

Claude Gueux

By

Victor Hugo

Claude Gueux was a poor workman, living in Paris about eight years ago, with his mistress and child. Although his education had been neglected, and he could not even read, the man was naturally clever and intelligent, and thought deeply over matters. Winter came with its attendant miseries—want of work, want of food, want of fuel. The man, the woman, the child, were frozen and famished. The man turned thief. I know not what he stole. What signifies, as the result was the same: to the woman and child it gave three days' bread and firing; to the man five years' imprisonment.

He was taken to Clairvaux, the abbey now converted into a prison, its cells into dungeons, and the altar itself into a pillory. This is called progress.

But to continue our story. Claude Gueux the honest workman, turned thief from force of circumstances, had a countenance which impressed you: a high forehead somewhat lined with care, dark hair already streaked with grey, deep-set eyes beaming with kindness; whilst the lower part clearly indicated firmness mingled with self-respect. He rarely spoke, yet there was a certain dignity in the man which commanded respect and obedience. A fine character, and we shall see what society made of it.

Over the prison workshop was an inspector, who rarely forgot that he was the gaoler also, to his subordinates, handing them the tools with one hand, and casting chains upon them with the other. A tyrant, never using even self-reasoning, with ideas against which there was no appeal, hard rather than firm, at times he could even be jocular; doubtless a good father, a good husband, really not vicious, but bad. He was one of those men who never can grasp a fresh idea, who apparently fail to be moved by any emotion; yet with hatred and rage in their hearts they look like blocks of wood, heated on the one side but frozen on the other. This man's chief characteristic was obstinacy; and so proud was he of this very stubbornness that he compared himself to Napoleon—an optical delusion, like taking the mere flicker of a candle for a star. When he had made up his mind to a thing, however absurd, he would carry out that absurd idea. How often it happens, when a catastrophe occurs, if we inquire into the cause, we find it originated through the obstinacy of one with little ability, but having full faith in his own powers.

Such was the inspector of the prison workshop at Clairvaux; a man of flint placed by society over others, who hoped to strike sparks out of such material—but a spark from a like source is apt to end in a conflagration.

The inspector soon singled out Claude Gueux, who had been numbered and placed in the workshop, and, finding him clever, treated him well. Seeing Claude looking sad—for he was ever thinking of her he termed his wife—and being in a good humour, by way of pastime to console the prisoner, he told

him the woman had become one of the unfortunate sisterhood, and taken to infamy; of the child nothing was known.

After a time Claude had accustomed himself to prison rule, and by his calmness of manner, and a certain amount of resolution clearly marked in his face, he had acquired a great ascendancy over his companions, who so much admired him that they consulted, and tried in all ways to imitate him. The very expression in his eyes clearly indicated the man's character; besides, is not the eye the window to the soul, and what other result could be anticipated than that the intelligent spirit should lead men with few ideas, who yielded to the attraction as the metal does to the loadstone. In less than three months Claude was the virtual head of the workshop, and at times he almost doubted whether he was king or prisoner, treated something like a captive pope, surrounded by his cardinals. Such popularity ever has its attendant hatred, and though beloved by the prisoners, Claude was detested by the gaolers. To him two men's rations would have been scarcely sufficient. The inspector laughed at this, as his own appetite was large; but what would be mirth to a duke, to a prisoner would be a great misfortune. When a free man Claude Gueux could earn his daily four-pound loaf and enjoy it, but as a prisoner he daily worked, and for his labour received one pound and a-half of bread and four ounces of meat; it naturally followed that he was always hungry.

He had just finished his meagre fare, and was about to resume his labours, hoping in work to forget famine, when a weakly-looking young man came towards him, holding a knife and his untasted rations in his hand, but seemingly afraid to address him.

"What do you want?" said Claude, roughly.

"A favour at your hands," timidly replied the young man.

"What is it?" said Claude.

"Help me with my rations, I have more than I can eat."

For a moment Claude was taken aback, but without further ceremony he divided the food in two and at once partook of one half.

"Thank you," said the young man, "and allow me to share my rations with you every day."

"What is your name?" said Claude.

"Albin."

"Why are you here?" added Claude.

"I robbed."

"So did I," said Claude.

The same scene took place daily between this man, old before his time—he was only thirty-six—and the boy of twenty, who looked at the most seventeen. The feeling was more like that of father and son than one brother to another; everything created a bond of union between them—the very toil they endured together, the fact of sleeping in the same quarters and taking exercise in the same courtyard. They were happy, for were they not all the world to each other!

