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# THE RENSSELAER STANDARD.

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NO. 8.

## FAITH.

BY CELIA THAXTER.

Fain would I hold my lamp of life aloft  
Like a wonder tower built high above the  
rest; Steadfast, though tempests rare or winds  
blow so hard.

Cleer through the sky dissolve in tears of  
grief.

For darkness passes; storms shall not abide.  
A little patience and the fog is past.

After the sorrow of the ebbing tide  
The singing flood returns in joy at last.

The night is long and pale; night heaves;  
The stars will wait for the moon to rise.  
Look to the east, where up the liquid sky  
The morning climbs! The day shall yet be  
fair!

## THE MAIN BRIDGE.

It was past midnight—the lights on  
the stone bridge which crosses the river  
Main at Frankfort were still burning,  
though the footpath was closed. I strolled  
away for a time on its pavements  
when a young man approached  
the bridge from the town with hasty  
strides. At the same time another  
man, advanced in years, was coming  
towards him from Sachsenhausen, the  
well known suburb on the opposite  
side of the river. The two had not  
yet met, when the latter turned from  
his path and went toward the parapet  
from the bridge into the Main.

The young man followed him quickly  
and laid hold of him.

"Sir," said he, "I think you want to  
drove."

"What is that to you?"

"I was only going to ask you to do  
me the favor to wait a few minutes and  
allow me to join you. Let us draw  
close to each other, and, arm-in-arm,  
take the leap together. The idea of  
making the journey with a perfect  
stranger, who has chanced to come for  
the same purpose, is really rather interest-  
ing. For many years I have not  
made a request to any human being;  
do not refuse me this one; which must  
be my last."

The young man held out his hand.  
He comes to you to do it," he continued,  
with enthusiasm. "Do be it; arm-in-  
arm. I do not ask who you are, good  
or bad—come, let us drown."

The elder of the two, who had at  
first been in so great a hurry to end his  
existence, now restrained the impetu-  
osity of the younger.

"Stop, sir," said he, while his weary  
eyes tried to examine the features of  
his companion. "Stop, sir. You seem  
to me to be too young to leave life in  
this way; for a man of your years life  
must have still bright prospects."

"Bright prospects—In the midst of  
rotteness and decay, vice and corruption!  
Come! Let us end it."

"And so young! Let me go alone,  
and do you remain here. Believe me,  
there are many good and honest people  
who could render life charming for  
you. Seek them, and you are sure to  
find them."

"Well, if life presents itself to you in  
such so bright, I am surprised you  
should wish to leave it."

"Oh, sir! only a poor old, sickly  
man, unable to earn anything, and who  
can endure no longer that his only  
child, an angel of a daughter, should  
work day and night to maintain him.  
To allow this longer I must be a tyrant,  
a barbarian."

"What, sir?" exclaimed the other,  
"you have an only daughter sacrific-  
ing herself for your sake?"

"And with what patience, what  
sweetness and love, what persever-  
ance! I see her sinking under her toil  
and her deprivations, and not a word  
of complaint escapes her balled lips.  
She is poor, she is sick, and still has a  
wad of love for her father."

"And you commit suicide! Are you  
mad?"

"Dare I murder that angel? The  
thought pierces my heart like a dag-  
ger," said the old man, sobbing.

"Sir, you must have supper with me;  
I see a tavern open yonder. Come,  
you must tell me your history, and I  
will tell you mine. There is no occa-  
sion for you to leap into the river. I  
am a rich man; your daughter will no  
longer have to work, and you shall not  
starve."

The old man allowed himself to be  
dragged along by his companion. In a  
few minutes they were seated at a table  
in the tavern, with refreshments before  
them, and each examining curiously  
the features of the other.

Refreshed by the viands, the old man  
began thus:

"My history is soon told. I was a  
mercantile man; but fortune never fa-  
vored me. I had no money myself,  
and loved and married a poor girl. I  
could never begin business on my own  
account."

"Under these circumstances I fear  
Madame Berg will not give you any  
possessions, nothing. Have you any val-  
uables more? Here is one florin, but  
that is all upon which we could raise  
some money."

Bertha considered for a moment.

"I have nothing," said she, "but my  
poor mother's prayer-book. On her death  
bed she entreated me not to part with it,  
and there is nothing in the world I hold more sacred  
than her memory and the promise I gave  
her; but still for the love of my sake, I  
will let her have it."

The girl burst into tears.

"I am afraid she will refuse. I al-  
ready owe her one florin, and she is  
very hard."

"For what purpose did you borrow  
the money you owe her?"

The girl hesitated to reply.

"You may trust me."

"Well, my father is very weak, and  
requires strengthening. I borrowed the  
money to get a quarter of a florin."

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