

THE WHITE DOVE

AND

WHAT IS LOVE?

ANONYMOUS



LUCIE AND MR. VERNON.

THE
WHITE DOVE:
A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HAPPY FAMILY."

TO WHICH IS ADDED

WHAT IS LOVE?
A TALE.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.



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STORIES.

THE WHITE DOVE.

THE little Lina opened her eyes upon this world, in the arms of her father, the good Gotleib. He kissed the child with a holy joy; “For,” said he, “now is a thought of God fixed in an eternal form;” and he felt that a Divine love flowed into this work of the great God,—This also thrilled his warm, manly heart with a wondrous love. He felt the inmost of his being, vibrating as with an electric touch, to the inmost of the little newborn innocent. But the rapture of the young father was altogether imperfect, until he had

sealed his lips in a love kiss upon those of the fraulein Anna, who lay there so white and beautiful in the new joy of a young mother. Like an innocent maiden, she twined her arms around Gotleib's neck, and grew strong in the influx of warm life that flowed into her responsive cares of the husband of her heart. Then Gotleib held up the newly born Lina, and the mother's lips touched the soft cheek of the tiny little one with a living rapture, as if all of Heaven were embraced in this heart-possession.

And Gotleib knelt by the bedside, and thanked God for the beautiful gift of love with a pious awe and holy joy—large tears stood in the eyes of Anna. As he rose from his reverent posture, he kissed off the bright

tears—even as the sun exhales dew-drops from a pure flower, and said,

“Dost thou weep for joy, sweet one?”

And Anna said—

“Once—not long since—I had a dream—a beautiful dream—that this day has been realised. I dreamed that I was in a quite heavenly place—yet the place was as nothing—it was the *state*—for I sat with an infant in my arms—a bright innocent little one—and thou, dearest Gotleib! knelt beside me; and an angel-woman stood near us, in a soft heavenly glory, and said, in low musical, spirit-words—‘Behold the fruit of the union of good and truth.’ And then, methought, thou didst embrace me with a new joy of love, and whispered—‘an angel of God is

born of us.' This little one is the dream-child, dear Gotleib."

Thus beautiful was the birth of the little Lina, who grew, daily, in a pure innocent loveliness. While she is expanding in the first days of her new, breathing, sensitive life, we will go back to the former life of Gotleib and Anna.

Gotleib Von Arnheim had first seen the light in this same small cottage, on the confines of the Black Forest of Germany. He was born with a large, loving heart. But the father and mother, and the dear God, were the only beings on whom his affections were fixed; for his sensitive nature shrank from the contact of the honest-hearted, but rough, peasant neighbors, that made the little world

of their simple life. But soon death came, and the good father left the earth for the beautiful Heaven-world. The little Gotleib missed his kind father; but his mother told him of the bright inner-life, and how his father yet lived and loved him; and the heart of the boy was comforted; he felt a sense of elevation in having his father, whom he had known so familiarly here upon earth, now the companion of angels, and living in such a bright and beautiful world.

Ah, life had to him such an inner-beauty; and, when still, dreamy moments of leisure intervened between his work and play, he revelled in such dreams of fancy, as lent light and life and joy to his whole being. But the death of the kind father, had not only carried

the boy's fancy to the other world; it was also drawing the mother's heart away to the fair spirit-land. Gotleib saw his mother's face growing thin and pale; he knew that she was weak—for oftentimes, in the long winter evenings, as he read to her from the holy Word of God, her hand would drop wearily with the raised spindle, and she, who was never before idle, would fold her hands in a quiet, meek resignation. At such times a tremor would seize the boy's heart. The mother saw it; and, one night, when his fixed, tender gaze rested on her, she raised her spiritual eyes to his, and said,

“Dear Gotleib! Thou wilt yet have the good God to love.”

“Ah, mother! mother!” cried the boy.

“Wilt thou, too, leave me?” His head was bowed upon her knees in bitter grief; the desolation of earth was spread like an impenetrable pall over his whole future. Suddenly he looked up, full of a strange, bright hope, and said—

“Mother, I too, may die.”

Then the mother put off her weakness—and long and loving was the talk she held with her dear boy. She told him that from a little one, he had ever loved God; that the first word he had ever pronounced was the name of the holy One. She had taught him to clasp his tiny baby hands and look up, and say, “God,” ere any other word had passed his lips. She had named him Gotleib, because he was the love of God to her, and he was to

be a lover of God. As she talked, the boy grew strong and calm, and said—

“Yet, oh, my mother! God is so great for the heart of a small child. God is so high and lifted up, in the far Heavens, that I feel myself but as a tiny blade of grass that looks up to the far sun—dear mother! the earth will be too lonely; ah, there is no hope but in death.”

“No, my son,” said the mother, “there is a beautiful hope for the earth also. I will tell you what will make you love God more truly than ever.”

The boy was fixed attention.

“Thou did’st not know, dear Gotleib—that when God created thee a strong, brave boy, He also created a tender, gentle little maiden,

like unto thee in all things, save thou wert a boy and she a maiden. Thou wert strong and able to work; and she gentle and born to love thee.”

“Where is she?” enquired the excited Gotleib.

“I know not,” replied the mother. “But God knows, and He will watch over the two whom He has created, the one for the other; and, on earth or in Heaven, the two will meet. Is it not better, then, not to wish to die, but to leave all things to the will of God? For what if thy little maiden is left alone upon the earth, and there is no strong, manly heart upon which she may lean—and no vigorous arm to labor for her—how will her spirit droop with a weary, lonely sadness? No, my

son, live! and the joy of a most beautiful, loving companionship may yet be thine. The earth will not be desolate ever to thy orphan-heart, with this beautiful hope before thee.”

Thus, in the cold wintry night of a dark sorrow, did the good mother plant a living seed of truth, that afterwards sprang up into a vernal flowery Eden, that bloomed in the boy's heart with an eternal beauty. When the early spring came, Gotleib looked calmly and lovingly on the beloved mother, who was leaving for the inner world. Death was beautiful to him now; it was simply the new birth-time of a mature, living soul.

The spirit of the mother's love seemed to linger over the home of his childhood, and it was a great sorrow to leave the cherished

spot; but, his mother told him he was to seek a brother of hers in the distant town of Heidelberg. As Gotleib turned from the now voiceless home of his parents, a fervent desire arose in his heart that he might again be permitted to dwell beneath this sheltering roof and amidst its living associations.

The boy went forth into the unknown world, with a living trust in his heart in the great God. His was a simple, childish faith, born of his love—to him God was not a mystery. It was a Divine personality he loved. Jesus had walked the earth, and his father and mother also—all were now spirits—none the less to be loved and trusted than when upon earth; but now they were to him in transcendent states of glory. The Lord

Jesus, as being infinitely great and glorious, was the alone One to whom he now looked for help—though ever as he knelt to pray to God, he felt that his angel-mother bowed with his spirit, and by her prompting beautiful words of humiliation and praise came to him, that he himself could never have thought of; hence the affections of his heart all grew up into the inner spirit-world.

And years passed in the good town of Heidelberg, years that brought blessings to the orphan boy, as they flew. The God in whom he trusted had provided for him—had awakened a friendly kindness in many warm hearts. And Gotleib, who was at first designed by his relatives to spend his days over the shoemaker's awl and last, at length

found himself by his own ardent exertions and the helpful kindness of others, a student in the University. This was to him a most pure gratification—not because of a love of learning—not because of ambition, to attain a position before his fellow men. Oh! it was quite otherwise with the good youth—he had one object in life. The hope that his dying mother had awakened in his heart was the guiding star of all his efforts. That little maiden created for him, and to be supported by him! The image was ever before him. Yes, he was a student for a high and noble use. Science was to be to him the instrument of a life of love and blessedness. To do good to others, and thus to provide for the

maiden—was what led him to the arduous study of medicine.

It mattered not that cold and hunger and toil all bound him in an earthly coil. The warm, hopeful heart has a wonderful endurance. The delicate, attenuated form of the young student seemed barely sufficient to hold the bright and glowing spirit that looked out from his soft eyes, when he received his degrees. The desire of his life was growing into a fruition; and when he returned to his poor lodgings, a sense of freedom, of gratitude and of delight crowned his yet barren life. To work! to work! seemed now the one call of his being; but, whither was he to go? There was the childhood's home, to which his heart instinctively turned; but, alone and

desolate, he could not dwell there. Gotleib had not forgotten his mother's lesson; he knelt and prayed to God for guidance. Even as he kneels, and feels his spirit in the sunshine of God's presence, there is a knock at the door, and the good Professor Eberhard enters. He has marked the student in his poverty and toil, and feels that he will now hold out a helping hand to the young beginner. As professor of anatomy, he needs the quick eye and delicate hand of an expert assistant.

