

OUR MONTHLY.

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THE THEBAN LEGION.

BY PROF. W. M. BLACKBURN.

CHAPTER VII.

WILES AND WOES.

ROMULIA thought that her son Galerius was about the greatest man in all the world. As she had managed him when he was a rough shepherd-boy, and still kept a close rein upon him, she must be the greatest of women. No one held a higher head at the court of Diocletian. None was more intensely superstitious. Almost every day she offered sacrifice to the gods of the mountains, and then made a feast upon meats presented to idols. It often provoked her to find that the Christians of the palace would not accept the invitations to her costly dinners.

One morning she met Valeria and her mother in the hall, and said to them, "Surely you will dine with me to-day, while your husbands are in Rome celebrating the Persian victory."

"Excuse us," they replied. "We have had sad news concerning some friends—very sad indeed." They dared not refer to Maurice and his legion.

She turned away muttering, "Yes, very sad all these Christians are of

late, with their fasting, and weeping, and praying! My son is a conqueror; that is the reason. Wait until he is emperor, and they may need their tears. Well, there is one comfort; I don't hear so much singing among the servants."

She went to her temple, on a high hill, and the sacrifice did not burn rightly. Her priests had cunningly used wood, green and gaseous, so that the smoke was thick, and vexing explosions frequent. Her nerves lost their dignity. "Little devils are spitting fire at us," said the priest in a woeful tone. "The gods are waiting to see the earth purged of all religions hateful to them."

The hint was sufficient. Romulia grew even more zealous for her religion. She would first act the spy, and then the informant. She intruded into the worship of the Christians. Hearing that the Lord's Supper was to be administered in the church, she said to Lucian: "Since you will not attend my feast, I propose to attend yours." She had a secret design. Her eye was aching to detect the part which a servant was acting.

"How happy we should be," he answered, "if you came as a sister in Christ. But you know our rule."

and near for candidates, and have had twenty-six of them. Our offer is now two thousand dollars a year and the parsonage, so that our only limit to securing candidates is in the supply. Our congregation now seems to be divided into twenty-six factions, each one adhering to one of the twenty-six ministers whom we have heard, so that each one of them has ground for en-

couragement. But we are a persevering people. So now you see, Mr. Editor, why we require a first-class orator, able-bodied, orthodox, married, and possessed of extraordinary fortitude and endurance.

Truly yours,

TIMOTHY S. JONES,

Member of Session.

A HYMN.

BY SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD

O LAND relieved from sorrow,
 O land secure from tears,
 O respite on the morrow
 From all the care of years!
 To thee we hasten ever
 To thee our steps ascend,
 Where darkness cometh never,
 And joy shall never end.

O happy, holy portal
 For God's own blest elect;
 O region pure, immortal,
 With best of spring bedecked!
 Thy golden gates forever
 Their open arms extend,
 Where darkness cometh never,
 And joy shall never end.

O home of homes, whose splendor,
 No eye of man may know,
 Thy light, serene and tender,
 Across our souls shall flow;
 No night, nor fears dis sever
 A friend from any friend,
 For darkness cometh never,
 And joy shall never end.

Rise then, O brightest morning!
 Come then triumphant day!
 When, into new adorning,
 We change and pass away!
 For so with firm endeavor
 Our footsteps gladly tend,
 Where darkness cometh never,
 And joy shall never end.