

**THE KING'S CUPBEARER;
AN HISTORICAL
MORALITY PLAY IN
TWELVE CANTICLES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649359486

The king's cupbearer; an historical morality play in twelve canticles by Agnes Chalmers

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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AGNES CHALMERS

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AN HISTORICAL MORALITY PLAY
IN TWELVE CANTICLES

BY
AGNES CHALMERS

Published by
THE CRESCENT PUBLISHERS,
Grand Rapids, Michigan,
U. S. A.

TRUSLOVE AND HANSON, LTD.,
London

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Grand Rapids, Michigan

*This book is offered as an American's
expression of gratitude to His Majesty,
the King of Great Britain and Ireland,
and to his valiant armies through whose
unselfed service Jerusalem was restored
December 9, 1917, to the civilized world.*

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THE KING'S CUPBEARER

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*AN EXPLANATION OF THE WRITING
OF THIS PLAY*

THE POET AND HIS SONGS

As the birds come in Spring
We know not from where;
As the stars come at evening
From depths of the air;

As the rain comes from the cloud
And the brook from the ground
As suddenly, low or loud,
Out of silence a sound;

As the grapes come to the vine
The fruit to the tree;
As the wind comes to the pine
And the tide to the sea;

As comes the white sails of ships
O'er the ocean's verge;
As comes the smile to the lips,
The foam to the surge;

To My
Ancestor

4 THE KING'S CUPBEARER

So come to the Poet his songs,
All hitherward blown
From the misty realm that belongs
To the vast unknown.

* * * * *

For voices pursue him by day
And haunt him by night,
And he listens and needs must obey,
When the Angel says: "Write!"

—*Longfellow.*

INTRODUCTION

THIS play is designed to give to the world a simple lesson in honest building. No more appropriate words of introduction could be offered than Montaigne has given in describing the value of the honest motive which should accompany all constructive work. " 'Tis an exact life," writes Montaigne, "that maintains itself in due order in private. Every one may juggle his part, and represent an honest man upon the stage; but within, and in his own bosom, where all may do as they list, where all is concealed, to be regular—there's the point. The next degree is to be so in his house, and in his ordinary actions, for which we are accountable to none, and where there is no study nor artifice. And therefore Bias, setting forth the excellent state of a private family, says: 'of which the master is the same within, by his own virtue and temper, that he is abroad, for fear of the laws and report of men.' And it was a worthy saying of Julius Drusus, to the masons who offered him for three

thousand crowns to put his house in such a posture that his neighbors should no longer have the same inspection into it as before: 'I will give you,' said he, 'six thousand to make it so that everybody may see into every room.' "

If this play furnishes an opportunity to look more closely into our dwellings, and if, even in a degree, it enables "everybody" to "see into every room," "The King's Cupbearer" shall thus have aided—somewhat—in the ultimate liberation of the human race.

AGNES CHALMERS

Grand Rapids, Michigan,
Thanksgiving, 1916.

THE CAST

CANTICLE I

(In the order of their appearance)

HANANI, brother of Nehemiah

FIRST JEW

SECOND JEW

THIRD JEW

NEHEMIAH, the King's cupbearer

ARTAXERXES, King of Babylon

(MILITARY AID)

HEARING—*Wakefulness*

SIGHT—*Intuition*

TASTE—*Discernment*

TOUCH—*Faith*

SMELL—*Understanding*

CANTICLE II

(Previous Characters)

CANTICLE III

ELIASHIB, the High Priest

SEVERAL PRIESTS

MEN OF JERICHO