Gotleib looked upon the Herr professor, as Heaven-sent, and in a few days was installed in all the luxury of a life of active use.

Years passed away, and Gotleib Von Arnheim sighed with a man's full heart for a woman's sympathy and responsive affection.

He had seen bright eyes gleam and soft cheeks flush at his approach, and he had looked wonderingly into many a sweet face. But he had not yet seen the little maiden of whom his mother spoke—who was to be the reflex of himself. All these German maidens were altogether different from him—and his heart remained unsatisfied in their presence. He felt no visions of eternity as he looked into their friendly faces. Sometimes hope almost died out. But his trust in God seemed to forbid the death of this sweet hope. Often he said, “The good God would not have created this intense desire in one so wholly dependent upon Him, were he not intending to satisfy it. At all events,” he thought—“If

the maiden is not upon earth, she is in Heaven." So he worked and waited patiently.

The wintry winds were howling, as it were, a wild requiem over the lordly ruins of the crime-stained castle of Heidelberg. Cold, and bitter, and clear was the starry night, when the weary Gotleib issued out of the Herr professor's warm house to answer the late call of a sick woman. Gotleib looked up into those illimitable depths where earths and suns hang suspended, to appeal to the material perceptions of man that this is not the alone world—the alone existence. The silent bright stars comforted the earth-wearied heart in which the day's toil had dimmed the spirit's perception. Gotleib stepped on

bravely through the frosty darkness, and said, hopefully, to himself,

“There is yet another world—another life than this.”

And now he stood before the house in which his services were needed. He entered a chamber, whose bare poverty reminded him of his student days. But far sadder was cold poverty here, for a lady lay on a hard couch before the scantily furnished grate, and her hollow cough, and the oozing blood that saturated her white handkerchief, rendered all words unnecessary.

A young girl with blanched cheek and tearless eye of agony, knelt by the wan sufferer. Gotleib felt himself in the sphere of his life's use; cold and fatigue were alike gone.

The sick and almost dying woman seemed to revive under his touch—it was as if strength flowed from the physician into the patient. His very presence diffused an air of hope and comfort through the desolate apartment, and the kind serving-girl, Bettina, who had guided him to the humble lodging, seconded all his active efforts to produce warmth and comfort, and soon returned with one of his prescriptions—an abundance of fuel for the almost exhausted grate. The cheerful blaze threw its strong light upon the young girl, who at first knelt in hopeless grief beside her dying mother.

What was it that thrilled the heart of Gotleib, as he looked upon this young maiden? Was it her beauty! No! He had seen others

more beautiful. Was it her sorrow? No! He had seen others quite as sad. But, whatever it was, Gotleib felt that he had met his destiny; the fulness of his being was developed to him; and, all unconsciously the maiden turned to him as the Providence of God to her. She seemed to rest her troubled heart upon his strong understanding. He said her mother would not die immediately, and she grew calm.

It was very late that night when Gotleib retired; and very fervent were the prayers that arose from his heart before he slept. He felt a sense of gratitude for the uses he was permitted to perform to his fellow beings, and, in his prayers, he felt that light shone from the Divine sun upon that sorrowing

maiden, and it was as if she knelt by his side, and his strong spirit-arms upheld her in the sunshine of God's love.

When the morning came, Gotleib awakened with a delicious sense of enjoyment in life—with a looking forth into the events of the day, that he had never before experienced. He hastened through his morning duties with an elasticity of spirit and hope that was altogether new to him. Though, as yet, his feeling was not defined into a thought, it was a faint perception, a dim consciousness that the elective affinities of his heart had all awakened. And while he thought he was in an excessive anxiety to see after his feeble patient, he was borne on rather by the attractions of his heart's love.

He paused in a thrilling excitement of hope and doubt, before the door of the poor chamber; he dreaded to have the agreeable impressions of the last evening dissipated. But, when he knocked, a light tread was heard; the door was gently opened, and the pale Anna stood before him, with such a gentle grace, and so earnest a look of gratified expectation, that, as she said in subdued tones,

“I hoped it was you,” his heart bounded with exultation, to think that the young girl had him in her thoughts. But, as he approached the sick bed, his reason told him, what was more natural than her wishing for the arrival of her mother’s physician?

A careful glance, by daylight, around the humble apartment, revealed to Gotleib that Anna worked with her delicate, white, lady-looking hands, for the support of her dying mother. A table, placed by the window, was covered with artificial flowers of exquisite workmanship, and, while he yet lingered in the chamber, Bettina, the maid, entered from the street door, with a basket filled with the same flowers—looked at Anna, and shook her head mournfully. The young girl's lips quivered and she pressed the tears back when she saw no purchaser had been found for her labor. Gotleib saw and felt with the most intense sympathy all that was passing. He lingered yet longer—he made encouraging remarks to the sick mother, and, at length,

ventured to approach the table, and gazed with admiration on the beautiful flowers, while his brain was busy in devising how he was to make them the medium of conveying aid to the suffering mother and daughter. He turned to the faithful Bettina, who clung to those whom she served in their hard poverty—he told her that if she would follow him he would find a purchaser for the pretty flowers. Anna cast upon him a look of tearful, smiling gratitude, and her simple, “I thank you,” as she held out her hand to him, bound him as with a magnetic chain to her being. Bettina thought the Herr Doctor was a most generous man, for he more than doubled the paltry sum she asked for the flowers; though she did not consider it necessary to

mention the fact to Anna; she merely stated to her, that she had found a purchaser for as many flowers as she chose to make.

But Gotleib! What an Eden those flowers made of his chamber! With what a joy he returned to it after hours of absence; it seemed as if they brought him into contact with the sphere of a beloved existence. He examined them with delight, and could not avoid covering them with kisses. Never was patient visited or watched over more attentively than was Madam Hendrickson; and, as the mother revived, the daughter seemed to feel new life. Light beamed from her soft eyes, and oftentimes, Gotleib thought that the roses that bloomed in her delicate face,

were far more beautiful and bright than those that grew under her light and skilful touch.

For him she seemed to feel an earnest, trustful gratitude. She never concealed her glad recognition of his coming; she was too pure, and innocent, and good to think it necessary to conceal any thing. And Gotleib's visits were so pleasant, they grew longer and longer—for he and Madam Hendrickson were of the same religious faith—and he had a peculiar faculty for consoling her. Gotleib spoke of the other world, with such a definite perception of its existences and modes of being, that the dying woman never wearied of listening to him. The high and true faith of the good Gotleib opened to him a world of beauty which he poured forth in his earnest

enthusiasm, more like a gifted poet, than a being of mere prose. Oftentimes, as he talked, the light of his intelligence seemed to gleam back from the answering eye of Anna, until his whole being was filled with delight. Meanwhile she felt that her hitherto dim and indistinct faith was growing into form and fixedness, and her intellect awakened to a sphere of ideas, to a world of perceptions, that endowed her all at once with a charmed existence, and flooded her with the light of a graceful beauty that made her appear to the admiring Gotleib like an angelic-spirit.

Thus were the spirit-links being woven through the cold bright days of winter. Madam Hendrickson was no longer confined to her bed; and on the Sabbath days Anna

could attend the public worship of God, of whom, now, only she seemed truly to learn. It was to the holy supper she went on that first solemn Sabbath day, after months of confinement and sorrow. Oh! how blessed it was to listen to the Divine word, through which God seemed to her awakened perception to shine, in a veiled beauty, and when she tasted the wine of spiritual truth, flowing from the wisdom of the Divine One, and ate of the bread of the celestial good of His love, Heaven seemed to open to her receptive heart and mind—and, as her heart's prayers went up, with those of the shining angels round the throne of God, it was not for herself that she prayed, but for him that had spoken living truth to her virgin heart. Oh, the

good child! In that holy moment she rejoiced to reveal her heart's love to the Divine Father; she knew that her love was born of her knowledge of God, and thus she knew that it was blessed from above.

