the workers shuffle blindly on ?
 And dumbly stand in gullies bound,
 The worn, be-dogged, silent suffering beast,
 Far driven past his due.
 And thou, beloved, hath thy burden worn thee
 weary ?
 Come, Brother, then let's on together.

A PRAYER FOR A BLIND WOMAN

Oh, Divine One, touch with thy love
 The mantle of earth which is woe,
 Transform its tatters with thy magic.
 Oh, Divine One, dearest God, list.
 Let thy brightness creep the shadows,
 Make the midnight shine with thy countenance.
 Oh, Divine One, make love, earth's armour,
 strong,
 That it shall turn the blade of woe !
 Make thou this pleading blessed with Thy
 listening. —AMEN.

These next lines are from a long poem
 upon "The Road of Day."

Men who sweat, men who ache, men who
 anguish ;
 Men who press their breasts upon instruments of
 labour, striking the pregnant soil that it
 belch forth its teeming utterance ;
 Men who live ! live to the last bitter drop within
 the cup, quaffing with the delight the potion
 of death, in defiance lifting the goblet ;
 Men who sit within the shadow of their doubt,
 beholding the cup of death in fearing,
 Waiting for to-morrow, who hath already laid
 her hand upon the cup's brim—
 To-morrow, whose finger pointeth to Eternity.

From a poem upon the passing of the old year :

Old year and older years,
I fain would greet ye now
And bid ye God-speed on your way.
I love ye well, and count ye o'er,
And here the brother of you every one
Lies smitten !

And I shall flit me through his dreams
And cheer him with my loving
And last within his pack shall put
A hope and speed him hence.
Old year, I love thee well,
And bid thee farewell with a sigh !

These concluding selections lead us into dreamland and shadowland :

Dreams are magic things,
And fellow not with lordlings more than swine-herds ;

Dreams are magic things,
They are the prologue, lifting the corner of the curtain of Eternity ;

Dreams are magic things,
Teaching cares to vanish with a wand of witchery.

Oh, linger in the land of dreams,
For it is the rightful kingdom of the spirit.

Oh, wake me not,
For should my dreaming work a spell to soothe
My troubled soul, wouldst thou deny me dreams ?

Oh, wake me not !
If 'mong the leaves wherein the shadows lurk,
I fancy conjured faces of my loved, long lost,
And if the clouds to me are sorrow's shroud,

Oh, let me dream !
The day may bring fresh sorrows,
But the night will bring new dreams !

In many of her poems Patience gives expression to her newer loves and friendships made with members of the Curran circle. Here is portion of one :

Am I a shadow, who love thee with a love like thine ?

I, who speak as thou speakest, share as thou sharest ?

Then blessed be the coming morrow,
For then a twain of shadows we shall be !

You and I together,
Like children, shall make way
To the broader, wider country,
To the newer, sweeter fields,
To the older, deeper memories,
To the newer, dearer ones !

To one of these friends who undertook a journeying to Dorsetshire, her native place, she offered this welcome :

“ When thou dost first set thy foot upon mine own shore, think of it : a wee whit dame with greeting hands, and smiling eyes and muted lips shall say : ‘ This is mine ain bonnie land ! ’ ”

In such of her poems as are more directly inspired as expressions of love, Patience reaches her greatest heights of attainment, but she has given many others of singular beauty and power upon subjects lacking any claim to that particular stimulus — often “ touching with a wand of witchery ” the most unpromising themes. Take, for instance, her poem, *To An Ancient Lyre*, given unprepared and unpremeditated at a moment’s notice :

Oh, ancient lyre, with sagging strings
And frame caressed by time Mute is thy song,
And yet in a far yesterday at some lady’s court,
Mayhap even in the hands of the troubador
Who knelt and sang, thou, too, didst whisper,
Chiming the pulsing of his heart,
Gushing the red fount of his love.

Whispering, confiding, luring, enchanting,
Thou didst lend thee ; mayhap a garland
’Bout the wound, or a flaming ribbon
From thee hung, and thy tremorous voice
Betrayed his trembling hand. Mayhap,
Thou hast sung while rank and file
Of knights, bearmoured knights, passed by.
Mayhap, thou’st sung a lilting lay
To some poor crown-bewearied head
In that far yesterday, and then forgot,
Dropped from the stilled hand
Thou’st mouldered thee away.

E’en should I, with tender hand,
Bestring thee all anew, thou mightst
Not utter the old familiar songs ;
Thy voice would be alike the voice of age
Made thin by time, a wordless, hopeless note,
Methinks thoud’st utter one sad tremorous cry,
And break once more.

And here we have a song on a brighter note:

I would make new notes
Whose beginnings are sobs and whose endings
Are laughter. Lo, I would work magic
And witchery upon my song, so that
No man might not hark. Lo, I would create
A sprite, not one whit heavier than down,
So that it might sit within a man’s ear
And woo him. And when he would pluck it forth,
Lo, it would sink deeper and lodge
Within his heart.

CHAPTER V

Patience Plays

“ I shall play with words like castanets, I shall set them twinkling like stars, yea, and make them pale and langourous. I shall burn them of passion and wreck them dizzy of twisting. I weave not, nay, but 'neath these hands shall such a word set up that earth shall burn with wonder.”

The work of Patience as thus far presented here deals largely with the serious; some still more serious work will follow. In this chapter we may see something of her skill as a player with words in lighter vein. It was a frequent practice of those in the little circle gathered about her to devise problems testing her “ word-twisting ” powers, and it was evident that she took a lively pleasure

in complying and in treating them to displays of her wit and wisdom—as a child might take delight in “ showing off ” her accomplishments for the entertainment of a family party.

Our first illustration is a production given in response to a demand which was sprung upon her by Dr. Prince for lines of a poem, or whatever else it might be called, beginning with all the letters of the alphabet except X in their order. She promptly complied, at a speed “ regulated only by the ability of the scribe to take it down.”

