

**THE CHANGED
CROSS, AND OTHER
RELIGIOUS POEMS**

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The Changed Cross, and Other Religious Poems by Anson Davies Fitz Randolph

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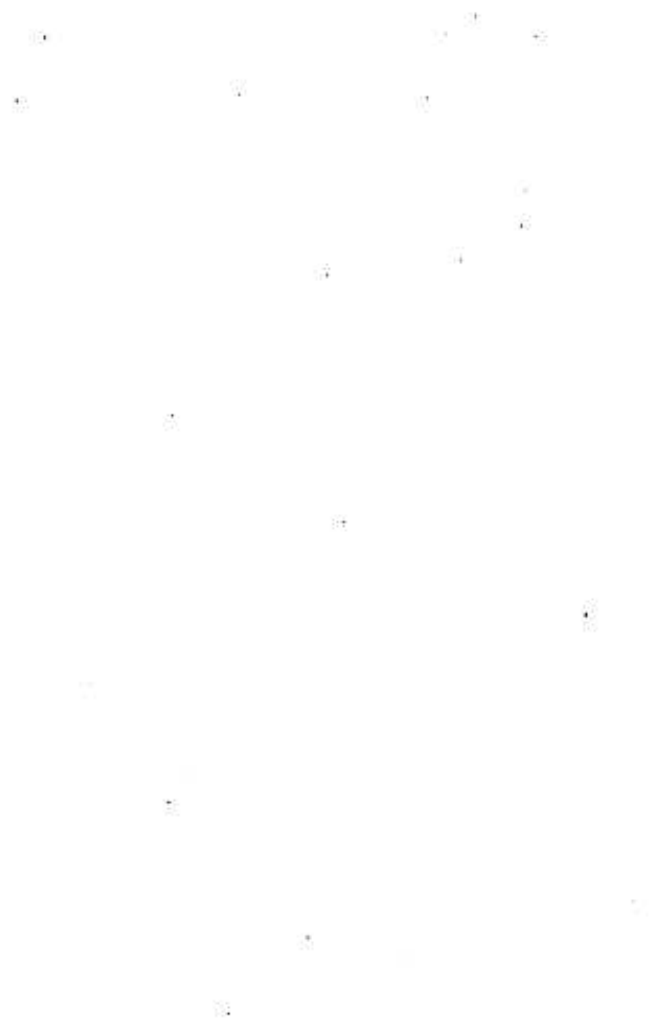
THE
CHANGED CROSS,
AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS POEMS.

NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION.

NEW-YORK:
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH,
770 BROADWAY,
CORNER OF NINTH STREET.
1868.

THE great favor which a part of the following selections had met in the form of "Leaflets for Letters," induced the Publisher, some few years ago, to gather them in a volume that has found a wide circulation. The present is a new and enlarged edition. As the poems are mainly waifs, gathered from magazines and newspapers, it has not been possible, except in a few instances, to ascertain the names of the writers.

NEW-YORK, March, 1865.



THE CHANGED CROSS,
AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS POEMS.

IT was a time of sadness, and my heart,
Although it knew and loved the better part,
Felt wearied with the conflict and the strife,
And all the needful discipline of life.

And while I thought on these, as given to me—
My trial tests of faith and love to be—
It seemed as if I never could be sure
That faithful to the end I should endure.

And thus, no longer trusting to His might
Who says, "We walk by faith, and not by sight,"
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose—My cross I cannot bear:

Far heavier its weight must surely be
Than those of others which I daily see.
Oh! if I might another burden choose,
Methinks I should not fear my crown to lose.

A solemn silence reigned on all around—
E'en Nature's voices uttered not a sound;
The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell,
And sleep upon my weary spirit fell.

A moment's pause—and then a heavenly light
Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight
Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere,
And angels' music thrilled the balmy air.

Then One, more fair than all the rest to see—
One to whom all the others bowed the knee—
Came gently to me as I trembling lay,
And, "Follow me!" He said; "I am the Way."

Then, speaking thus, He led me far above,
And there, beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of divers shape and size were seen,
Larger and smaller than my own had been.

And one there was, most beautiful to behold,
A little one, with jewels set in gold.
Ah! this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear:

And so the little cross I quickly took;
But, all at once, my frame beneath it shook.
The sparkling jewels fair were they to see,
But far too heavy was their *weight* for me.

"This may not be," I cried, and looked again,
To see if there was any herb could ease my pain ;
But, one by one, I passed them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast my eye.

Fair flowers around its sculptured form entwined,
And grace and beauty seemed in it combined.
Wondering, I gazed ; and still I wondered more
To think so many should have passed it o'er.

But oh ! that form so beautiful to see
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me ;
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair !
Sorrowing, I said : " This cross I may not bear."

And so it was with each and all around—
Not one to suit my need could there be found ;
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my Guide gently said : " No cross, no crown !"

At length, to Him I raised my saddened heart :
He knew its sorrows, bid its doubts depart.
" Be not afraid," He said, " but trust in me—
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee."

And then, with lightened eyes and willing feet,
Again I turned, my earthly cross to meet,
With forward footsteps, turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide ;

And there—in the prepared, appointed way,
Listening to hear, and ready to obey—
A cross I quickly found of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

With thankfulness I raised it from the rest,
And joyfully acknowledged it the best—
The only one of all the many there
That I could feel was good for me to bear.

And, while I thus my chosen one confessed,
I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest;
And, as I bent, my burden to sustain,
I recognized my own old cross again.

But oh! how different did it seem to be
Now I had learned its preciousness to see!
No longer could I unbelieving say,
Perhaps another is a better way.

Ah no! henceforth my own desire shall be,
That He who knows me best should choose for me
And so, whate'er His love sees good to send,
I'll trust it's best, because He knows the end.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, saith the Lord."—
ISAIAH 55: 8.

"For I know the thoughts that I think towards you—thoughts
of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."—
JER. 29: 1.

And when that happy time shall come, of endless peace and rest,
We shall look back upon our path, and say: it was the best.