As she passed out of the church, she encountered the earnest glance of surprised and delighted recognition from Gotleib. Very soon he was at her side. In the fullness and stillness of beautiful thoughts and satisfied affections they walked on. Oh, how happy the dear mother looked, when she saw the two enter her lonely chamber. The heavenly light and warmth of love seemed to be within and around them; and she saw that two beings so exactly created the one for the other, could not but find an eternal happiness

in each other. Gotleib was truly in one of his genial, sunny moods; he seemed to soar into worlds of light; his expanding heart was filling with the glory of Heaven. The teachings of his childhood were all brought forth; he talked of his beloved mother—now an angel of God—told of the beautiful hope she awakened in his heart concerning the little maiden created by God for him, when his heart shrunk in such pain from the isolation her death would leave him in. Then he turned to the blushing Anna, and said he thought the maiden was now found. She lifted her love-lighted eyes to his—he clasped her hand and said softly—

“Thou art mine!”

“I am thine,” fell responsive from the maiden’s lips; and, an infinite blessedness flowed into the loving, satisfied heart of Gotleib.

The next day brought with it a new and beautiful joy. A letter from the beloved one, conveyed into his hand as he tenderly pressed hers, at parting. For this his thirsty soul had yearned—for some expression of the maiden’s heart-love that had as yet gleamed upon him but momentarily from her modest eyes. But alone in his chamber, with the dear letter before him! Ah, now indeed he was to lift the veil that hid his life’s treasure. To have revealed to him the heart and mind of the beloved one. And his whole

being went forth to her as he read the tender revealings. She wrote:

“Gotleib! My heart would fain speak to thine. It longs to say gratefully, ‘I love thee, thou Heaven-sent one.’ And I would tell thee of a dream, that came to me last night in my heart’s beautiful happiness.

“I was reading aloud to my mother in the book you lent me. I read of how the angels ever have their faces turned to the Divine sun. Of how their shining brows are attracted to this central point, in whatever position they may be—even as our feet are attracted to the central point of the earth. I was happy in this beautiful truth, and felt that through my love for *thee*, my thought was lifted upward, and my face, too, was turned to the

Lord; and when sleep came, it seemed as if my happy spirit was conscious of a new and beautiful existence. I found myself in a large place, and a company of angelic spirits surrounded me; and we were seated at a table, adorned with an exceeding elegance, and having many varieties of food, of which we partook but without a consciousness of taste—only there was a genial delight of mind arising from the mutual love of all those bright ones. An angel-woman spoke to me and said, ‘This is the Lord’s supper; appropriate to thyself the goods and truths of His heavenly kingdom.’ While she thus spoke, I saw thee, dear Gotleib, approach, with such a smiling and beautiful grace, and thou said’st to me, holding my hand—‘Sweet

one! how bright thou art! Hast thou learnt some new truth? For thou art ever bright, when thou dost perceive a new truth.' Then I answered, 'Ah, yes indeed! I have learned a beautiful, new truth'; and I led thee to an east window and pointed upward to the great Sun, that shone in such a Divine effulgence—then I told thee how the angels were held by the attraction of love in this centre of being—even as the children of the world are held by the attraction of gravitation to the earth—and as we talked, the light shone around thee, dear Gotleib! with so heavenly a glory, that my heart was filled with a new love for thee. For I saw, truly, that thou wert a child of God, and in loving thee I loved him who shone in such a radiant glory upon

thee. Oh! Was not this a pleasant dream? Gotleib! What worlds of beauty thou hast opened to me. Once my thought was so narrow, so bound down to the earth; but thou hast lifted me above the earth. A woman's heart is so weak—it is like a trailing vine, that cannot lift itself up until its curling tendrils are wound round the lofty tree tops of a man's ascending thought. Gotleib, thus dost thou bear me up into the serene, bright Heavens, and like some blooming flowery vine will my love ever seek to adorn thy noble thoughts.”

Gotleib was charmed with the maiden's thoughts. Oh, yes—her flowers were already flying over his highest branches. She soared above him, and through her, heavenly truths

were growing clearer to him. How grateful he was to his Heavenly Father, that from his own bosom, as it were, was born his spirit's companion. But her life was from God—and how holy was her whole being to him. She was enthroned in his inmost heart to be for ever treasured as the highest and best gift of God.

It was evening when he next stood beside her. The mother slept, and Anna and Gotleib stood in the moon-lit window. Few, and softly whispered, were his loving words to her. But she smiled in a oneness of thought when he said—

“In Heaven, the sun shone upon us; upon earth the cold moonbeams unite us; but the sunshine will soon come again.”

Anna felt that her letter had made Gotleib very happy; and she bent her head lovingly on his manly breast. Oh! To him, the desolate forlorn one, how thrilling was the first caress of the maiden. His lips touched her soft white brows with a delicious new joy. But brow, eyes, cheeks, and lips were soon covered with rapturous kisses.

Ah! happy youth and maiden thus bedewed with life's nectar of blessedness. What are earth's sorrows to thee? Heaven is in thee, and eternity only can satisfy the infinite desires of such hearts.

But as the days passed, the material body of the mother wasted away, and her spirit was growing bright in its coming glory. She wished much to see her beloved Anna in a

holy marriage union before she left this world. So a few weeks after the betrothal, Gotleib led his bride to the marriage altar. It was a festive scene of the heart's happiness even beside the bed of death. Madam Hendrickson felt that she, too, was adorning for a beautiful bridal—and earthly care being thus removed from her heart, she was altogether happy.

And the good, true-hearted Anna, in white bridal garments and virgin innocence, looked to the loving mother and the happy Gotleib like an angel of God. Even the Professor Eberhard thought thus; and quite certain it is, that the good minister spoke as if a heavenly inspiration flowed into him, as he bound the two into an eternal *oneness* of being. "Little

children!” said he, “Love one another! was the teaching of the great God, as he walked upon the earth. Hence love is the holy of the holies. And it flows from God even as heat flows from the material sun—and as the sun is in its own heat and light, so God is in love.”

And taking the marriage ring, he placed it on the soft white, rose-tipped finger of the bride, and said—

“How beautiful and expressive is this symbol of union, showing the conjunction of good and truth, which conjunction first exists in the Lord, for His love is the inmost and His wisdom is like the golden bond of truth encasing and protecting love. And this love of the Lord flowing into man is received,

protected, and guarded by woman's truth, until, in her fitness and perfect adaptation to him, she becomes the love of the wisdom of the man's love, and the twain are no longer two, but one."

The fresh spring days were now coming; Madam Hendrickson went to an eternal spring. But the heart of the loving Anna rose above the earthly sorrow of separation; as if upheld by her husband's strong faith, her imagination delighted itself in following the beloved mother into her new and beautiful states of being.

Gotleib felt that now it was good for him to return to the home of his childhood, for it was more delightful to live apart from the strife and toil of men. In the simple country

life much good might be done, and yet there would be less of life's sorrow to look upon. It was weary to live in a crowded haunt, where a perception of vice and misery so mingled itself with the blessedness of his heart's love. Anna was charmed and delighted with the pure country life, and as business increased on the Herr Doctor's hands, it was so great a happiness to her to minister to his comfort. After the long winter rides, how she chafed his cold hands and warmed his frozen feet, and how lovingly she helped him to the hot suppers of the good Bettina, no homeless and desolate wanderer of earth can know. But to Gotleib, what inexpressible blessedness was all this; and how often he left off to eat, that he might clasp Anna to his heart and cover

her with kisses. Thus went the blessed married life until another spring brought with it the sweet “dream-child,” as Anna called the little one, whom the angel said, was “the fruit of the union of good and truth.”

The little Lina thus born into the very sphere of love, seemed ever a living joy. The father’s wisdom guided the mother’s tender love, and the little one was good and unselfish—and so gay in the infantile innocence and grace of her being, that oftentimes the young mother leaning on the father’s bosom, would whisper—

“Gotleib, she is indeed an angel of God.”

One dark and wintry day, as the child thus sported in the inner glad light and joy of her heart, and Gotleib and Anna as usual were

watching the light of her radiance, a beautiful White Dove flew fluttering against the friendly window. The child grew still in her wondrous joy. But the father quickly opened the window, and the half frozen bird flew in, and nestled itself in Anna's bosom. It was fed and warmed and loved as a bird never was before. For the little one thought it was the spirit of God come down upon the house, and Gotleib loved it, because to him it was a living symbol of the peace and purity of his married life, and Anna received it as a heavenly gift for the loving child. Thus both literally and spiritually the White Dove of innocence and peace dwelt in their midst.



LITTLE MARY LYLE.

