

BANNER OF LIGHT.



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Original Poetry.

THE ANGEL VOICE.

For days and weeks—nay, months and years,
Had sorrows crowded round our way—
Joy changed to griefs, and smiles to tears,
Till there seemed left no cheering ray.

Our home a paradise had been,
If Fortune had not turned her back,
And made the path of life once green
A worn and weary, weary track.

When those who dwell beneath that roof
With me, were all so good and dear—
'Twas strange that Fortune kept aloof,
And smiled on those not half so fair.

Our Mary with her flashing eyes,
And Effie with her golden hair—
Fair girls and boys of various size,
And parents well-beloved were there.

But now, a sad, sad time had come;
Too long the tale, or how, or why,
When they might be without a home—
Without a friend beneath the sky.

Yet still we gathered round the hearth,
And strove to drive the gloom away;
But ah! the flashing of our mirth,
Was like the glow-worm's flitting ray.

There was unspoken in each heart,
A thought of coming, doubtful strife,
When we so soon, too soon must part,
To fight our way alone through life.

While thus we sat, and mused again,
A low voice breathed upon the air—
In such a sweet, rich music strain,
We knew an angel hovered near.

We hushed our breath, for we would fain
Hear once more breathe that music strain;
When, lo! the soft and sweet refrain
Came floating on the air again;

And these the words it seemed to say:
"Think you the future dark before,
And see you not the dawning day?
Fear not; angels are watching o'er."

The sunlight is where shadows fall,
Joy still lives on though trials come;
Then do not lose the sunlight all,
But look beyond the shadow's gloom.

Go bravely forth your lot to meet;
And I again this truth can say,
That spirit-friends shall guide your feet,
And soon will dawn a happy day."

Then softly died the voice away,
Not lost the words that had us told—
But deep into our hearts that day,
They fell like seeds into the soil.

As oft I hear that sweet refrain,
"The sunlight is where shadows fall,"
My heart grows strong and light again,
Obedient that dear angel-call.

Boston, January 18, 1859.

THERE'S NOT A FLOWER THAT BRIGHTLY BLOWS.

BY J. HOLLIS M. SQUIRE.

There's not a flower that brightly blows,
That does not soon decay;
And not a hope the human knows,
That may not fade away.

The days of youth as brightly seem
As spring-time's early flowers,
Till age comes on—no goes the dream,
And joy forsakes the hours.

I dreamt a dream in youth's young morn;
When hope was strong and new—
My glad heart beat, no more forlorn,
Beneath her eyes of blue.

Ambition flourished with her sighs,
Hope donned a diadem;
But yet another won the prize,
And my heart lacks a gem.

A violet hung o'er the brook,
And looked with loving, long,
The joyous stream returned the look,
And sang its liquid song.

It turned the pebbles in its bed
And eddied round the bar,
And still the violet's tinted head
Beamed o'er it like a star.

Sweet Summer fled as Autumn swept
From out his realm of gloom;
Cold winds along the valleys swept,
And flow'ers ceased to bloom.

The brook sang on, and begged its love,
To seek it and to wed—
The flower dropped from its stem above,
"The waves received it—dead."

Thus every joy that buds to-day,
Each hope that bursts to bloom,
When cold misfortune sweeps the way,
Finds refuge in the tomb.

Oh, hopes that made the past so bright,
And promised more and more—
I mourn and mourn thy absent light,
That time cannot restore.

New York, January 28, 1859.

LINES TO THE REFORMER.

BY HUBSON TUTTLE.

Oh! be ye not weak-hearted;
The battle's to the strong,
And Truth has strength gigantic
To sway the raving throng.

God speeds thee on thy mission,
And nerves thy arm in fight,
When you gird on in battle
For freedom and for right.

The angel hosts are with thee,
To guide thee on thy way,
And will proclaim thy triumph,
When error rolls away.

Then will the angels crown thee
With laurel for thy deed,
The proud and manly feeling
That you have served your kind.

Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these—
"It might have been."
W. H. CHAPMAN.

ALTHEA: A REVELATION OF EARTH AND SPIRIT-LIFE.

BY CORA WILBURN.

The Sin-stained Spirit.

It is a wild and dreary waste, far-reaching to the dim horizon's gloomy confines; turbid waters swell in rising waves, uplifting scaly and repellant forms; a leaden sky, with drifting thunder-clouds is overhead; the walling wind's discordant voices fill that realm of silent desolation; where the huge, misshapen trees stand leafless, their knotted branches tossed about, and swaying, like spectral forms in invocations of despair. The grass is frosted by the piercing blast; the grey rocks, barren and isolated, bear no flowery impress; no habitation meets the eye; nature's vivid mantle of green has never touched the darkened spot; no sunshine ever fell there benignantly; no blue skies promise summer; no rosy streaks announce the dawn of light; no sunset glory crowns the close of day. Night there, is dense and silent, with unutterable gloom; the mysterious shapes of phantoms of remorse and horror flit to and fro; amid the chilling atmosphere, pass lurid flashes of still unquenched fires; the altars of the past of sin are there invisibly, and unseen hands relume the flame.

