

- 1 -
ELECTA

No account of this celebrated woman is given in the Scriptures, although the 2d epistle of John is addressed to the elect lady and her children. It is, therefore, to tradition that we must turn for the history of Electa.

First Electa: In an elegant room, upon a luxurious couch, at midnight, a matron was sleeping. The moonbeams came through the window, stole across the Persian carpet, and kissed the cheeks of the slumbering woman. Invisible angels were there, encamped about her whom the Lord loved.

Full of grace, moral virtue, and practical piety, she was worthy the ministrations of angels. While the moonbeams were illuminating her face, she was dreaming. The pictures painted in her sleep were doubtless intended for prophetic warnings. She dreamt that it was a future day, full of turbulence; she saw bloodshed, a mob, a rough giant, who came forward to propose terms, which he said would be sufficient to expiate some gross offence she had committed, but what, she did not perceive. She declined his terms, she was about to perish when she saw a light, and from it came a voice saying: "Whosoever believeth in me, though he perish, yet will I sustain him". For a long time the impression of Electa's dream remained fixed in her mind, and thrills of apprehension would seize her when she related it.

Second Electa: Electa was born and reared amidst the gorgeous scenes and circumstances of Oriental wealth. Her husband was a Greek. He had been reared among nobles, who were his peers. Like Electa, he had been brought up to worship idols, and in this heathen faith they reared their children. But happening by good fortune to hear a discourse from the Christian missionary Paul, Electa, with her husband and family, yielded their faith to Him whose gospel was so powerfully imparted to them, and they became Christians. It was at a period when all manner of persecutions awaited those who professed the Christian faith. Imprisonment, scourgings, loss of property, and often the loss of life was the price paid by those who gave their adherence to Christ. Electa and her family, however, were spared for many years. The Maxonic influence which her husband so largely shared made friends among those who would otherwise have persecuted them.

In adopting the Christian religion, Electa had adopted all the virtues and graces that flow out of it. To spend her large income in relieving the poor, to devote much of her time to the care of the sick, to keep an open house for indigent and hungry travelers - these were among the least of her good deeds. She was ripening daily for the better world. Her fame went everywhere as Electa, the friend of the distressed.

Third Electa: But now the time of trial came. Strict orders were issued from the Roman Emperor that all who professed the name of Christ should recant or suffer death. It was not possible that so shining a mark as Electa should escape, and a band of soldiers soon found their way through the doors so long opened for the entrance of the poor and distressed. But the captain of the band was a Free Mason, and was loth to injure one of whose good deeds he had heard so much. He told her the recantation was a mereform, and need not indeed affect her private opinions, and handed her a cross which he bade her throw on the floor and put her foot upon it, assuring her he would then leave her without danger. She took the cross, but it was to press it to her bosom, to her lips, to weep tears of love upon it, to assure the soldier that in this sign she was more than willing to die, and from the hour she professed the Christian religion, she had waited eagerly for this opportunity to testify her love for Christ. She told him to do his duty, whatever it was, and Christ would give her divine grace to do hers.

Fourth Electa: Our sympathies are fain to close now, before the drama reaches the final act, tragical and horrible as it was, but painful as is the task, we will, for the sake of completing the history, paint the scene of their sad end, in as moderate colors as the vivid subject will allow. The family was cast into a loathsome dungeon, where they remained for a year, at the end of which time the Roman judge came in person, and being also a Freemason, besought them yet, as it was not too late, to save their lives by recanting from the faith. But Electa made answer as before, as did all the family, saying - "It is good that they for whom Christ died, should give testimony to the power of His death by dying for Him." Then came the last sad scene. They were taken from the dungeon and savagely scourged - mother, father and children - until life barely lingered in their tortured bodies. Then they were taken in carts drawn by oxen,

amidst the jeers and scorn of the people, to the nearest hill, and one by one nailed to the crosses.

Fifth Electa: As a meek and loving servant of Christ, the last words of Electa was a prayer for her persecutors.

Whene'er the cry of poverty resoundeth,

Sweet Charity, O hasten thy relief;

Pursue thy noble task; for want aboundeth,

Thou driest tears and calmest bitter grief.

Let all the world thy fair example follow,

All things are proved by the still voice within,

And those who give to those oppressed with sorrow

A higher price than gold can buy shall win.

Go, lovely Charity, with blessings bounding,

Go, lend thine aid to all distress;

And let thy voice repeat in tones rebounding,

GIVE TO THE POOR; yourself you'll bless.