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SHE'S a pleasant little maiden,
 Tiny, gleesome Mary Lyle;
And on her mind no stain you'll find,
 Nor any trace of guile.

Her footsteps sound upon the ground
 Like pattering drops of rain,
While her smile is like the sunshine
 That brightly comes amain.

She hath no wondrous beauty;
 She'd grace no gay parterre;
The humble flower, in greenwood bower,
 Is meetest type of her;
And yet, you could not see her,
 Or watch her ways awhile,
Without a blessing from your heart
 On little Mary Lyle.

You may meet her in the meadow,
Of a pleasant sunny day,
But speak alone in gentle tone
Or she will glide away.
And scarce the timid roe can fly,
Along the forest aisle,
With steps more fleet, or nimbler feet,
Than those of Mary Lyle.

You should see her skip across the green,
And through the wildwood free;
You should see her toss upon the grass
And hear her tones of glee;
Then, as you watched her lightsome face,
Or caught her innocent smile,
You'd say with me, 'twere sweet to be
Like little Mary Lyle. ANON.

WHAT IS LOVE?

A MOTHER, full of thought and tender affection for her beautiful daughter, was seated on a sofa, in a large apartment. She had been reading, but the book had fallen from her hand, and she was gazing upon her fair child, who stood beside the street window. An earnest, pleased smile, played around the sweet mouth, and a rosy blush mantled over the fair cheek of the young girl, as she gracefully, yet with an embarrassed air, bowed in acknowledgment of a passing recognition.

The invalid mother closed her eyes, and clasped her hands in an earnest prayer for her beloved child. Her spirit grew calm in an inner light. Truth seemed sensibly to flow into her from the Divine form of God—and

her maternal love was the plane into which this truth was received. She called, in her low, loving tones, "Lucie!" and the fairy-like, delicate Lucie was at her side in a moment. She sank, in her girlish beauty and grace, on a low seat, and gazed into her mother's face with the innocent lovingness of a young child.

Mrs. Herbert drew her to her, and kissed the sweet, blooming face, and said to her, "Lucie! this is your sixteenth birth-day—you are no longer a child."

Lucie bent her head upon her mother's bosom, and said—"Oh, mamma! I am a child; I do not wish to be any thing else."

The mother smiled, and said, "Not so, my daughter. I would have you retain the grace

of obedience—and, as a child, yet learn from the wisdom of others. But I would also have you realize that you have entered upon another period of life which God has blessed with beautiful gifts; and to appreciate these gifts, you must know what they are; otherwise, through ignorance, you may abuse them. Look, my daughter, into that mirror, which reflects your form, and see what beauty you are blessed with.”

The pleased and blushing Lucie raised her eyes to the opposite mirror. She caught her mother’s glance of warm affection, and turned to embrace her, saying, “Oh, mamma! I thank the good Lord that I am beautiful, because it makes you happy.”

“Yes, dear child, you do indeed make me happy; and I thank the good Lord, also, that I have given birth to one so fitted to make others happy. Your beauty is not for yourself, or for me alone. God has created you in so fair and gentle a form, that through you He may bless some noble and good man.”

Lucie felt the destiny of woman unfolding itself in her expanding being. She reverently kissed her mother’s hand, for she felt that she was guiding her into the sacred recesses of her own being—into the holy of holies—her heart. A warm, confiding sympathy, changed the relation of mother and child, at that moment, into that of spirit friends. The young girl felt that the mother was her

heart's confident, and said, in her guileless simplicity—

“Mamma, I feel such a capacity for loving; I am always imagining how dearly I could love; and, sometimes, when I receive little attentions from men, my heart bounds forth to meet them with a beautiful joy—and then I fear—and my heart shrinks back—and then I feel like nestling in your bosom as a little child—for I remember that ‘Undine,’ the fair water spirit, had never a woman's soul until she loved. Mamma, what is love?”

“My child, God is Love; and all pure love flows from Him.”

“But, mamma, that seems mystical and abstract. I want to understand that which is in myself.”

“Very well, my child; I am coming down into your own little heart. But, as love could not exist in your heart if there was no love in God, you must first perceive His love before you can understand your own heart. The Divine love is a desire to make others happy. God would give Himself to every human being; devote His infinite grace and beauty of character to their happiness. He would soothe them in their sorrows—rejoice with them in their joys—elevate their thoughts—purify their affections, and delight to do them every possible good. But, He cannot do this unless we love Him—for it is as when a beautiful, loving woman desires to do this to a man and he remains indifferent to her charms. Of course she cannot make him

happy, because he will not know her, or see her, or delight himself in her presence. Do you not see that to receive love from God we must love Him, and we cannot love Him without knowing Him and thinking of Him.”

“But,” said the young girl, “to know God! seems so impossible. Dear mamma! help my thoughts.”

“My child, it is simple and easy to know God, because He has brought Himself down to our comprehension. The Divine Jesus, with all of His vast, incomprehensible thoughts and feelings, filling eternity and expanding into infinity, yet walked the earth in so simple a life that we can know Him and love Him. He was a being of such a pure and unselfish goodness, of such tender and gentle

affections, without a taint of pride, vanity, or earthly ambition.”

Lucie looked up with light sparkling in her eyes. “Oh,” she cried, “truth at last seems clear to me. This is the type of a real man. Yes, now I can love God; my thoughts can rise from His earthly life to His Heavenly glory. Now I *see* what goodness is—what His love is.”

Mrs. Herbert continued, with an earnest enthusiasm, “Lucie, my child! Fix this Divine image in your mind. God is the type of what man should be. So chaste, so meek and mild, so serene before a mocking world, with his thoughts ever dwelling within an inner world of glory. This is the measure of a man; and when the spontaneous spring of

love that swells in your maiden heart, from an infinite fountain of love would flow forth, let each human being be measured by this Divine image. If you see not the qualities which assimilate man to God, turn from the finite imperfection to the infinite and eternal truth, and this form of God, which is the truth, will be your guide.

“But, my child, you are young and inexperienced, and I must hold up to your view the opposite of love—which appears as love—but is as to true love, what the dancing ‘will-of-the-wisp,’ born in bogs and fens, is to the eternal sun that shines in the pure, blue heavens.

“This apparent love is born of the selfishness of man; it does not look to God—it has

no thought beyond this earth—beyond personal gratification. A man may woo a woman with a grace and tenderness that charm her fancy and call forth the deep gratitude of her loving heart, when *she* has no place in his heart. Himself is enshrined there like some bloody Moloch, to whom a fair and innocent victim is to be devoted. Such a man weds a woman with no thought or desire of making her happy, but of making himself happy, by having her minister to his desires. She is his slave, not his equal. It matters not whether she wears a visible manacle, or whether she graces with her beauty and intelligence, some gorgeous home—she is his slave; he regards her as being for his use. He may feel pride in her rare beauty, he may be

vain of the accomplishments of her intellect, but it is with the sole idea that they are *his*—that they are means by which he may attain ends.

“Ah, if woman would but realize this truth—would make of love a *science*—would learn to test the genuine and reject the spurious, how many breaking hearts might be saved.”

Mrs. Herbert’s earnestness affected Lucie. She kissed the tears from her mother’s sad eyes, and said—

“Dear mamma! I thank you that you are so anxious to save me from sorrow; and I will love no one who does not love God, and who does not try to be like Him.”

The twilight hour of communion between mother and daughter was ended, and soon a

gay circle of society came with the evening lights.

Lucie's birth-day party seemed to catch the very spirit of joyousness from her light and graceful being, which was so full of an inner light of love. As she glided, sylph-like, through the mazy dance, the glance of admiring eyes and the words of flattering tongues followed her. But no self-love grew in her heart, for she had realized the high and beautiful destiny before her of making *one* human heart happy, and she lived in the delight of that thought.

The last compliment had been gracefully acknowledged; the warm good-night kiss of her mother yet lingered on her lips; and, in the sanctuary of her chamber, she knelt, in

her child-like innocence, to thank God for all His blessings. But, most of all, her thoughts in her evening prayer rested upon the beautiful truth her mother had spoken. The Divine image grew radiant in her mind. But even this thought grew mazy in her indistinct consciousness. Sleep had come; and the kneeling maiden, in her light undress, half reclining on the crimson couch, rested in the rosy repose of her blooming innocence. But it was her body alone that remained unconscious. The happy spirit awoke in the gardens of God. She felt the glorious sunshine, and opening her eyes, she beheld the effulgence of light, flowing from the divine sun in the east. She said softly to herself, This is the God whom I worship.” But a sense of His

infinity, of the vastness of His existence overwhelmed her. She bowed her face in a self-abasing humility. The infinite purity and absolute perfectness of the Divine Being seemed to separate her from Him; and yet the joy of worshipping so great a God, held her to Him.