It is the arid waste of one of the lower spheres of life's continuance, and we look upon the surrounding conditions of a soul awakened to its true position; shudderingly we look for, on the woman's form, there crouching in late woe and tardy penitence, is set the seal of a fatal beauty, that shines forth from the dark and tattered raiment, the disheveled mass of golden hair, a sign of power—misused, alas! and yet a promise grand and eloquent, of expiation and redemption, from the darkness and the exile of her destiny.

The beautiful pale face is convulsed with the mighty anguish of a guilty soul; vainly striving to cover her chilled limbs with the scanty folds of the beggar's garb, she starts in new terror as she beholds the stains upon it, and reads with soul and eye their accusing significance. Here, wet and burning, scarring the little hand that holds it, glisten tear-drops, wrung from innocent eyes—from troubled hearts—from the unmerited suffering of loving souls, that, but for her tyranny, had been, oh! so happy.

There were drops of blood, not wrung from the sacrifice of life, but from the sacred fount of feeling, memory, love! There burned the imploring kiss of the outcast, vainly supplicating for the mercy, so scornfully denied. The ensigns of mourning, whose dread realities she had cast over happy homes, clinging in black terror to the trailing robe; the wreaths of childhood's glory changed to cypress glooms twined there; the roses of youth and love hung on unholy altars, gleamed thence in mockery—changed, lifeless and devoid of fragrance; the queenly apparel, the awarded crown of bays, changed to that prison-garb, to the broad band that, thorn-lined, pierced the aching brow!

She had been great and powerful in the might of her beauty and genius—her wealth and pride. She had trampled on hearts, and walked smilingly over graves; yet the world called her good, and on the marble tombstone, recorded the many virtues—the magnificent charities—of the beautiful and high-born Althea.

She gazed with wildly distended eyes, upon the dreary landscape; she turned imploringly a look to heaven. No ray of light fell from the wintry sky. She sought to climb the frowning crags, to reach the boundaries of that land of gloom—to meet beyond some being of her kind. In vain! Sharp stones pierced her weary feet, and clouds shut out the world of beauty, the summer skies, and leaping, golden waters far beyond. The walling winds sang mournfully, and overhead the thunder rolled.

"This is Heaven! the pearly gates, the golden streets, the white robe, and the crown of glory!" cried, with a mocking laugh, that reverberated from rock to shore, the darkened spirit.

"And here am I to remain eternally!"

She cast herself upon the frozen ground, and wildly tore her flowing, golden hair; she beat her breast in intolerable anguish, and thrust her frame against the sturdy trees—the hard, cold stone—calling loudly, frantically for annihilation!

They surrounded her with gibes and mockery—the grinning faces; the vague, dark, floating spectres, that arose from lake and strand, and lowering cloud. And they reviled her for her sufferings—denied her claims to sympathy and pardon, even as she had done on earth to others. Maddened by their reproaches—insensate with remorse, she flung herself upon the ground, and called aloud to heaven for relief.

"She prays with her lips only!" cried the jeering phantom, and Althea relapsed into silence; and, in despair, covered her face and rent anew the burning garb that clung around her.

"Oh God, send me relief!" the fervent prayer thrilled through the frame of the imploring sufferer, uprose in a whisper so low, it escaped the hearing of the malignant ones; it cleaved the thunder-clouds above, and, borne upon the fluttering pinions of an invocation fraught with faith, it reached an upper realm of vastness and beauty inconceivable. It knelt at the feet of one angel there, who heard, and touched to the soul of pity, responded to that anguished wail:

"Solitary, forsaken, justly punished! but if I can atone for the sins of earth, I will! by every effort—by every throb of life! But, oh! not immortality here, in this darkened spot!—not lifeless solitude—endless loneliness, I pray thee, Father!"

The golden, azure and roseate clouds, disporting at the angel's feet, bore to her ear the cry of that tortured soul, and the undertone of faith was there; the beauty of devotion clung to the prayer for deliverance. Lilla heard and replied in music.

Was it sunshine that cleaved the bosom of the threatening storm clouds? Was that a ray of light celestial, athwart the darkness? Was it music floating downward from the realms of bliss? Althea looked and listened; deep into her soul, benighted as it was by pride and sin, spoke thrillingly a sweet, persuasive voice, calling forth the heart's best offering—prayer!