A task is
 Before me.
 Can I, O God, perform it?
 Dole me patience,
 Enough that I be sustained,
 For I am, indeed, in need of strength.
 Give me, O God, thy grace,
 Hear my supplication;
 I am a beggar for a crumb;
 Justly deal in mercy;
 Keep me within the path of judgment;
 Leave me wit that I may perform this duty;
 Make the task perfect,
 Neither constrained nor overdone.

O, beloved God, keep tryst with me,
 Prithee give ear to my prayer,
 Quiet the turbulence of my heart ;
 Righteously shall I endeavour,
 Steeling me against the tongue of envy,
 That I suffer not upon the judgement of this.
 Upon me distil thine aid,
 Vouchsafe thy succour.
 Wound not with thy indifference ;
 Yea, this is thy servant upon the path of folly
 Zealously endeavouring that she follow a fool !

Dr. Prince relates that Patience had a trick of leaping from, say, a conversation to the composition of unrelated poems and back again, and that she often dictated in the same evening the continuation of some of her longer work interspersed with talks and brief poems. On one evening in May, 1918, she introduced a variation. "She dictated 100 words of *The Merry Tale*, then immediately gave 200 words of *Samuel Wheaton*, then 50 words of *The Merry Tale*, and finally 1,600 of *Samuel Wheaton*—making the breaks between the stories fit as closely that the characters in one story seemed to

reply to the characters in another story—
 "which caused a great deal of amusement
 and pleasure."

In the same month was recorded another of "those impossible stunts" of hers. She wrote about 200 words of *The Merry Tale*, then ran off into the *Samuel Wheaton* story, then began a poem and interspersed it with sentences from *The Merry Tale*, the resulting mixture reading as a consecutive narrative, which, when disentangled, resolved itself into a poem and into passages from the stories.

From the poem we take these lines,
Memories of Long Ago :

I would unloose them, like little wan-faced
 children
 Seeking some consolation, some familiar tongue.
 Weeping hauntingly, they shall seek along the
 way,
 For I shall unloose them—little hidden things,
 Hungrily awaiting the touch which one were
 theirs.

This is portion of the prose :

“ And the night swallowed up the fast flying Quintissimo. And Cato leaned fore from his nag's back, holding closer the form of the young un. And there came forth one who rid fast and sped toward the ongoing Cato—— ”

In another feat—described by Dr. Prince as a “ climactic experiment ”—he proposed as subject “ any kind of conversation between a lout and a wench at a fair,” intermingled with a poem on The Folly of Atheism. He tells us that about eight seconds elapsed between his announcement and the beginning of dictation, which proceeded without interruption to the end, as fast as it could be taken down. The mixture, when “ unscrambled,” gave the poem :

Who doubts his God hath but announced
His own weak limitation ;
Hath tied his hand and fettered of his foot——
To doubt thy God is but to stop
The everlasting flow of mercy ;
To die of thirst and lose thee
In the chaos of thyself.

And this from the conversation :

HE : Ha'e ye seen the mummings settin' up a puppet show athin the fieldin' ?

SHE : Aye, I seed 'em fetchin past, and buyed a ribbon an' a new latchet, an' a shoon bucklin, an' silken thongs.

HE : Weel, Gad ! Did ye see the dominie wi' his new breeks an' a sabbath shirt ?

SHE : Weel, can ye heed it and him at the fair ?

These are some of the feats which have been labelled “ antecedently impossible,” and none can deny their claim to be so regarded. Their recounting here was by no means necessary towards making good the claim of Patience to be a master-player with words, even though this play stands as unique. It may, however, serve the purpose of providing an additional pill for some of our learned Professors to swallow—or, in the more dignified language of Mr. Yost, of serving “ to add to the accumulation of the evidence of her personality.”

Other feats of composition with which Patience has played are less complicated

than the foregoing, but, at the same time, supremely difficult by reason of their instant and impromptu delivery. Take, for instance, a poem of four verses upon *Morning, Noon* and *Night*, in which the particular "stunt" was alliteration :

I have known the night, the steadfast, steady,
Solemn, sacred night, star-studded
Moon emblemed, serene, an holy altar
At which I may worship in sacred silence,
Tipping the sable cup in sweet communion
With that sire who silence keeps.

A very notable tribute to Patience and to her powers—even to her existence—was paid by the Missouri State authorities when on the hunt for an inscription for use on certain tablets in the new state buildings. They came to Patience for help in their difficulty—and got what they wanted. An essential requirement was that the inscription contain neither more nor less than 120 letters, the spaces and punctuation marks to be counted as letters. Patience gave them exactly what was required without a moment's delay or

hesitation. A unique transaction this—an approach by presumably hard-headed public functionaries for help from "a wee fairy dame"—such as Patience! The inscription ran thus :

'Tis the grain of God that be with in thy hands,
Cast nay grain awither. Even the chaff is His,
and the dust thy brother's.

Impromptu verses of a much simpler kind, to fit subjects suggested, were given in abundance by Patience in response to requests from listeners of every kind comprising her audiences. Here are some samples :

NEW YORK

A gaudy bubble poised, reflecting the motley day,
A tenuous thing, a magic thing, the culmination
Of man's desire, the pinnacle of his attainment,
A gaudy bubble.

PARIS

A peafowl, with its graceful neck turned forward,
Hungry for the garden, languishing for its perfume,
A peafowl so, with an arrow deep within its heart.

LONDON

Weel, I'm sayin' you! 'tis a sogged puddin',
 Heavy o' wit, smug in honour, yea, honourable
 with age.

ROME

A land of dreams and dreaming, where mystery
 Comes forth as mist in early morning,
 Verdant in spirit, spiritual in labour.

POMPEII

Like a jewel of pearls about the hillock's throat,
 The proud, proud hillock, with her head of fire
 Like a necklet of pearls about her false, false
 throat
 An instant, and behold!
 The labour of time becometh naught but ash and
 smouldering embers.