Music came floating on the soft air that touched like a love-kiss her cheek, and she felt that the music was that of a human mind breathed upon by the breath of God's truth. She felt the thrill of a responsive symphony. She looked up, and saw standing beside her a youth radiant in beauty; he smiled, and pointing upwards said, in the words of the Psalm she had just read upon earth, "O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him

upon His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.”

Lucie turned to the bright spirit with such a loving trust and said, “Tell me, am I upon the hill of God that I see so much of His glory?”

And the youth seated himself by the maiden on the velvet turf, where roses grew in a flowery beauty, and bright crystal waters murmured to the soft breathing winds. The spirit answered in gently attuned words of wisdom:

“The hill of God is the inmost of thine own being. It is the spiritual love of the finite human soul, that looks to God as being the supreme good from whom all good flows as light from the sun; from whom all life in the

universe exists, as the life of the finite human body exists from its in-dwelling soul.

“You and I, fair maiden, are not life in ourselves. We are *forms*, receptive of life, and this life from God is love—for God is love, and love is life.”

“I feel it,” said Lucie, “for I can never lose my love but with my life.”

The youth smiled and said, “Then, truly, thou wilt never lose thy love, for thy *life* is immortal, and indestructible.”

As the wise spirit spoke, Lucie felt as if she had found an eternal joy, so welcome to her were the pleasant words of his wisdom; and she said pleadingly:

“Tell me, I pray thee, of the Being of God.”

The spirit answered, “The Being of God is incomprehensible to our finite minds. He is *self-existent*. He is life itself, and we are but forms of life, derived from Him. We cannot attain to the perception of life as it is in Him. We only perceive His life as it flows into us. We know that the *substance* of God is love, and His *form* is wisdom; and the emanations from this self-existent substance constitute the elements of creation, and creation takes the Divine form. We are but forms of God’s love, and this love is moulded in us by our finite understanding, either into forms of beauty, or into perverted, distorted forms. That only is a form of order and beauty which is moulded after the Divine Form. If our understandings and our intellectual

perceptions are turned to God, the light from Him flows in and reveals to us His Divine spiritual form, in all its grace and beauty; in its Divine perfections of being, so full of tender mercy and loving compassion as it looks into the hearts of the countless myriads of its creation, and provides for all of their wants. In God we see an endless bounty of doing *good* to all beings out of Himself—not for the sake of himself, but for their sakes. How, in all of His Divine Providence, He strives to raise us out of an evil life, and fill us with beautiful thoughts and pure affections! Even now,” said the spirit youth, “methinks He, in His Divine Providence, has brought me from the outer life into a spiritual consciousness, in the world of dreams, that I

might see the beautiful maiden whom my heart has, heretofore, treasured as an ideal form of loveliness. But, now, I know that my *ideal* is a spiritual reality, and when I return to the cold outer life, believe me, I will ever remember the maiden of my dream.”

“What,” said Lucie, “dost thou too dream like me—dost thou live in the outer world? For I sleep, yes, sleep, kneeling at my evening prayer. But is it beautiful thus to sleep, and dream in the warm sunshine of God’s love. Ah! now I see how he watches over us in our sleep; how we have two lives, an inner and an outer; and in the inner life spirits commune together, though in the outer world they may be far separated.”

“This,” said the youth, “is a delightful knowledge, and evermore I will look away from my outer isolation to my inner beautiful companionship. It is this for which my soul has so often yearned; for one so gentle and loving, to reflect my thoughts in whom I may ultimate my love of God.”

The maiden said, “I, too, have yearned for one in whom I might see the form of God, and love God in him.”

The youth said, “These words are indeed sweet to my soul; but as our love comes from God, we will worship Him. And worship, my beautiful one! is realizing that God is all, and we are nothing without Him. It is this humility of self-abasement that is the true joy of worship. We delight to see the glory in Him.

As the spirit thus spoke, his beautiful countenance grew radiant with the grace of humility.

And the two knelt in the fair spirit world—and as they gazed up to the eternal sun of glory, a light, so translucent flowed to them, that they beheld the form of the divine Jesus, revealing to them the beauty of His infinite soul. The kneeling maiden was borne up in the supporting arms of the youth, and her head rested on his bosom. She looked up to him, and said,

“The light of the divine truth, has revealed to us the beauty of the Highest; my soul can only love him—and thou must be like Him, Oh, beautiful youth! that I may love thee. In thee must I see the light of His truth, glowing

in a gentle intelligence—animated by a love of doing good to others for His divine sake.

“Ah,” said the youth, “thy love will prompt me to these pure aims. It is thus, God regenerates His children, through love.”

But a dim consciousness of outer life was coming. Lucie felt a warm kiss and heard the words, “Adieu, my spirit bride.” Then she awoke—and her dream seemed so like a reality, that she looked wonderingly around and felt a painful loneliness—and yet she was so happy. No maiden, after hearing the beautiful words of love spoken, which betrothed her to her heart’s chosen one, ever felt, more thrillingly, the self-consecration of her whole being, to this elected one, than did Lucie, to the youth of her dream.

Sleep came no more to those bright eyes, though she lay so still and happy in her beautiful thoughts. She recalled every feature—every word—the air and the acts of him, who had called her his “spirit bride.” Ah, those words, how they thrilled her—and was she indeed the bride of one so good and wise, and beautiful? This thought, warmed her heart with the most fervent love and gratitude to God; she could not think of the youth, but the image of God flowed into her heart, and when she thought of God in his great sun of glory, then was the vision of the kneeling, worshipping youth beside.

Beautiful maiden! This dream was God’s Providence to thee. For, cradled in wealth, Lucie, in her Eden garden of youth and

beauty, like a fair Eve, might have listened to the voice of the tempter, and become the victim of some external love. But now, having listened to the music of a spiritual wisdom and love, all other loves seemed so earth-born, that she heeded them not.

For many days, the young girl spoke not of her dream. Her mother saw that a great change had passed over the spirit of her child. The serene grace of a dawning woman-hood had replaced the careless frolic of the thoughtless child. She no longer seemed to have outer wants or troubles—and when she spoke, her words were the forms of ideas—not mere words. An inner life seemed to have awakened in her, and lifted her above the outer, and had opened in her a fountain of

intelligence and perception that astonished all of her masters.

Mrs. Herbert studied her sweet child with a mother's yearning tenderness. She gazed with delighted surprise upon her developing being. When another long twilight talk with Lucie, revealed to her fond mother all the hidden springs of thought and feeling, she listened to the dream, told in a confiding simplicity, and entered into all of Lucie's feelings. Free from all idle superstitions, yet her mind was open to a rational perception of the possibility of *dreams* being *realities*. The train of Lucie's thought and conversation, on that evening, had opened her soul to a higher life; and she realized, that in the Providence of God, the body might sleep, while the spirit

remained awake in a vivid perception—and retained its consciousness, in the highest or inmost degree of its lower mind, or outer intellectual casement. Lucie was delighted to find that her mother did not think her dream, but a dream. And she said,

“Dear mother, then you think that I have had a glimpse into that inner life, which is every day as real as it was in my dream.”

Mrs. Herbert replied—“Our spiritual life must be as continuous as our outer life—for the outer but exists from the inner.”

Lucie answered musingly, “But, mamma, it is so different from the outer life. So beautiful, so satisfactory, and altogether charming.”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Herbert, “it must be quite different—and yet the outer life is a correspondent basis of the inner life. The outer life must be pure and good, that the inner life may be beautiful. An evil person could not have seen the scenes you saw, nor the companion whom you so much enjoyed.”

“Ah, mamma!” said Lucy, “how pleasant it is to be good; to love truth; to be gentle and kind, because the good God is, when we know that this outer thought and feeling brings us into so beautiful an inner life.”

Mrs. Herbert looked happy with her beloved child, and answered, “This revelation of your inner life may serve to help you comprehend how, when God was upon the

earth, clothed in materiality, He yet had a consciousness of His Infinite interior life.

“Yours was but a passing momentary consciousness in the world of your ideas, and you perceived that what was but a thought, a feeling, in your outer life, was, in reality, a form, a personation in your inner world—and that your life was more vivid and sensitive in the inner world of the spirit, than in the outer world of the body. If your finite spirit had such a perception of pleasure in an inner spiritual possession, what must this inner consciousness have been in the Lord, who in spirit filled the universe, while this spirit manifested itself in a material body to our external perceptions?”

