

**THE VALE OF  
CEDARS: OR,  
THE MARTYR**

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The Vale of Cedars: Or, The Martyr by Grace Aguilar

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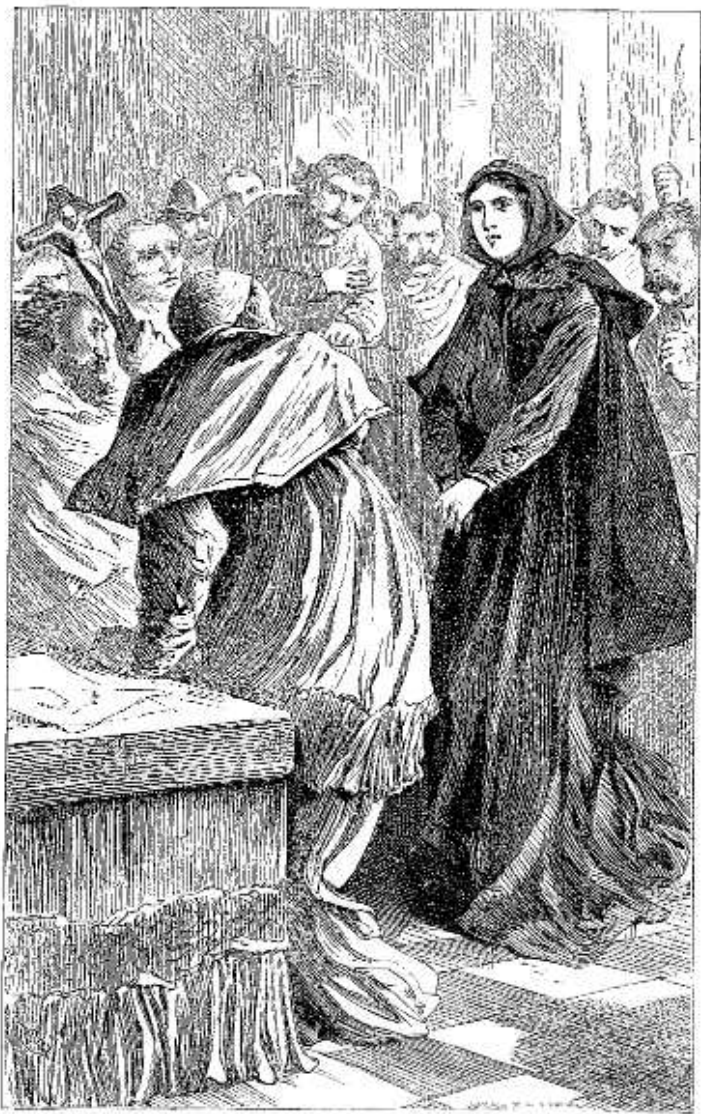
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**GRACE AGUILAR**

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CEDARS: OR,  
THE MARTYR**









# THE VALE OF CEDARS;

OR,

## The Martyr.

BY

GRACE AGUILAR,

AUTHOR OF "HOME INFLUENCE," "WOMAN'S FRIENDSHIP," ETC.

"The wild dove hath her nest—the fox her cave—  
Mankled their country—Israel but the grave."

BROOK.

NEW YORK:  
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,  
90, 92 & 94 GRAND STREET.  
1870.





## MEMOIR OF GRACE AGUILAR.

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GRACE AGUILAR was born at Hackney, June 2nd, 1816. She was the eldest child, and only daughter of Emanuel Aguilar, one of those merchants descended from the Jews of Spain, who, almost within the memory of man, fled from persecution in that country, and sought and found an asylum in England.

The delicate frame and feeble health observable in Grace Aguilar throughout her life, displayed itself from infancy; from the age of three years, she was almost constantly under the care of some physician, and, by their advice, annually spending the summer months by the sea, in the hope of rousing and strengthening a naturally fragile constitution. This want of physical energy was, however, in direct contrast to her mental powers, which developed early, and readily. She learned to read with scarcely any trouble, and when once that knowledge was gained, her answer when asked what she would like for a present, was invariably "A book," which was read, re-read, and preserved with a care remarkable in so young a child. With the exception of eighteen months passed at school, her mother was her sole instructress, and both parents took equal delight in directing her studies, and facilitating her personal inspection of

all that was curious and interesting in the various counties of England to which they resorted for her health.

From the early age of seven she commenced keeping a journal, which was continued with scarce any intermission throughout her life. In 1825 she visited Oxford, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Worcester, Ross, and Bath, and though at that time but nine years old, her father took her to Gloucester and Worcester cathedrals, and also to see a porcelain and pin manufactory, &c., the attention and interest she displayed on these occasions, affording convincing proof that her mind was alive to appreciate and enjoy what was thus presented to her observation. Before she had completed her twelfth year she ventured to try her powers in composition, and wrote a little drama, called *Gustavus Vasa*, never published, and only here recorded as being the first germ of what was afterwards to become the ruling passion.

In September, 1828, the family went to reside in Devonshire for the health of Mr. Aguilar, and there a strong admiration for the beauties and wonders of nature manifested itself: she constantly collected shells, stones, seaweed, mosses, &c., in her daily rambles; and not satisfied with admiring their beauty, sedulously procured whatever little catechisms or other books on those subjects she could purchase, or borrow, eagerly endeavoring by their study, to increase her knowledge of their nature and properties.

When she had attained the age of fourteen, her father commenced a regular course of instruction for his child, by reading aloud, while she was employed in drawing, needlework, &c. History was selected, that being the study which now most interested her, and the first work chosen was *Josephus*.

It was while spending a short time at Tavistock, in 1830, that the beauty of the surrounding scenery led her to express her thoughts in verse. Several small pieces soon