THE SPHINX

Mystery of ages! labour, unlearned, hath created
 thee
 Some emblem, mayhap, gazing through the stilly
 nights,
 And through the searing days, at all the mystery
 of life,

JOAN OF ARC

Bred of the sod, foundationed in the folk
 With the fire of a kind enkindled,
 Sought by a holy God, delivered of an army of
 righteousness
 And a tongue of surety
 She led not but an army, she leadeth a host
 And what hath martyrdom writ upon the page of
 time,
 Not ash, but immortality!

“Patience, I feel you are like our own
 Jeanne d'Arc,” said a French lady present.
 “Inasmuch as thou hast spoken it,” was the
 reply, “thy sainted one hath but breathed
 Him unto thee. And I be such an atom,
 such a wee small one, who led nay host, but
 would share o' Him.”

“Often there comes to me,” wrote
 Dr. Prince, “the realisation that Patience
 not only knows what is going on now, but
 knows the literature of all times and places,”
 and no one familiar with even a fraction of
 her outpourings—given either as pastime or
 a in deadly earnest—could honestly declare
 his conviction unjustified.

However, we shall have a good deal more bearing upon this question before the end of our story, and, as this particular chapter is labelled as a contribution on the lighter side, we give as a tail-piece her lines, entitled, *A Trick to Best To-Morrow* :

I have come to the wall
 And a little wicket gate beyond which
 Is to-morrow, maybe a woeful morrow,
 Maybe a tearful morrow; mayhap
 A sunny morrow, mayhap a laughing morrow.
 Yea, but weal or woe, I have a trick
 To best her . . . I laugh!

CHAPTER VI

Odds and Ends

The course of our story, so far, has led us into many byways, but our yielding to the temptation to wander therein may have been justified by the thought that our jury sitting in judgment upon Patience should be allowed some glimpses of as many facets as might be of her many-sided mind.

The diversion now facing us is one leading to quite new fields—into regions atomic!—with Patience delivering discourses upon such subjects as creation and evolution.

“Look ye, ee’n the dusts be but dusts till the tide cometh when they seek them a completing. Blown ’pon by His breath they fall through the vasts in agonies of nothingness. Aye, and become gladsome when they

seek the light and cling one unto the other, and thereby be not the dusts but a thing. Thereby is the firmament builded up. Even so it is unbuilded, thereby leaving new and free the dusts for more of fashioning. See ye, then, the flesh is but that that He did create for the bowls of all things. Aye, and it is but a transient thing. Aye, a-lended, ne'er thine. Yet this fashioning is ever new. Thereby no thing is e'er the same. Tides may sweep and new things be that no man conjureth even within his wildest dreaming."

At the time when these passages were being written no signs of the neutron, the deuteron, the positron and their doings had appeared on the scientific horizon. Some thinkers may have been more or less gingerly toying with the idea that material for the building up of new worlds might be pouring out into the depths of space from every blazing star, through the disintegration of its atoms, but nothing of all this could have come within the ken of the Curran household.

Yet we find Patience discoursing upon this building, unbuilding and rebuilding the firmaments as casually as one might be told, say, of the changes of the moon or some such incontrovertible phenomenon.

On the question of reincarnation she says :

"The bowl (of flesh) is, and broken may become a new bowl, fulfilling the same office, but the wine, once drunk, may not be drunk again."

Here are some verses from a long poem relevant to this :

Strange, is it not, beloved, that even as I lay my
cheek to thine,

Even as my eyes behold thine, even as we
together, lip to lip,

Declare through our silence adoration ;

Strange, is it not, that these atoms which are
thee and me

Have held this wine since first they sifted through
the ether, through the great God's fingertips ?

Strange, is it not, beloved, this symbol?
 We, the chalices of His steadfast pledge,
 Stand for a moment cheek to cheek, and lo!
 Crumble once more, letting the wine to flow
 Its scarlet stream across eternity;
 Indelibly writing thee and me,
 And our dusts lie awaiting for the Potter's hand
 To turn new chalices for newer loves.

What is the tabernacle of flesh?
 Naught but the assemblance of atoms,
 Held together by the essence of God.
 Behold Him! The pith of chaos,
 That certain God, who, with a sure hand
 Creates the universes, swings suns and moons,
 And lets the stars drip from His fingertips.

It has been noted as remarkable that throughout all her communications Patience makes no reference to any of the current events of those days, but there is what would appear to be one exception provided by four poems upon war and peace which are clearly appropriate to the first world war and its ending. The first of these was a long poem, written in November, 1916, telling of a visit to a battle-field:

And ah, mine eyes sought, sought, sought!
 I looked on every way and ever saw some livid lip,
 Some grinning death-oped mouth, some glaze-
 dimmed eye that saw
 No morning's coming; some man-stopped hand
 That reached in supplicance for a brother's grasp,
 Some beast felled 'mid his master's blood,
 Some blade deep-dyed, the drops still thickening
 on its edge.
 And I did raise mine eyes
 And look afar unto the fields that lay,
 And lo, there, cross on cross did stand
 Rude wrought of such are stuff as His
 Was builded up. No word that, read
 Might tell who lay within Earth's breast.

Another poem came in December, 1917, in which these lines occur:

Father, is this Thy will? God!—the din!
 Blood, thick-crust'd, still living, I saw it fall unto
 the dust,
 Hell is within the eyes that look across the
 wastes:
 Hell crawls upon the earth, dragging its robe of fire.

And this ode to Peace, also in 1917:

Peace, oh, gentle sister, why tarriest thou?
 Come, come upon a new morning,
 Fan the earth with thy soft wing,
 Pour o'er earth's wounds from thy urn
 Plent'ousness and joy.

Peace, Peace, oh, gentle sister,
 Make haste, for Mercy is weary,
 And the earth perisheth.