Lucie said, "Yes, the Life of God must have been wholly different from all other human lives, because a finite spiritual consciousness could only reveal its own small sphere of ideas—but the spiritual consciousness of God revealed the universe, both spiritual and material. It is a beautiful revelation to me, dear mamma, that we have two lives—one visible to men, and the other to spirits—and that our spirit may live in the sunshine of God's presence, no matter how the storms of earth may darken our outer life. And, oh! mamma—the pleasant companionship in the inner world! What a charm it gives to my life."

And Lucie bent her head to her mother's bosom, and seemed lost in her happy memories.

Mrs. Herbert was eminently a practical woman; she *saw truth* only to *love* it. Every new perception lent its light to her every-day life; and, while she entered, with the most fervent sympathy, into the dreams of the young girl, she wished not that she should be only a dreamer. Up to this period of her life Lucie had been a mere child—with all the thoughtless gaiety and want of responsibility that would naturally manifest itself in a child, for whom others unceasingly thought and provided.

Mrs. Herbert saw that the dawn of a new existence had opened upon her daughter. The

amusements and interests of the child were giving place to the yearnings of a woman's heart. She saw, that now was the crisis in her destiny; that now the warm spiritual being was taking its mould in the outer circumstances of her life; and the judicious mother lifted up her thoughts to the great centre of love and wisdom with a prayer that God would guide her to influence her child aright.

She stroked back the soft brown curls from Lucie's fair brow, and kissing her tenderly, said,

“Lucie, what if your dream should some day be realized on earth, and you should meet this spirit-youth in a bodily form. You would expect to marry him, would you not?”

Lucie answered softly, "Dear mamma, why do you ask me such a question?"

"Because, my love, I would have you prepare for this all-important event. For, if this ideal of your girlish fancy and dreams should be realized, of course you would wish to minister to his happiness in every possible way; for this end, you must acquaint yourself with many things, of which you are now totally ignorant. To make a happy home, is the most beautiful work of a woman's life. Man seeks peace and repose in the order and harmony of his home. A woman must understand many practical details to attain this order, which is the basis on which the superstructure of her happiness is to be built; for, having attained the basis, then she can help

to elevate the thoughts and affections of a man to that which is higher, holier, and more beautiful.”

“Ah, mamma,” said Lucie, “it will be delightful to learn what may minister to the happiness of another.”

The young girl felt a self-consecration of her whole inner being and outer life to one end, and this fixedness of purpose, and definiteness of object, gave energy and order to her whole life. It was wonderful what the next few years accomplished. Knowledge poured in upon her eager mind, her warm heart awakened her perceptive faculties, and she learned as it were by intuition. These were the most important years of her education; and while her physical health was

carefully guarded, her life was an active succession of pleasing duties.

Mrs. Herbert was a happy mother. In the place of her winning, artless, but thoughtless child, she now had a companion and friend, so tender and devoted, that her thoughts and feelings were discerned and responded to, almost before she spoke them. Accomplished and efficient in all things, Lucie possessed a quiet, self-forgetting repose of manner, united with an almost infantile grace and purity of being, which made her presence delightful to all. She moved in society like a messenger of blessings to all with whom she came in contact; her thought was constantly flowing forth to do good to others.

Beauty and wealth naturally attracted admirers, but Lucie felt that God had created her for *one*. To her, marriage was too holy and sacred a thing to be made a jest of, and, without being reserved or forbidding, no man ever spoke of love to her—simply because she totally avoided the subject, and was blessed with a mother's protecting presence.

And in all these years, what had become of the dream? Could she forget it? No—for in her evening prayers, that scene never failed to recur to her; as she knelt and lifted her thoughts to the great sun of her worship, it ever passed through that garden of beauty, with its bower of roses, and murmuring winds and waters; and the radiant spirit of

the beautiful youth knelt with her, and the soul-thrilling words, "My spirit bride," rolled back on her memory with an exquisite delight that called forth a daily inner consecration of her whole being to this high and beautiful ideal. And, sometimes, when a great and true thought flowed into her mind, she would smile with a dreamy-looking satisfaction; for she felt that she was not *alone* in the spirit-world; and this thought had flowed into her mind from the radiant intelligence of that bright spirit. Sometimes she yearned sadly after the outward companionship and daily consciousness of the presence of her heart's beloved. But she indulged in no vain longings, for she knew the Providence of God would guide all things right.

Lucie was in the enjoyment of this happy and contented mood, when, one morning, her mother requested her to visit an old lady upon some errand of friendship.

The servant ushered Lucie into the parlor to await the coming of Mrs. Leslie, who was engaged for a few moments. As she stepped lightly into the apartment, she saw a gentleman standing before the fire, with his face towards the door. Lucie felt a thrill, she knew not what it was—the air and figure of the person before her struck her so wonderfully. She was embarrassed—she sunk into her seat—there was no word or glance from the gentleman—but his head was slightly inclined forward, as if intently listening.

Lucie scarcely ventured a second glance towards him. But a soul-thrilling voice broke upon her ear in plaintive tones—"Am I alone?"

She started involuntarily, and looked eagerly—alas, the gentleman was blind! An unutterable compassion and sympathy filled the heart of Lucie. She had scarce self-possession enough to answer—

"A morning visiter to Mrs. Leslie is in the room." Her voice was tremulous with emotion; but as she spoke, she saw a most wonderful lighting up of that pale, speaking face—gladness, as of a joyful recognition, shone over the whole being of the blind man. At this moment Mrs. Leslie entered; and, after a most affectionate greeting, said to

Lucie, "I must make you acquainted with my nephew, Henry Vernon, who has come to live with me."

Mr. Vernon bowed with a peculiar grace. His figure was light and elastic, with that buoyancy of a highly nervous temperament, so expressive of genius. His aunt, with kindly affection, guided him to a seat, and then devoted herself to Lucie, who was strangely embarrassed. She could have wept; why she knew not—for, before she had met with those who had walked enwalled by darkness, and, though she had pitied them, she was not so strangely moved by compassion; but now, she could scarcely control her voice to deliver her mother's message.

Mr. Vernon sat bending forward with that intense eagerness of expression so peculiar to the blind, who must make sound and touch suffice for sight.

Mrs. Leslie, with a kindly tact drew Mr. Vernon into conversation, by informing him that Mrs. Herbert, the mother of the young lady, was a friend of his mother's. Again the radiant smile illumined his face, as he expressed great delight at learning this; and remembered to have heard his mother speak of her friend, Mrs. Herbert, in connection with her youthful days.

Thereupon Mrs. Leslie proposed to Lucie, that, if her mother would be disengaged, she would bring Mr. Vernon to spend the evening with her.

Lucie ended her visit, and walked home in an excited bewilderment. She felt that she could not see her mother—the moment she entered the house, she flew to her chamber and knelt before her God. Her heart was throbbing with a great cry of sorrow—the radiant spirit of her dreams was blind upon the earth! She could not mistake him—it was he—there was not a doubt in her mind; and she wept over his misfortune, as if she herself had been just struck with blindness.

But upon this great sorrow a light shone; a perception how useful she could be to him, awakening an inner joy in her. She arose, and putting away the traces of her emotion, sought her mother. She determined that she would say nothing of what she had felt and

perceived, but simply informed her mother of Mrs. Leslie's expected visit for the evening.

Mrs. Herbert was pleased to hear of her old friend, Mrs. Vernon, and said she had learned from Mrs. Leslie, that her only son was blind—that he had lost his sight three years since—that he was an artist by profession—and she imagined from what she had heard, that he was a very interesting person. At all events, she would be interested in him for the sake of his mother. Lucie made some excuse for spending several hours in her own room, and, in this time, her soul was resigning itself to the Divine Will.

The evening brought the expected guests—Mrs. Herbert received them with a

warm welcome—so warmly and kindly, that Mr. Vernon felt strongly attracted to her, and this sympathetic attraction called forth the latent charm of his genius. He entered into conversation with vivacity and freedom; and the little circle could scarce realize that a blind man talked, so vivid were the descriptions of what he had seen. For he had been a traveller, both before his misfortune and since; and all of his sight seemed to have been devoted to art. In whatever country he had sojourned, his attention had been directed to this one subject. He said his profession had been dedicated to a high and holy use—he had studied to perfect himself in it as a science—that through it, he might

shadow forth the spiritual perceptions that thronged in his mind.