The inspector of the workshop was so hated by the prisoners that he often had recourse to Claude Gueux to enforce his authority; and when a tumult was on the point of breaking out, a few words from Claude had more effect than the authority of ten warders. Although the inspector was glad to avail himself of this influence, he was jealous, and hated the improved robber with an envious and implacable feeling—an example of might over right, all the more fearful as it was secretly nourished. Claude cared so much for Albin that he thought little about the inspector.

One morning as the warders were going their rounds one of them summoned Albin, who was working with Claude, to go before the inspector.

“What are you wanted for?” said Claude.

“I do not know,” replied Albin, following the warder.

All day Claude looked in vain for his companion, and at night, finding him still absent, he broke through his ordinary reserve and addressed the turnkey.

“Is Albin ill?” said he.

“No,” replied the man.

“How is it that he has never put in an appearance to-day?”

“His quarters have been changed,” was the reply.

For a moment Claude trembled, then calmly continued—

“Who gave the order?”

“Monsieur D——.” This was the inspector’s name.

On the following night the inspector, Monsieur D——, went his rounds as usual; Claude, who had perceived him from the distance, rose, and hastened to raise his woollen cap and button his grey woollen vest to the throat—considered a mark of respect to superiors in prison discipline.

“Sir,” said Claude, as the inspector was about to pass him, “has Albin really been quartered elsewhere?”

“Yes,” replied the inspector.

“Sir, I cannot live without him. You know the rations are insufficient for me, and Albin divided his portion with me. Could you not manage to let him resume his old place near me?”

“Impossible, the order cannot be revoked.”

“By whom was it given?”

“By me.”

“Monsieur D——,” replied Claude, “on you my life depends.”

“I never cancel an order once given.”

“Sir, what have I ever done to you?”

“Nothing.”

“Why, then,” cried Claude, “separate me from Albin?”

“Because I do,” replied the inspector, and with that he passed on.

Claude’s head sunk down, like the poor caged lion deprived of his dog; but the grief, though so deeply felt, in no way changed his appetite—he was famished. Many offered to share their rations with him, but he steadily refused, and continued his usual routine in silence, breaking it only to ask the inspector daily, in tones of anguish mingled with rage, something between a prayer and a threat, these two words:

“And Albin?”

The inspector simply passed on, shrugging his shoulders, but had he only observed Claude he would have seen the evident change, noticeable to all present.

“Sir, listen to me; send my companion to me. It would be wise to do so, I can assure you. Remember my words.”

On Sunday he had sat for hours in the courtyard, with his head bowed in his hands, and when a prisoner called Faillette came up laughing, he said—

“I am judging someone.”

On the 25th of October, 1831, as the inspector went his rounds, Claude, to draw his attention, smashed a watch-glass he had found in the passage. This had the desired effect.

“It was I,” said Claude. “Sir, restore my comrade to me.”

“Impossible,” was the answer.

Looking the inspector full in the face, Claude firmly added—

“Now reflect; to-day is the 25th of October, I give you till the 4th of

November.”

A warder remarked that Claude was threatening Monsieur D——, and ought at once to be locked up.

“No, it is not a case of blackhole,” replied the inspector, smiling disdainfully; “we must be considerate with people of this stamp.”

The following day Claude was again accosted by one of the prisoners named Pernot, as he was brooding in the courtyard.

“Well, Claude, you are sad indeed; what are you pondering over?”

“I fear some evil threatens that good Monsieur D——,” answered Claude.

Claude daily impressed the fact on the inspector how much Albin’s absence affected him, but with no result save four-and-twenty hours’ solitary confinement.

On the 4th of November he looked round his cell for the little that remained to remind him of his former life. A pair of scissors, and an old volume of the “Emile,” belonging to the woman he had loved so well, the mother of his child—how useless to a man who could neither work nor read!

As Claude walked down the old cloisters, so dishonoured by its new inmates and its fresh white-washed walls, he noticed how earnestly the convict Ferrari was looking at the heavy iron bars which crossed the window.

“To-night I will cut through those bars with these scissors,” pointing to the pair he still held in his hand.

Ferrari laughed incredulously, and Claude joined in the mirth. During the day he worked with more than ordinary ardour, wishing to finish a straw hat, which he had been paid for in advance by a tradesman at Troyes, M. Bressier.