This came in January, 1918, within a few weeks from the end of the war :

Peace hath not ceased to stare :
 Hath not yet unfroze her tongue
 For fearing, hath not yet let
 Her arms fall from suppliance.
 Hath not yet stanchd the bleeding
 Of her heart, though her lips smile
 She is mute, and only the succour
 Of ages may comfort her !

In the minds of many who have thus followed these pages some such question as this must surely have presented itself. What was the reaction of the world at large to the news that a phenomenon of a kind unprecedented in all history had made its appearance in the American city of St. Louis, not as an evanescent wonder, but one in process of development, long-continued, and real beyond all possibility of disproof? The answer—at least, on this side of the Atlantic

—would probably have been : “ Never heard of it.” In America matters stood somewhat differently. We are told that the phenomena were witnessed and testified to by a variety of notabilities, including Cabinet members, state representatives, professors of philosophy, psychology, of law and literature, writers, poets, critics and journalists, editors and publishers, judges and lawyers, clergymen and doctors—“ each one trying to fit the phenomena into his own theories.”

In an earlier chapter we have quoted some of the figures compiled by Dr. Prince as to the volume and rate of production of the matters given by Patience. Here are some interesting details :

The novel *Telka*, 70,000 words, in blank verse, was given in 35 hours' actual writing time. Written in an archaic dialect, with 98 per cent. in words of one or two syllables, in 95 per cent. pure Anglo-Saxon, no word of which had come into the language later than the sixteenth century. Mr. Yost has

devoted some fifteen pages to dealing with *Telka*, its contents, and the criticisms and comments it evoked from reviewers and learned linguistic experts. At the end of one descriptive passage he asks: "Where is the man or woman who can do this, consciously or unconsciously? But the reader will say: here is the book. To declare a thing that has been accomplished an impossibility is to utter a paradox. True, it was Patience Worth who did it."

Dr. Prince supplements these fifteen pages with another fifteen of his own on the subject of *Telka*.

And, yet, can the story of Patience Worth be on its way to the limbo of forgotten things—of less account than the doings of, say, the latest Indian firewalker or of the "glamour girl" of the time being?

Turning again to Dr. Prince's book, we find a dozen pages contributed by Mrs. Curran, in which she deals with her association with

Patience in its many and varied aspects—including that of the reception of the phenomena by the world at large.

"When I let my modest name be coupled with that of a Puritan spinster of some hundreds of years ago," she says, "I never for one instant realised that Patience Worth and I would be cast out upon the stormy sea of distrust. There is no come-back for the psychic. Being suspected, his word is worth less than his goods. Science labours to disprove them even without looking at them. Let any man announce himself a psychic if he would feel the firm ground of respectability slip from under his feet; if he once admits himself an instrument differing in any respect from the masses, he will find himself a suspected character. Science, with side glances, will talk secretly of dire and devious matters, connecting his name with such doubtful associations as obsessions and secret deviltries of all manner and kind. They humour the subject and listen tolerantly to

his effort to prove himself sane, while they cast wise eyes and smile."

Patience does not mince her words when dealing with such opinions and philosophies.

"The gab o' fools," she says; and "your philosophers be the fools o' the courts ahigh, and :

"I am amused at man!

He mews wisdom and drools philosophy as an infant.

His lips drivel cocksurely, loose, all-knit garments on which he lets his thoughts distort.

Where is his soul? Retreated as a grim monk within his cell, awaiting a single ray from the sun :

I am amused at man!"

One of the most elaborate attempts to explain away Patience Worth was that of Dr. Cory, a professor of philosophy in Washington University. His arguments occupy eight pages of Dr. Prince's book, where three times that amount of space is devoted to their refutation. In his contribution to the discussion, Dr. Cory envisages

some kind of weird and wonderful entity (sex unspecified) with transcendent powers, which quite honestly imagines itself to be Patience Worth. "A product possessing a mentality of a very high order—original, creative, possessing a delicate sense of beauty, a hardy rationality, and above all, and perhaps most surprising, a moral and spiritual elevation; it is hard to imagine either its range or its limitations."

"And yet this mind that has plumbed so deeply human experience, and has touched with a sure hand its greatest tragedy, is a mind that is in error regarding its own origin and history."

He speaks of Patience as "a dreamer that never awakens, suffering from the persistent illusion that she is the discarnate spirit of an English woman who lived in an age now long passed"; and he says "that she is honest in this belief there is no reason to doubt!"

When Dr. Cory's article was read, Patience had her say.

“ Whist ye, I be a-tickle. It be such a queerish task for to sit aside the day and see man strut forth with his bark o’ learning and plunge it at the breast o’ God’s wisdom, swaggerin’ home with a chuckle o’ satisfaction without lookin’ ahind to see if it be a kill ! ”

We are told that Patience possessed and exercised the power of reading the inmost mind of those about her and an awareness of their lives and doings. She knew that many of them secretly believed in her, but would not acknowledge this belief—a fact which she made known to them with the comment that it was “ through fear o’ gab.”

In the earlier pages of this book the name of Professor Joad cropped up in connection with questions of belief or unbelief; and it happens that by an odd coincidence, while this chapter was being written, the current issue of one of our Sunday newspapers came along with an up-to-the-minute confirmation by the Professor of his belief that nothing could be known of the region which Patience

calls “ The Land o’ Here,” because “ no one has ever come from there to tell us anything about it.”

Due weight will doubtless be given to the dicta of these two eminent authorities by readers who may be collecting material for their answers to the “ Riddle of Patience Worth.”

We already know that, according to her own story, Patience grew up a rather lukewarm Puritan, but, as to any later development of her specific religious beliefs, she preserved silence and did not encourage any discussion upon the subject.

On hearing that “ certain Jesuits had expressed the opinion that she was a wandering soul,” Patience made the cryptic comment that “ even an holy one might drink wisdom out of an ass’s track ! ”

In an article written by Mrs. Curran we are told of another incident of the kind—a lengthier story, but one worth quoting in full.