“For,” said he, “the true mission of art is not to minister only to the sensual perceptions of the beautiful, but through the senses to awaken the intellectual perception of truth. There have been,” he continued, “two schools of art, the Italian and the Greek. The first is a sensual school; in it is the external perfection of form, without any appeal but to the external perception of the beholder; and these two schools are signally illustrated on the Capitoline hill in Rome. In the Court of the Capitol stands an equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, in bronze. It is a magnificent horse—an animal full of sensual life and power expressed—and the Emperor is a man

in keeping with the horse, with all the brawn and muscle which with the Romans constituted manhood. But as you descend the lofty marble steps of the Capitol, you behold two Greek equestrian statues—Castor and Pollux—here you have the *spirit* of a horse breathing through the marble. You realize, in the horse, aspirations after mighty deeds, tempered by the gentle affections and sympathies he bears for man; while the twin brothers have in them that aërial grace that leads the mind to a perception of a higher life, of an inner spiritual existence. When I stood before the Apollo, I realised this to the fullest extent. Those old Greek artists,” said he, musingly, with a mournful melody in his voice, “must have sometimes had their spiri-

tual sight opened, and have seen as an actual existence the spiritual form of man; hence the pure ideality of some of their creations—perhaps in dreams they saw visions of the spiritual world.”

Lucie drank in these words with thrilling interest. But in a few moments the blind artist continued. He had studied Greek art only in Italy—“for,” said he, “when I travelled in Greece, I was blind. With closed eyes I breathed the balmy breath of its delicious climate, and saw not the havoc of time, nor the perversions wrought by its fall from the order in which it was created. Yes,” continued he, “to me Greece was hallowed ground. I had wandered in Egypt, that mighty type of the eternal science of the human mind; in

Assyria, which represents the rationalism of man, a degree above the sensual scientific; in Israel, which is as the spiritual mind, with its voices from Heaven, in which the word of God is written; and then I came to Greece, which is as an intellectual perception of truth. As the nations of the earth represent the faculties of the human mind, so do individuals in nations represent the nationality in a consecrated individual type. This type of Greece is Plato. In him the intellectual perception of the human mind reached its culminating point. It shows that without revelation the brightest intellects must wander in obscurity. And why? Because the finite cannot realise the Infinite man—his conception of man is so narrow, that he seeks to make God an

ether, an aura of intelligence, that he may disembody him from his own finiteness of comprehension. Until God reveals Himself to us, we can not elevate our minds above space and time, to realise that Infinity is of feeling, and not of space. His eternity is of thought, not of time—for He is above all space and all time; and we are bound within their material walls until he lifts us out of their suffocating darkness.”

The sighing cadence in which the last words were drawn out, revealed the sorrows of the stricken man—which he, with a quick and sensitive perception of the sympathy of his friends sought to dispel by alluding to some of the advantages which his blindness gave him—that he dwelt in a world of ideal

forms, unmarred by material reality. For instance, he said, that while in Greece, he lived not in the present, but in the past; and when he stood on the hill of Colone, where the blind Œdipus had rested, that he had realised, in *fancy*, the charming description of Athens, which Sophocles puts in the mouth of Antigone:

Œdipus. Where are we now, my dear Antigone?
Knowest thou the place?

Antigone. Far as my eyes can reach I see a city,
With lofty turrets crowned; and if I err not,
This place is sacred; by the laurel shade,
Olive and vine thick planted, and the songs,
Of nightingales sweet warbling through the year.

“And were you alone,” asked Lucie, “on the hill of Colone?”

“I had no Antigone with me,” replied Mr. Vernon, smilingly, “but I had a friend who guided my steps.”

Refreshments were brought in, and Lucie had a nervous desire to assist one whom she felt that she was created to minister to. But Mrs. Herbert assumed this privilege herself, for her feelings were so much interested in Mr. Vernon, that all of her attention was devoted to him.

Mrs. Leslie asked for music, and Lucie inquired what she should play for her. She referred to Mr. Vernon, and he arose and accompanied her to the instrument, and as they walked across the room, her hand within his arm, guiding him, he said—

“Music is the soul, breathing itself into sound. Choose your own music, that through its sound I may recognise your soul.”

Lucie trembled with excitement, and without a thought, almost involuntarily struck the notes of her daily chant. Beautifully soft and harmonious was her voice as she sung.

“O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy.”

“I thank you,” said Mr. Vernon, as if *his* whole soul spoke through his lips. “I once heard that chant in a dream; and no words ever move my soul as do these.”

“And do you dream so vividly?” asked Lucie.

“But once, but once,” answered Mr. Vernon. “It was several years ago, and your presence strangely recalls my dream. It is sad that I may not see you and compare you with the vision of my dream.”

And the blind man sighed and said, as if speaking to himself—“That was a dream of my youth—it would be selfish in me even to seek to realize it on earth.”

Lucie attuned her music to his state—it was delightful to him to feel the harmony of a perfect accord with her being, steal over him. The magnetic sphere of a beautiful spiritual presence was thrilling his every nerve with blessedness.

Mr. Vernon left that charmed presence with the most yearning desire to live for ever

in it, and yet with a dreadful feeling of the bitterness of his misfortune, that would forbid him to *ask* a woman's love.

Lucie, too, was elevated into a state of blessedness. There was a fulness of joy, in the companionship of such a mind, that she had never before realised. Her sweet face was flushed with the pleasurable excitement of her spirit; her eyes beamed with radiant light; and her motion was full of the grace of her happiness. Mrs. Herbert looked upon her with admiring eyes, and sighed—she was regretting that Mr. Vernon was denied this pleasure. Lucie seated herself behind her mother, and laid her hand lovingly in hers.

“Mamma,” she said, “I am very happy.”

Mrs. Herbert responded to her affectionate pressure, and said: "It is a great pity that Mr. Vernon is blind; he is so agreeable a man. I wonder if his sight cannot be restored."

"Ah, mamma, there is no hope for that," responded Lucie. "He told me all about his blindness. It arose from a disease of the optic nerve, and it is incurable. But how calmly and patiently he bears this great deprivation. He says that it is wearisome—the long, long, darkness—but when he reflects how kindly he was prepared for it—how much he had read, and seen, and how his memory is stored with subjects of thought—that he cannot repine. He spoke of his travels, and said it was beautiful to travel; to see many countries, and to have loved and been interested

in many people in different lands; that it extended the sphere of man's thought and feeling, and made him realize how great and beautiful a thing it is in the life of God, that He, from the fixed centre of His being, looks into all the stars of the universe with their peopled worlds, and knows, and loves, and cares, for all.

“Mamma, I find Mr. Vernon delightful, because he lifts my thought up to God. And oh, mamma, he had the same dream that I had. I did not tell him that I too had dreamed—but he detailed it all to me with perfect accuracy, and, to-morrow, he wishes us to come to Mrs. Leslie's, to see the scene of his dream, painted—it was the last work he executed.”

“Lucie, my child,” exclaimed Mrs. Herbert, “would you be willing to marry this man, blind?”

“God created me for him, dear mamma! and it matters not what his misfortunes are, I am his—and if he is blind, dear mamma, only think of how many ways I can minister to his happiness, of how useful I can be to him. Dear mamma, when I was a young girl, and asked you what love was, you made me realize that it was a consecration of myself to another, to promote his highest good in every possible way. For years I have lived with this beautiful hope before me. I have trusted that God would provide for me this highest happiness and use of woman. And now He has brought to me the bright spirit of my

dream—of a dream so vivid and remarkable that it has influenced my every thought and feeling since I have experienced it, and a dream which you explained as a supernatural state of spiritual consciousness. And he, too, had the same dream! Mamma, we met in heaven! God joined us together there—shall we be disjoined on earth?”

Mrs. Herbert was much agitated. This was not the destiny she would have chosen for her lovely and beloved child—a union, perhaps for many, many years, with a man hopelessly blind. But she felt that what was not her will, might be the will of God, and she bowed her soul submissively.

She clasped her child in her arms, and said: “Lucie, you know how dear you are to

me. But now you have attained to the age of a woman; I no longer wish to exercise the authority of a parent. You are free to act in accordance with your convictions and feelings—but act slowly my child. May there not be some mistake?”