Shortly before noon he made some excuse to go down into the carpenters’ quarters, a story below his own, at the time the warders were absent.

Claude received a hearty welcome, as he was equally popular here as elsewhere.

“Can any one lend me an axe?”

“What for?”

Without exacting any promises of secrecy he at once replied—

“To kill the inspector with to-night.”

He was at once offered several; choosing the smallest, he hid it beneath his waistcoat and left. Now there were twenty-seven prisoners present, and not one of those men betrayed him; they even refrained from talking upon the

subject among themselves, waiting for the terrible event which must follow.

As Claude passed on he saw a young convict of sixteen yawning idly there, and he strongly advised him to learn how to read. Just then Faillette asked what he was hiding. Claude answered unhesitatingly—

“An axe to kill Monsieur D—— to-night; but can you see it?”

“A little,” said Faillette.

At seven o'clock the prisoners were locked in their several workshops. It was then the custom for the warders to leave them, until the inspector had been his rounds.

In Claude's workshop a most extraordinary scene took place, the only one of the kind on record.

Claude rose and addressed his companions, eighty-four in number, in the following words:

“You all know Albin and I were like brothers. I liked him at first for sharing his rations with me, afterwards because he cared for me. Now I never have sufficient, though I spend the pittance I earn in bread. It could make no possible difference to the inspector, Monsieur D——, that we should be together; but he chose to separate us simply from a love of tormenting, for he is a bad man. I asked again and again for Albin to be sent back, without success; and when I gave him a stated time, the 4th of November, I was thrust into a dungeon. During that time I became his judge, and sentenced him to death on November the 4th. In two hours he will be here, and I warn you I intend to kill him. But have you anything to say?”

There was a dead silence. Claude then continued telling his comrades, the eighty-one thieves, his ideas on the subject.

That he was reduced to a fearful extremity, and compelled by that very necessity to take the law into his own hands. He knew full well he could not take the inspector's life without sacrificing his own; but as the cause was a just one, he would bear the consequences, having come to this conclusion after two months' calm reflection. If they considered resentment alone hurried him on to such a step, they were at once to say so, and to state their objections to the sentence being carried out.

One voice alone broke the silence which followed, saying—

“Before killing the inspector, Claude ought to give him a chance of relenting.”

“That is but just,” said Claude, “and he shall have the benefit of the doubt.”

Claude then sorted the few things a poor prisoner is allowed, and gave

them to the comrades he mostly cared for after Albin, keeping only the pair of scissors. He then embraced them all; some could not withhold their tears at such a moment. Claude continued calmly to converse during this last hour, and even gave way to a trick he had as a boy, of extinguishing the candle with a breath from his nose. Seeing him thus, his companions afterwards owned, they hoped he had abandoned his sinister idea.

One young convict looked at him fixedly, trembling for the coming event.

“Take courage, young fellow,” said Claude, gently, “it will be but the work of a minute.”

The workshop was a long room with a door at both ends, and windows each side overlooking the benches, thus leaving a pathway up the centre for the inspector to review the work on both sides of him.

Claude had now resumed his work—something like Jacques Clement, who did not fail to repeat his prayers.

As the clock sounded the last quarter to nine, Claude rose and placed himself near the entrance, apparently calm.

Amidst the most profound silence the clock struck nine; the door was thrown open, and the inspector came in as usual alone, looking quite jovial and self-satisfied, passing rapidly along, tossing his head at one, grinding words out to another, little heeding the eyes fixed so fiercely upon him.

Just then he heard Claude’s step, and turning quickly round said—

“What are you doing here? why are you not in your place?” just as he would have spoken to a dog.

Claude answered respectfully—

“I wish to speak to you, sir.”

“On what subject?”

“Albin.”

“Again!”

“Always the same,” said Claude.

“So then,” replied the inspector, walking along, “you have not had enough with twenty-four hours in the blackhole.”

Claude, following him closely, replied—

“Sir, return my companion to me.”

“Impossible.”

“Sir,” continued Claude, in a voice which would have moved Satan, “I implore you to send Albin back to me; you will then see how I will work. You are free, and it would matter but little to you; you do not know the feeling of having only one friend. To me it is everything, encircled by the prison walls. You can come and go at your pleasure; I have but Albin. Pray let him come back to me! You know well he shared his food with me. What can it matter to you that a man named Claude Gueux should be in this hall, having another by his side called Albin? You have but to say ‘Yes,’ nothing more. Sir, my good sir, I implore you, in the name of heaven, to grant my prayer!”