“Now comes a rather important reference to sacred history. Some weeks ago Archbishop Glennon of this diocese, following a general policy of the Catholic Church, preached a sermon in which he said that good spirits do not return: that they were ‘in the keeping of God,’ and that, if spirits did return, they were emissaries of the Evil One, tempting with soft words and a robe of piety the souls of men to their damnation. This was on Sunday, and the papers next morning contained this synopsis. That evening we wrote with Patience, and the matter was mentioned. At once Patience had this to say:

“‘I say me, who became apparent before the Maid? Who became a vision before Bernadette? No less than the Mother: yet they have lifted up their voices saying the dead are in His keeping?’ This last gave us the cue to what she referred, although we had no idea of what she meant by the rest. Looking up the matter next day, we

found that Bernadette Soubirous was the Maid of Lourdes, the peasant girl before whom appeared the Mother Mary, according to the Annals of Church History.”

Patience disposed of the matter by declaring: “I shall not sing one lay which shall not contain God. Let any man do this and he need not fear temptation nor the phantom Satan.”

CHAPTER VII

The Sorry Tale

That this chapter might fittingly be entitled "Patience Worth—Christian" is a conclusion which readers will find amply borne out. We need hardly speculate upon the kind of reactions to which it may give rise—as to how far it may be anathema to the die-hard materialist, or even, perhaps, to many in the foremost ranks of his opponents.

In *The Sorry Tale*, and in the matter given here in association with it, is to be found overwhelming evidences of the Christianity of Patience. We begin by quoting a very striking confession of faith made by her and recorded by Mr. Yost. He tells that "Patience's attitude towards the Saviour is one of deep and loving reverence; nor does she hesitate

to assert His divinity with definiteness. "Think ye," she cries, 'that He who doth send the earth a-spin through the blue depths of heaven be not a wonder-God who springeth up wherever He doth set a wish? Yea, then, doth He to spring from out the dust a lily, so also doth He to breathe a-thin the flesh and come to earth, born from out the flesh athout the touch o' man. 'Tis so, and from off the lute o' me hath song afflowed that be asweeted o' the blood o' Him that shed for you and me.' And she puts the same assertion of His divine birth into this tribute to the Virgin :

Mary, Mother, thou art the spring
That flowereth, though nay man applanted thee,
Mary, the song of thee
That lulled His dreams to come
Sing them athrough the earth and bring
The hope of rest unto the day.

Mary, Mother, from out the side of Him
That thou didst bear afflowed the crimson tide
That doth to stain e'en unto this day—
The tide of blood that ebbd the man
From out the flesh, and left the God to be.

Mary, Mother of the earth's loved !
 Mary, bearer of the God !
 Mary, that I might call thee of a name befitting
 thee,
 I seek, I seek, I seek, and none
 Doth offer it to me save this
 Mary ! Mary ! Mother of Him,
 The flesh that died for me !

The following lines were entitled "Credo" :

I believe in the all-merciful God, and in His Son
 as a sign of His mercy ;
 I believe in creation as His utterance ;
 I believe in His Heaven as I believe in the
 creation.
 I believe in the resurrection of life, for its
 manifold symbols are before me.
 I believe in the life everlasting, for no culmination
 which man might utter might contain my
 belief in God. AMEN.

The *Sorry Tale* evoked a vast amount of discussion and criticism from writers and thinkers, and others qualified to speak with authority, and much of this matter was included in Dr. Prince's work, at great length. One contribution upon which he lays considerable stress was from a letter written to

Mrs. Curran by an acknowledged authority upon biblical origins and history, a writer of many works on the subjects.

Here is an extract from his letter :

"On page 611 of *The Sorry Tale* Patience introduces into the Last Supper an incident similar to the one recorded by St. John in a post-resurrection scene (20-22), and, among her rather rare quotations of Holy Writ, dictated to you this : 'And He breathed : This is the Holy Ghost, the sign of peace within thee.' The passage in St. John is : 'And this saying *He breathed hard* and saith to them : Receive (or take) a spirit holy.' Now, if you will consult the translations, you will find in *all*, since Wiclif down to the Revised Version of 1881, 'He breathed on them,' and furthermore *on them* is not in italics (as it should be) *although absolutely absent from the original in the Greek.*

"' *Emphuseo* ' does not even mean 'I breathe upon,' but 'I puff up my cheeks,' 'I breathe hard.'

"Now, Patience Worth shows her knowledge of things heavenly when she intimates that she knows *what* the Divine breath or breathing means. It is not necessarily a breathing *upon* each

individual present, but a magnetic emanation of breath *filling the room* (as in the beginning of Acts) from above.

“Notice, now, that this word *occurs nowhere else in the New Testament*, and you will realize its deep significance.”

The plot of *The Sorry Tale* is thus summarised by Dr. Prince :

“It is a story of the time of Christ in which Christ Himself is the outstanding and speaking figure, though the central figure is a son of the Emperor Tiberius by Theia, a dancing slave, who names him Hate. He is born outside the walls of Bethlehem on the same night in which Christ was born, and the two lives move in parallel paths to the tragedy on Calvary, where Hate is also crucified, being the person known as the unrepentant thief.”

Concerning the method of production of this 325,000 word book, Mr. Yost writes :

“All this extraordinarily voluminous story was spelled out, letter by letter, with great rapidity, an evening’s production—about two hours being

devoted to the work, as a rule, ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 words, and on one occasion rose to 5,000 ; but on that occasion about three hours were given to it. The larger part of the book was written in my presence, and virtually every line of it was written in the presence of other visitors.”