“No, mamma, there is no mistake. But I will do nothing without the sanction of your advice, for I am convinced that God will order all things right for me, in His providence. And He will bring you to see that it is good and right for me to become the guide and assistant of the one who alone can be to me a spiritual guide. Mamma, it is you who have taught me that, ‘in the beginning God created them male and female,’ that the man is the understanding or the wisdom, and the

woman the love that is to be united to this wisdom, that thus out of two a *one* might be found—an indissoluble one, whose identity of being involves eternity. And oh, mamma, how short will this outer blindness seem to me, compared with an endless future—a bright and glorious future, of light, and joy, and freedom!”

“But, my child, there will be many weary days, even in the short outer life. It is a fearful thing to be blind—to be dependent upon others for innumerable wants—it is scarcely possible that human patience should not sometimes sink under it. You have seen Mr. Vernon but one evening, you have been charmed with his mental resources—with his amiable appearance—but he may have quite

other moods. Your life would be a trying one.”

“And what do you think my life would be if I should shrink from my highest and holiest duty, from any selfish consideration. Could I be happy *alone*, dear mamma! knowing that he for whom I was created languished in unhappy isolation? No, mamma, neither could you be happy to have me in opposition to my clear convictions do such a thing.”

“But Lucie,” said Mrs. Herbert, “has Mr. Vernon recognized you as the vision of his dream?”

“I do not know, mamma. He said it was sad, that he could not see me, to compare me with the person of his dream, for my voice

was the same. But he added, that it would be selfish in him to seek to realize upon earth what he had enjoyed in heaven.”

Mrs. Herbert asked Lucie to permit her to go alone the following day to Mrs. Leslie's, to see the painting. Lucie cheerfully consented, and retired, not with a desire to sleep, but to *think*. At first her spiritual sensations were undefined; gradually they calmed down into a glad and tearful happiness! And finally, after elevating her thoughts into the heavenly light of the spiritual sun, she slept as in the presence of the Lord.

And when she awoke, it was as if to a new day in her existence. Life was so suddenly filled with interest—it was, as if she had realised her own being in an other. She longed

to communicate all the joy and good of herself to that other; who, she felt with an intuitive perception of his thoughts, was sadly yearning for her. She met her mother, with a new warmth of affection, as if she would love her into her own inner joy. Mrs. Herbert responded to her affectionate warmth, and at the earliest possible hour, walked round to Mrs. Leslie's, to see the painting, in which Lucie was so deeply interested. She saw that Mr. Vernon was intensely excited, when he heard her voice. He started forward with that peculiarly radiant smile, and listening air, as if his ear awaited the tones of another voice; but when he found that Mrs. Herbert was alone, the light faded from his countenance, and a mournful, disappointed, yet patient and

resigned expression succeeded it. Mrs. Herbert was deeply touched, and she could not but realize how Lucie loved the unfortunate man. She turned to him in the kindest manner and said,

“Mr. Vernon, will you gratify my curiosity, by permitting me to see the last picture you painted.” He bowed an acquiescence, and Mrs. Leslie led Mrs. Herbert into an inner apartment.

The beautiful painting represented a youth and a maiden kneeling with their faces upturned to a great glory of light, that streamed upon them from the east; while around them bloomed a flowery Eden. As Mrs. Herbert gazed intently, almost uncon-

sciously, she exclaimed, "It is, indeed, Lucie!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Leslie, "it is so remarkable a likeness, that I questioned Mr. Vernon closely as to whether he had not seen Miss Herbert before his blindness, but he says not—that this is, simply his ideal. And you see he has caught his own air and likeness, too."

While the two ladies gazed and discussed, Mr. Vernon listened with a breathless attention.

Mrs. Herbert felt her heart drawn towards him in a great compassion. She saw his delicate and sensitive nature; and if he was indeed created for Lucie, she felt that she could not object to her daughter performing

her duty, and making both herself and this unfortunate man happy.

With this feeling, when she was leaving, she asked Mr. Vernon if he would not like to walk with her. He accepted her invitation with a grateful alacrity that plainly showed where his heart was yearning to be. When they were in the street, Mr. Vernon narrated to Mrs. Herbert his dream, and told her how the first tones of Miss Herbert's voice had thrilled upon him—of how, without seeing her, he felt that she was good and beautiful—and how his dark outer life seemed to grow bright in her gentle presence. But he sighed deeply—and said his misfortunes would prove an insuperable barrier to his earthly

happiness, but that in *heaven* he could look forward to a beautiful blessedness.

Mrs. Herbert's heart was melted, and she told him that she could conceive it possible for a woman to love him in spite of his misfortune.

"Yes," said he, "if I met with her whom God created for me—she would undoubtedly love me, for there is an irresistible spiritual attraction, between such—but it would be selfish in me when I could not add to her happiness, to permit her to become the minister of mine."

Mrs. Herbert replied, "It is sometimes the highest blessing that can be conferred upon woman, to give her an object upon which she may pour forth the pent up love of her

heart,—one upon whom she may lavish all the tenderness and gentle sympathies of her nature. But,” said she, “we have reached my house, and you can discuss the point with Lucie.”

As Mrs. Herbert guided the young man into the house, he said,

“Words cannot express the gratitude I feel to you, but God will bless you for your beautiful kindness.”

She left him alone in the parlor, and sought Lucie in her chamber. She clasped her child to her heart—and murmured joyfully, “Lucie! I have seen the picture, and it is a beautiful likeness of you.”

“Oh, mamma,” said Lucie, “how happy you make me.” Mrs. Herbert informed her

that Mr. Vernon awaited her in the parlor. She tripped down with so light and airy a grace, that one might easily see that the elastic spirit was but slightly clogged with its case of earth. But, light as was that step, the quick ear of the blind man caught its every tread, and felt the joy of his life expanding as it drew near to him. The soft hand was clasped in his, but no word was spoken; it was a joy too deep for utterance. Gradually his head bent forward in that waking dream of happiness, and he felt a light kiss on his brow. Had an angel touched him there could not have been a deeper reverence in his murmured words—"I thank you!"—that rolled up from the deep gratitude of his heart.

Thus it was, upon the earth, began the united life of those whom God had made one in heaven.

Lucie lived but in her devotion to her husband, who was to her, in his serene, thoughtful resignation, the very form of wisdom—of a wisdom that was always seeking to elevate her thoughts and affections to a higher world. She lived in heaven with him while yet upon earth; and she to him, was as the light. Her loving hand guided him through the darkness of earth, while the quick perceptions of her feminine intellect lent a grace and beauty to every truth which he made clear to her. Thus he loved his own wisdom out of himself, and she loved the wisdom that was from God in him.

Mrs. Herbert looked with delight and satisfaction on the beautiful happiness she had been the means of bestowing—and always said, softly, to herself, “What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.”



THE PASSION FLOWER.

[THE unfolding of the passion-flower is very peculiar; a thrill pervades it, a tremulous motion—then suddenly it expands.]

PLANT.

“WHAT means this fearful thrill?

And this low quivering chill?

Like icy dews distilled!

I thought to bear a flower—

Is this its natal hour?

Thus are my hopes fulfilled?

And now this fervent glow—

Like breezes whispering low

Some secret in my ear.

I feel oppressed with life:

Oh, why this fitful strife

Of joy and pain—I fear!”

MAIDEN.

Thou hast been longing
 To bear a flower.
I have watched thee
 Many an hour.
Thus thy blossoms
 Ever unfold;
They shrink to meet
 A breath so cold
As this of earth—
Ever is birth
 Painfully sweet.
I will love thee
 Do not fear,
Thou shalt be to me
 Most dear.
Trust thy petals

To the light.

Do not hide them

From my sight.

I have watched and watered thee:
Wilt thou not now bloom for me?"

FLOWER.

"Never more shall I speak to thee,
I am dumb now thou seest me."

Slowly the flower unfolds its leaves
And a heavy sigh the maiden heaves.

MAIDEN.

"In my heart a bud lay sleeping—
Oft mine eye was wet with weeping,
Lest it should not bloom.
'Ope for me thou tender blossom,
I will guard thee in my bosom,
That no harm may come.'

So to me a low voice whispered,
And a dark eye, soft and moistened

Looked up into mine.

Then the bud its slight bands bursted,
To that bosom I entrusted

Its white virgin leaves.

Now my chilled breast heaves,
And my sad heart grieves

All alone.

Thou too, bearest a cross, pale flower!
Emblem of Love's natal hour,
And too oft its only dower.

Not so mine—

Over my cross, I will weave a crown,
Which shall seal me heaven's own.”