Claude, overcome with emotion, waited for the answer.

“Impossible,” replied the inspector, impatiently; “I will not recall my words. Now go, you annoyance.”

And with that he hurried on towards the outer door, amidst the breathless silence maintained by the eighty-one thieves.

Claude, touching the inspector, gently asked—

“Let me at least know why I am condemned to death. Why did you separate us?”

“I have already answered you: because I chose.”

With that he was about to lift the latch, when Claude raised the axe, and without one cry the inspector fell to the ground, with his skull completely cloven from three heavy blows dealt with the rapidity of lightning. A fourth completely disfigured his face, and Claude, in his mad fury, gave another and a useless blow, for the inspector was dead.

Claude, throwing the axe aside, cried out, “Now for the other.”

The other was himself, and taking the scissors, his wife’s, he plunged them into his breast; but the blade was short, and the chest was deep, and vainly he strove to give the fatal blow. At last, covered with blood, he fell fainting across the dead.

Which of the two would be considered the victim?

When Claude recovered consciousness he was in bed, surrounded by every care and covered with bandages. Near him were sisters of charity, and a recorder ready to take down his deposition, who with much interest inquired how he was.

Claude had lost a great deal of blood, but the scissors had done him a bad turn, inflicting wounds not one the least dangerous: the only mortal blows he had struck were on the body of Monsieur D——.

Then the interrogatory commenced.

“Did you kill the inspector of the prison workshops at Clairvaux?”

“Yes,” was the reply.

“Why did you do so?”

“Because I did.”

Claude’s wounds now assumed a more serious aspect, and he was prostrated with fever which threatened his life. November, December, January, February passed, in nursing and preparations, and Claude in turn was visited by doctor and judge—the one to restore him to health, the other to glean the foundation for his scaffold.

On the 16th of March, 1832, perfectly cured, Claude appeared in court at Troyes, to answer the charge brought against him.

His appearance impressed the court favourably; he had been shaved and stood bareheaded, but still clad in prison garb.

The court was well guarded by a strong military guard, to keep the witnesses within bounds, as they were all convicts. But an unexpected difficulty occurred: not one of these men would give evidence; neither questions nor threats availed to make them break their silence, until Claude requested them to do so. Then they in turn gave a faithful account of the terrible event, and if one, from forgetfulness or affection for the accused, failed to relate the whole facts, Claude supplied the deficiency.

At one time the women’s tears fell fast. The usher now called the convict Albin. He came in trembling with emotion and sobbing painfully, and threw himself into Claude’s arms.

Turning to the Public Prosecutor, Claude said—

“Here is a convict who gives his food to the hungry,” and stooping, he kissed Albin’s hand.

All the witnesses having been examined, the counsel for the prosecution then rose to address the court.

“Gentlemen of the jury, society would be utterly put to confusion if a public prosecution did not condemn great culprits like him, who, &c.”

After a long address, Claude’s counsel rose. Then followed the usual pleading for and against, which ever takes place at the criminal court.

Claude, in his turn, gave evidence, and people were astonished at his intelligence; and there appeared far more of the orator about this poor workman than the assassin. In a clear and straightforward way he detailed the facts as they were—standing proudly there, resolved to tell the whole truth. At

times the crowd was carried away by his eloquence. This man, who could not read, would grasp the most difficult points of argument, yet treat the judges with all due deference. Once Claude lost his temper, when the counsel for the prosecution stated that he had assassinated the inspector without provocation.

“What!” cried Claude, “I had no provocation! Indeed: so a drunkard strikes me, I kill him, then you would allow there was provocation—the penalty of death would be changed for that of the galleys; but a man who wounds me in every way during four years, humiliates me for four years, taunts me daily, hourly, for four years, and heaps every insult on my head—what follows? You consider I have had no provocation. I had a wife for whom I robbed—he tortured me about her; I had a child for whom I robbed—he taunted me about this child; I was hungry, a friend shared his bread with me—he took away my friend. I begged him to return my friend to me; he cast me into a dungeon. I told him how much I suffered; he said it wearied him to listen. What then would you have me do? I took his life, and you look upon me as a monster for killing this man, and you decapitate me—then do so.”

Provocation such as this the law fails to acknowledge, because the blows have no marks to show.