It is also told that, before beginning the story, Patience displayed an amount of agitation and a kind of emotion not before shown by her. “The hand of thy handmaid shaketh at the task,” she said. “This lyre singeth the song of Him. This holied task be the love of me, yet ’tis a sorry put, for woe is me that I tell of the woes of Him. Within it there be much of Him, and this tale be dear, very dear to me. Look ye! the side that flowed red doth weep fresh drops e’en unto this day. The every day seeth the weeped drops. Think ye, then, that this hand would set these drops gushed, or yet touch them that fall, without a tremor? Oh, men of earth, look, look! Amid thy day stalketh He. He be the oped chalice that poureth the cleansing flow, ever,

ever—Yea, His treasures gleam, and I be a telling thee, ah, joy! much be His that He doth treasure that Earth hast cast as chaff.”

The passages now following are part of those from *The Sorry Tale* selected for quotation by Dr. Prince.

“And Mary lay the alabaster box upon the floor and oped its pit, and behold, tears fell within it as she put unto it its cover and gave it unto the hands of Jesus. And He held it up before them that looked and spake: ‘Her casket of jewels she hath delivered. Behold, the herbs of Heaven shall be refreshed with these.’ And they departed. And the morn found them that had harked filled with wonder and fear; for no man might speak the forgiveness of sins save that he made his sacrifice at the holy places. And they were fearful among them.”

“The Jews and the Romans were filled of the wonders He had done. Word had come that before Him multitudes bended low, that beneath His hand all sorrow had

vanished, the eyes of the weeping smiled, that no man who passed Him on the roadway might pass unknowing that he had met the God. For His works were like unto no man's. His wraths were anguish bathed of mercy. His wisdom like unto a breaking day. And it had come that multitudes had cried out: ‘Master, who among us is greatest?’ And He had taken unto His breast a babe, and let His blessed lips to lay upon the golden crown, and had spoken: ‘Behold the wonder of Heaven! I say unto ye, no man whose faith is not like unto one of these may know the Father!’”

“And they pierced the chalice and let flow the living wine, and they raised up the cross, and lo, the clouds sank even upon the earth, sweeping the hills and breaking down the trees in wrath of the wind. And the tempests rang the wraths that should fall in ages on them that had done this thing. And He hung, the beauteous head wet of blood and crowned of thorns even, as men had made His days thorned, and His precious

flesh was illumed with the flashes of the lightning. And behold, the earth quaked, and it was true that the tombs gave up their dead. And when the mighty peal had fallen like a trumpet, like a bird that flies singing sounded out 'it is finished' and His head sank. And the smile of God broke upon His countenance, and it was over."

One poem only appears in *The Sorry Tale*, but there are others, apart from it, which have every claim to mention in its company :

GOLGOTHA

There is nothing in to-night which may remind
me
Of that holy instant when the moon rose o'er the
Place of Skulls
And laid her soothing hands on His bruised brow.
To-night is a summer's show, a little pantomime
In which all men play, perpetrating a jest upon
life.

There is nothing in to-day which may speak
Intimately and with conviction of that third day
When they sought the tomb and found Him not,
For to-day is just an empty sepulchre.

There is nothing, nothing to remind me
He shall not come from the clouds, nor shall
I ask that I lay my finger in His wounds,
Yet God, I have felt His agony, and the day,
Despite its emptiness, is pregnant of His
Resurrection.

THE RED CROSS

Scarlet emblem, blushing symbol,
Pillow of the God-head, where its
Regal brow bended, and it wept tears
Which burned the ages : Blushing symbol,
Bathed in mercy ; what man may stand
Before but that he raise his hands,
Palms up, and his heart leap,
And he remember Nazareth, the birth
Of love, and Golgotha, its culmination.

EARTH'S GARDEN OF SORROW

Gethsemane, Gethsemane, Gethsemane !
Oh, garden of sorrow ! Whose pathways
Knew His tread and His sacred sorrow.
Oh, that thy herbage might speak !
That thy stones might cry out !
That thy paths might utter what His words
spoke !
For, like a pean of joy, I know they would arise ;
Ne'er knowing that brassy note of fear,
But a melody perfect in its fashioning,
A perfect prayer.

Gethsemane, Gethsemane, Gethsemane !
 Oh, sacred spot ! The bosom on which
 He laid His head and wept
 No tear of fear or sorrow,
 Save for the earth's tarrying.

Gethsemane, Gethsemane, Gethsemane !
 Unto a garden spot
 Did He withdraw and pray—
 Earth, seek out thy Garden !

A MESSAGE

I have a message, a word, a pledge ;
 It is no mystery, all men might know it ;
 It is a common thing, constructed of wood ;
 It stood upon Calvary. But behold its shadow—
 Its restful, cooling shade for all men.

OH, YOU STAR !

Oh, you star that hung o'er Bethlehem,
 Mayhap plucked from the very arch
 Of Heaven's Gate !
 You star, foretelling peace,
 Shedding radiance,
 Proclaiming a Babe new-born !
 Where in the firmament art thou ?
 Still tracking some vasty way,
 Mayhap to hang in that fair morn
 Of my Eternity ?
 Once more a beacon to the spot
 Where he doth dwell ;
 Oh, you star of that far yesterday !

The Sorry Tale is given a very great deal of attention in Dr. Prince's book, where it is dealt with exhaustively from every point of view by learned and critical commentators, to which only this passing mention is practicable here. We have, however, many reviews, journalistic and other, which give the general verdict in briefer compass, and here are a few extracts :

A Washington University Professor of History :

“The sheer beauty of the Sermon on the Mount, the spirituality of the passage descriptive of the Last Supper and the evening at Gethsemane, the moving narrative of the last days, and the terrific climax of the Crucifixion I shall not soon forget.”

A St. Louis Editor :

“The scene in the garden of Gethsemane is an exquisite piece of writing, while the version of the trial and crucifixion is a marvellous meticulousness of strange detail. The very last scene on the last page is a piece of anguishing irony.”

“The New York Globe” :

“Nothing can match the exquisite tenderness of the narrative where it touches upon Jesus and the miracles of loving. While no Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, but only a woman probably could be so sympathetic and tender with the woman Theia, the vain one who drank honeyed words and ate of first fruits, and who came to know the vats dregs.”

