

**GENEVIEVE OF
BRABANT. A
LEGEND IN VERSE**

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Genevieve of Brabant. A legend in verse by Mrs. Charles Willing

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MRS. CHARLES WILLING

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*"From the deep bowers of the embowering wood
That cottle you,"*

[Franklin, loc. 2]

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BY

MRS. CHARLES WILLING.

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1879.

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To her dear memory, who my nursery hung
With pictures of the lovely lady pale,
The saintly Geneveva, and whose tongue
Interpreted to childish ears the tale
Of love o'er which no treachery could prevail,
I dedicate my verse, Slow wane the years
Since that blest presence passed within the veil;
Yet still my heart the perfect music hears
Of the sweet voice whose tone the legend old endears.

THE story of Genevieve of Brabant has been told in many ways, but historic incidents and localities have still been preserved, and still through every version runs the tale of woman's love and faith, fortitude and patience, of deliverance from great peril and preservation through years of hardship and exposure, of a wife's angelic trust, affection, and forgiveness, and a mother's pure, self-sacrificing devotion. Mrs. Jameson, in her "Sacred and Legendary Art," assures us that it has afforded an inexhaustible subject for poetry, painting, and the drama, and there are beautiful pictures from the history of Genevieve by artists of the modern German school. Germany has, however, handled somewhat rudely the legend of "Genoveva," and France depicts her "Geneviève" with a touch alternately frivolous and profane. England has been just to the beautiful and tender story, but has given it to us in fragments only. In the following attempt to repro-

duce it in our own language, the saintly wife and mother bears the English name of Genevieve. "I tell the tale as it was told to me," when many a time at twilight—the children's hour—visions of the silver doe, the lovely boy, the forest glade, passed vividly before our eyes, and grew yet clearer by day, when the pictured story, in its series of softly-tinted sketches, looked down on us from our nursery-walls, transforming them into the galleries of Siegfried's castle, the aisles of the grand old wood, and the dim or fire-lighted cave.

May the legend, doubly sacred to me, reveal to other young hearts glimpses of that purity and sanctity of wifehood and motherhood which dawned on our childish comprehension as we listened to it, and fill other young minds with lovely pictures of the mother and child in their forest-life, sustained, like His humbler creatures, by their Heavenly Father's care! It sees the light only in the hope of aiding children and mothers to whom a harder lot than life in the forest is assigned,—that of maintaining in a crowded city the struggle of existence. To shelter, feed, and instruct the children of the Poor day by

day, and thus enable mothers to earn their daily bread by labor, while the little ones are protected and cared for, is the aim of the DAY NURSERY, in whose behalf this volume is printed, and to which any means obtained by its sale will be devoted. It owes much to the kind and liberal aid of the artists by whom it has been illustrated.

PHILADELPHIA, 1878.