The judge then summed up the case in a clear and impartial manner; dwelling on the life Claude had led, living openly with an improper character; then he had robbed, and ended by being a murderer. All this was true.

Before the jury retired, the judge asked Claude if he had any questions to ask, or anything to say.

“Very little,” said Claude, however. “I am a murderer, I am a thief; but I ask you, gentlemen of the jury, why did I kill? why did I steal?”

The jury retired for a quarter of an hour, and according to the judgment of these twelve countrymen—gentlemen of the jury, as they are styled—Claude Gueux was condemned to death.

At the very onset several of them were much impressed with the name of Gueux (vagabond), and that influenced their decision.

When the verdict was pronounced, Claude simply said—

“Very well; but there are two questions these gentlemen have not answered. Why did this man steal? What made him a murderer?”

He made a good supper that night, exclaiming, “Thirty-six years have now passed me.”

He refused to make any appeal until the last minute, but at the instance of one of the sisters who had nursed him he consented to do so.

She in her fulness of heart gave him a five-franc piece.

His fellow-prisoners, as we have already noticed, were devoted to him, and placed all the means at their disposal to help him to escape: they threw into his dungeon, through the air-hole, a nail, some wire, the handle of a pail—any one of these would have been enough for a man like Claude to free himself from his chains; he gave them up to the warder.

On the 8th of June, 1832, seven months and four days after the murder, the recorder of the court came, and Claude was told he had but one hour more to live, for his appeal had been rejected.

“Indeed,” said Claude, coldly; “I slept well last night, and doubtless I shall pass my next even better.”

First came the priest, then the executioner. He was humble to the priest, and listened to him with great attention, regretting much that he had not had the benefit of religious training; at the same time blaming himself for much in the past.

He was courteous in his manner to the executioner; in fact he gave up all—his soul to the priest, his body to the executioner.

Whilst his hair was being cut, some one mentioned how the cholera was spreading, and Troyes at any moment might become a prey to this fearful scourge. Claude joined in the conversation, saying, with a smile—“There is one thing to be said, I have no fear of the cholera.”

He had broken half of the scissors; what remained he asked the gaoler to give to Albin—the other half lay buried in his chest. He also wished the day’s rations to be taken to his friend.

The only trifle he retained was the five-franc piece that the sister had given him, which he kept in his right hand after he was bound.

At a quarter to eight, the dismal procession usual in such cases left the prison. Pale, but with a firm tread, Claude Gueux slowly mounted the scaffold, keeping his eyes fixed on the crucifix the priest carried—an emblem of the Saviour’s suffering. He wished to embrace the priest and the executioner, thanking the one and pardoning the other. The executioner simply repulsed him.

Just before he was bound to the infernal machine he gave the five-franc piece to the priest, saying, “For the poor.”

The hour had scarcely struck its eight chimes, when this man, so noble, so intelligent, received the fatal blow which severed his head from his body.

A market-day had been chosen for the time of execution, as there would be

more people about, for there are still in France small towns who glory in having an execution. The guillotine that day remained, inflaming the imagination of the mob to that extent that one of the tax-gatherers was nearly murdered: such is the admirable effect of public executions.

We have given the history of Claude Gueux's life, more to solve a difficult problem than for aught else. In his life there are two questions to be considered. Before his fall, and after his fall. What was his training, and what was the penalty? This must interest society generally, for this man was well gifted, his instincts were good: then what was wanting? On this revolves the grand problem which would place society on a firm basis.

What nature has commenced in the individual, let society carry out. Look at Claude Gueux. An intelligent and most noble-hearted man, placed in the midst of evil surroundings, he turned thief. Society placed him in a prison where the evil was yet greater, and he ended with becoming a murderer.

Can we really blame him, or ourselves?—questions which require deep thought, or the result will be that we shall be compelled to shirk this most important subject. The facts are now before us, and if the government gives no thought to the matter, what are the rulers about?

The Deputies are yearly much occupied. It is important to sift sinecures and to unravel the budget; to pass an act which compels me, disguised as a soldier, to mount guard at the Count de Lobau's, whom I do not know, and to whom I wish to remain a stranger; or to go on parade under the command of my grocer, who has been made an officer. I wish to cast no reflections on the patrol, who keep order and protect our homes, but on the absurdity of making such parade and military hubbub about turning citizens into parodies of soldiers.