“The Washington Star” :

“The story is too long for general reading, and at times too archaic for pleasant reading. But, aside from these minor barriers, it is a book of great beauty — a finely noble composition.”

A Manitoba Professor of English Literature :

“No book outside the Book of Books gives such an intimate picture of the early life of Jesus, and no book has ever thrown such a light on the manner of life of the Jews and the Romans in the Palestine of the day of our Lord.”

A Philidelphia Rector :

“As a story of the time of Christ, I do not know anything like it for sheer tragedy and spiritual beauty. The whole conception is striking and its execution extraordinary.”

A Prominent Episcopalian :

“Many ministers have found new inspiration from these records. The wonder is that more have not been drawn to this forest of wisdom. The words of Patience Worth are the most loving since St. Paul wrote the famous chapter in his first letter to the Corinthians.”

“The New York Tribune” :

“Perfectly astounding as to style and even more remarkable as to construction. It is a wonderful, a beautiful, and a noble book.”

CHAPTER VIII

The Land O' Here

It may be remembered that, at her first coming, Patience introduced herself with the odd announcement that she had come to "bake her bread" at Mrs. Curran's hearth; and that, as time progressed, she again and again proclaimed herself as one offering bread to a hungered world, enjoining upon her hearers the task of lending their aid.

"And thou dost take athin thy hand the crumbs o' this bread and cast it to them a hungered," she said. "And behold, thy handmaid careth not for the whys or why nots o' Earth's day. Nay, for this loaf, this crumb, thou casteth for Him, and if it be trod aneath the feet o' Earth, still it be casteth and thy work done."

As we know, she typifies as bread her teachings of faith and love; and, as will be told here, she offers as a crowning reward, triumph over the fear of Death and over the fear of nothingness at the end of life's journey. She pictures Death as a gift of God, the key to her "Land o' Here"—"the land to which the traveller is so loath to go, but loath, so loath, to leave."

As might have been expected, her listeners were strongly inclined to be inquisitive and greedy for information concerning the region from which "no traveller returns," but she definitely discouraged attempts made in that direction. "This be His Kingdom. What folly that ye ask to prate about it," she said to one questioner. "It be not the will of Him that thou shoulds't see the Here. Needs't thou see what God himself sealet thine eyes to see?" And again: "What be days and nights but the filmed folds that veil the Here from the There? Yea, the Here lappeth thy lands even as the young waves lap the shore."

I tell thee, Heaven be all, and doth to clothe o'er all. 'Tis true it abideth even upon Earth o' all it be, and Earth doth dwell enwrapped o' it."

"This be a busied land, and be thy building not afinished thou shalt finish it afore setting to His tasks."

"E'en as a dust's mite be thy scripts unto this wisdom's fount; yea, thy sages be the fools o' the courts on high."

"List thee. Earth sendeth up much note. Yea, and some do sound them at wry o' melody, and others sing them true. And lo, they who sing awry shall mingle much and drown in melody. And I tell thee, o'er and above shall sound the note o' me!"

Asked if we should recognise our friends there, Patience said: "Ah, me, what a fogged land thou thinkest! He is a sire, not a monster!" And when questioned as to whether she had made contact with Dr. William James (the famous Harvard

psychologist—then lately deceased), she replied: "Hark, unto thee I do say me this, 'tis the day's break, and Earth shall know, e'en athin thy day, much o' the Here. This, the brother o' ye, the seeker o' the Here, hath set a promise so."

This came in a reply to one bereaved:

"Oh, that ye knew that the caravan unto Here moveth slowly, e'en though thine eye may not see where it hath gone past thine eye's ope, still surely it moveth on. Oh, that ye knew that thy love hasteneth on afore thee, thricefold enriched for thy waiting, that ye knew that ye should cast free o' tears—would ye offer unto smiling, sorrow? Would ye weep at losing what hath only become truly thine through Him?"

This came for another mourner:

And the gentle God sendeth days
Which move slow, but even they
That pass like sorrow's procession
Are speeding! What would'st thou?
Hast not they damie spoken
Unto him thou lovest, and heard o' his hope
Like that o' a little child
That he might see his mother's face?
Ah, well, it be! And would'st thou,
Who lovest him, weep upon his joy?
Smile, my sweet; smile and wait!

Why should'st thou mourn, beloved,
 If I depart these shuttling days?
 In yesterdays I still abide with thee,
 And hastening but a little way beyond
 Upon the trending path. Think, beloved,
 Think of that newer meeting which ne'er
 Doth lose its first sweet ecstasy!

A visitor remarked that Patience was deep,
 and lived in a deep, deep place. She was
 answered:

"Aye, a deeper than words! There be abere
 what thou knowest better than words can tell;
 for from off lips that spake not o' the Land o'
 Here in words o' little weight thou hast supped
 o' love; and know that that be trod by him
 shall also be trod by thee. Should'st thou at come
 o' Here to hark unto the sound o' this voice,
 thinkest thou that heights—aye, or depths—
 might keep thee from there? And e'en so, doth
 not the one thou seekest haste e'en now to find
 the path, and waiteth?"

Another visitor asked a question concerning
 the truth or otherwise of certain communica-
 tions purporting to come from "the immortal
 world."

"This be not the pratin' o' thy handmaid,"
 Patience answered. "I say me naught o' my
 brothers. The thing I utter is truth."

This came upon another occasion:

"Heaven is not alike to all. Each man enjoyeth
 his Heaven—I say *his* Heaven—for the thing he
 enjoyeth in that same Heaven shall not be thine.
 This path leadeth on and on, and on."

Here we have an elaborate rebuke to the
 presumption of some self-satisfied mortal
 whose expectation of entrance into the
 highest heaven did not appear to be warranted
 by his deserts:

Oh, man, what glittering heaven would'st thou
 create?