Deputies or ministers, it is important we should sound every subject, even though it end in nothing, to question and cross-question what we know but little about. Rulers and legislators, you pass your time in classical comparisons that would make a village schoolmaster smile. You assert that it is the habits of modern civilization that have engendered adultery, incest, parricide, infanticide, and poisoning—proving that you know little of Jocasta Phedra, Œdipus, Medea, or Rodoguna. The great orators occupy themselves in lengthy discussions on Corneille and Racine, and get so heated in literary argument as to make the grossest mistakes in the French language.

Very important indeed all this is, but we consider there are subjects of far greater consequence.

In the midst of such useless arguments, what answer would the Deputies give if one rose and gravely addressed them in the following words:—

“Silence, all those who have been speaking—silence I say! You consider yourself acquainted with the question: you know nothing about it.

“The question is this. In the name of justice, scarcely a year ago, a man at Panniers was cut to pieces; at Dijon a woman’s head was taken off; in Paris, at Saint Jacques, executions take place without number.

“This is the question! Now take your time to consider it, you who argue over the buttons of the national guard, whether they should be white or yellow, and if security is preferable to certainty!

“Gentlemen of the Right, gentleman of the Left, the great mass of the people suffer!

“Whether a republic or a monarchy, the fact remains the same—the people suffer!

“The people are famished, the people are frozen. Such misery leads them on to crime: the galleys take the sons, houses of ill-fame the daughters. You have too many convicts, too many unfortunates.

“What is the meaning of this social gangrene?

“You are near the patient: treat the malady. You are at fault: now study the matter more deeply.

“When you pass laws, what are they but expedients and palliatives? Half your codes result from routine.

“Branding but cauterizes the wound, and it mortifies, and what is the end? You stamp the crime for life on the criminal; you make two friends of them, two companions—inseparables. The convict prison is a blister which spreads far worse matter than ever it extracts; and as for the sentence of death, when carried out it is a barbarous amputation.

“Therefore, branding, penal servitude, and sentence of death are all of one class; you have done away with the branding, banish the rest. Why keep the chain and the chopper now you have put aside the hot iron? Farinace was atrocious, but he was not ridiculous.

“Take down that worn ladder that leads to crime and to suffering. Revise your laws; revise your codes; rebuild your prisons; replace your judges. Make laws suited to the present time

“You are bent on economy; do not be so lavish in taking off the heads of so many during the year. Suppress the executioner; you could defray the expenses of six hundred schoolmasters with the wages you give your eighty executioners. Think of the multitude; then there would be schools for the children, workshops for the men.

“Do you know that in France there are fewer people who know how to read than in any other country in Europe? Fancy, Switzerland can read, Belgium can read, Denmark can read, Greece can read, Ireland can read—and France cannot read! It is a crying evil.

“Go into our convict prisons, examine each one of these condemned men, and you will observe by the profile, the shape of the head, how many could find their type in the lower animals. Here are the lynx, the cat, the monkey, the vulture, the hyena. Nature was first to blame, no doubt; but the want of training fostered the evil. Then give the people a fair education, and what there is of good in these ill-conditioned minds, let that be developed.

“People must be judged by their opportunities. Rome and Greece were educated: then brighten the people’s intellect.

“When France can read, then give the people encouragement for higher things. Ignorance is preferable to a little ill-directed knowledge; and remember, there is a book of far greater importance than the *Compère Mathieu*, more popular than the *Constitutionnel*, and more worthy of perusal than the charter of 1830—that is the Bible.

“Whatever you may do for the people, the majority will always remain poor and unhappy. Theirs the work, the heavy burden to carry, to endure: all the miseries for the poor, all the pleasures for the rich.

“As such is life, ought not the State to lean to the weaker and helpless side.”

“In the midst of all this wretchedness, if you but throw hope in the balance, let the poor man learn there is a heaven where joy reigns, a paradise that he can share, and you raise him; he feels that he has a part in the rich man’s joys. And this was the teaching Jesus gave, and He knew more about it than Voltaire.

“Then give to these people who work, and who suffer here, the hope of a different world to come, and they will go on patiently. For patience but follows in the footsteps of hope.

“Then spread the Gospel in all our villages, let every cottage have its Bible; the seed thus sown will soon circulate. Encourage virtue, and from that will spring so much that now lies fallow.

“The man turned assassin under certain circumstances, if differently influenced would have served his country well.

“Then give the people all encouragement; improve the masses, enlighten them, guard their morals, make them useful, and to such heads as those you will not require to use cold steel.”