Milk-white in sanctity, no stuff but that it gleams
 in colourlessness,

With pearled gates and alabaster shadows,
 rimmed with white walls, cloud-tipped of
 white silver and lucid gems of water pureness.

The paths enshrouded in a snow of bloom,
 And the silver streets lined of fleece-clad angels,
 Whose white wings enfold their whiter forms,
 Whose white, white souls abide this white, white
 land,

And, I pray you, *wherein* thou?

The next lines picture a welcome being given to the day which is to bring with it the call to the "Land o' Here."

They troop as young maidens
Or angels, white robed,
From the gateway of Heaven unloosed,
Laughing, expectant as youth—
Days!
Among them is one who shall come to my side
and beckon,
Leading me forth unto the gateway and pointing.
Oh! with what joy I await her!
God-sent messenger! How shall I greet her?
Weeping? Nay, I shall smile,
And lay my hands within hers,
And say: Hasten, sister, hasten!

Patience speaks elsewhere of death as "cheap pence paid for Eternity"—and as a second birth in this passage:

"Thou didst not see with thine eyes o' flesh afore thy coming. Aye, but at thy bearing, thy mother oped up thine eyes and thou didst see and behold o' the Earth. Aye, now list thee. Death, then, is thy mother, for hark: at her bearing thou shalt shut up thy eyes o' flesh and see o' the Land o' Here."

Now we find her apostrophising Death as a cloaked figure of dread, dogging man's footsteps from infancy onwards:

Who art thou?
Who steppeth to Earth at birth o' me
And e'en mid wail o' weak—
Aye, at the birth o' wail
Dids't set a chill 'pon infant flesh
And at the track o' me on earth
Doth follow ever, and at height afollow,
And doth touch, and all doth crumble to a
naught.

Stand thou! Stand thou!
And draw thy cloak from off thy face!
Ever hath the dread o' thee
Clutched at the heart o' me.
Aye, and at end o' journey,
I beseech thee,
Cast thy cloak and show me thice!

Ah! thou art the gift o' Him!
The Key to There! The Love o' Earth!
Aye, and Hate hath made o' man
To know thee not—
Thou! Thou! O Death!

In many other passages, in prose and verse, Patience dwells upon the same theme and its associations:

“ Why live the paltry span of life allotted thee
in desolation, while about thee are His promises ?
Thou art, indeed, like a withered hand that holds
a new-blown rose.”

“ Earth, Earth ! the mother of us all ! Aye,
the mother of us all ! How loth, like, like a child
we be, to leave and seek 'mid dark ! ”

“ Shall I arise and know thee, brother, when,
like a bubble, I am blown into Eternity from this
pipe of clay ? Or shall I burst and float my atoms
in a joyous spray at the first beholding of this
home prepared for thee and me ? ”

In these final verses we have her crown-
ing words of encouragement and confidence :

I sleep, and feel afloat
Whither ! Whither ! To wake—
And wonder warmeth at my heart—
I've waked in yester year !
What ! Ye ? And what ! Is't thou ?
Ah, have I then slept to dream ? Come,
Ne'er a dream-wraith looked me such a
welcoming !
Twere' yesterday this hand wert afold.
And now, ah ! do I dream ?
Tis' warm pressed within mine own !

Can I, then, trust me on this journey lone
To country I deem peopled, but know not ?
My very heart declareth faith, yet hath not thine
Been chilled and touched by this same phantom ?
I watch the swallow skim across the blue
To homelands of the South,
And, ah, the gnawing at my heart doth cease ;
For how he wings in flight
To lands he deems peopled by his brothers,
Whose song he hears in flight.
Not skimming on the lake's fair breast is he,
But winging on and on,
And dim against the feathery cloud.
He fades into the blue.

Set ye at rest, and tread the path unfearing,
For He who putteth joy to earth applanted joy
Athin the reach o' thee, e'en through
The dark o' path at end o' journey.
His smile ! His word ! His loving !
Put forth thy hand at glad, and I do promise
thee
That joy o' earth assupped shall fall as naught,
And thou shalt sup thee deep o' joys,
O' Bearer, aye, and source ; and, like glad light
o' day
And sweet o' love, they coming here shall be !

And now we have reached the end of our
Fairy Tale, which to some may appear to

have grown up almost beyond recognition as such; but it still *is* one, and at that the tale of a very rare and wonderful sort of fairy. In an earlier chapter we figured our juvenile audience as sitting in judgment and finding as their unanimous verdict that she was certainly a very good fairy. We know, however, that such unanimous verdict cannot be expected from our grown-ups; we know that some of them will never give in to fairies, at any price—that is, to any such as Patience, unless, indeed, they give in to her being one of a very wicked kind—a prowler out for no good purpose. Still others may give it all up as a riddle as tough as the Riddle of the Sphinx. Some will fail to see where any question of a riddle comes in, and take Patience to be just what she says she is.

Anyhow, all can “pay their money and take their choice.” Our concern is with facts rather than theories, and we must resist the temptation to tackle the question of the “whys and why-nots”—even for the sake of a shot at Dr. Cory’s persistently-illuminated

robot which honestly imagined itself to be Patience, or at Dr. Joad’s drivelling bogies with no brains, or at the reasoning of those who may see Patience only as a decoy-duck of satanic contriving.

Mr. Yost—after years of intensive first-hand study—summarised his convictions in one line, which stands out as a challenge:

“*She is unique: Earth has no record of such a personality, with such qualities.*”

For our finale we are giving Patience the lady’s privilege of having the last word, in this little verse wherein she figures not as temptress, or fairy dame, but as a little grey moth with fluttering wings:

Out of the silence of that vasty dark, through
the heaven’s portals,
What hap should a grey moth, whose wings be
sped of love
And whose urge wert but to tear the grey day’s
cloth to tatters,
Letting through the light—what hap should such
a moth flee forth?
Surely He would not withhold its joy, but let
His mild eyes close
And smile at the fluttering wings!