They fled afar, the shapes of evil, veiling their eyes, and folding close their robes of gloom; for an inspiring power had descended from the higher realms, and the weak sinner's faith was strengthened—the soul's first offering laid upon the altar of expiation—the first saving prayer passed her rebellious lips, softening them into mild entreaty, child-like trust.

Upon an island shore we stand, entranced in wonder and enrapt in joy! The summer air is redolent with the breath of roses, the spicy odors of the forest's depth. Around, a sea of light and music, swelling rhythmically to the singing winds; above, a sky of azure beauty, and floating downward from its realms celestial, in jeweled barge and car and temple, come the teachers of a higher life—the seraphs of knowledge, love and song.

The messenger-birds there wing their flight from soul to soul; star-chaplets beakon from the distant cloud heights, and banners wave, and forms of undreamt-of beauty, faces of rapt beatitude, tresses of living gold, and hands in waving welcome, glisten and vanish there. From the deep woods arises the choral melody of immortal songsters, and flowers naxer, blighted, by the sun's touch, bloom beneath the blessing of the sun. In those fair Eden-bowers, the emerald foliage shades the sacred shrines of art and music—the home altars of love. From tree and flower, cascade, sea and cloud—from the golden sunlight's benediction and the mountain's height, uprising from the fertile plains and angel-homes—from all, with one accord, in blending tones of ecstacy, to harmony, arises to the unseen world's beyond, the anthem of all life and spirit—prayer! 'Tis on this blessed isle, close by a fane of beauty, thrice consecrated by the light divine, that Lilla dwells awhile—dwells there, until a deeper draught of love and knowledge shall uplift her spirit higher; until still nearer to the softly unclosing portals of the beautiful above, she shall be led by the sovereign power of divine forgiveness.

From the bright region of joy and life and breathing beauty, even down to the land of desolation, to the wintry clime, an inspiration guides the willing spirit, and a sweet duty leads her feet. A gleam of pity from an angel's eye—a passing glimpse of her pure-white raiment, of her dazzling veil of encircling light—pierced through the darkness of that nether clime, and Althea, looking up, beheld, and bowed her spirit to the dust in reverence, and, crossing her hands upon her bosom, cried piteously, imploring, to the angel-come.

And Lilla smiled in sweet response, and music trembled on the darkened air, and stole upon the callous heart. The first ray of hope dawned on Althea's soul; for the first time, the wrongs of the past crowded there, unaccompanied by defiance, by pride—rebellion. The flower of humility sprung from the dark soil, and tears, "blest tears of penitence," watered the celestial growth.

With the first faint ray of heavenly light resting on her tortured heart, Althea knelt—alone, amid the arid waste, in prayer; and from the soul of Lilla burst forth a victorious hymn, that, re-echoed by the surrounding angel choir, was borne upwards and upward still, from sphere to sphere of spirit-life and beauty, until it reached the far-off, gleaming portals of the land celestial, of which no eye hath seen the glory—no ear hath heard the songs divine of praise.

CHAPTER I.

We return to the earth we dwell upon; to the customary scenes, the familiar forms and faces of this world, back into the past, to trace the life path of one, who, beautiful and worshiped by the world, entered the realms of the hereafter despoiled of her regal robes, of the magnificence of her surroundings, doomed to a life of expiation, to a long pilgrimage of solitude and pain.

She had been born to the power and sway of wealth; the descendant of a noble house, the only daughter of proud parents; endowed with bewildering beauty, rare intellect, and a heart naturally warm, impulsive and generous, whose aspiring throbs for justice, freedom and equality, she stifled with untrembling hand, for the world's sake.

As a child, she tyrannized over teachers and servants—resolutely withdrew from all association with the friendless, the outwardly poor and unlovely. She gave sweetly of her ample means for public charities, and aided in the erection of churches and monuments; she rendered homage to the great, and applauded the intellectual and famed. With scorn and coldness she turned from the appealing beggar, from the aspect of squalid poverty, from wretchedness and suffering.

She looked with kindling eye upon the pictured scenes of earth's beauty—upon the revelations of the

artist's ideal—for the love of the beautiful dwelt in her soul, perverted from its original excellence. But from the fair face worn with pallor, from the loveliness unheralded by external elegance and fashion's sanction, she turned in utter indifference. She threw wreaths and costly presents to the famed singers of her time; the sweet music of the peasant mother's lullaby had no charms for her ear—the children of the poor were not beautiful to her fastidious taste. Pride, the attendant demon of humanity, had secured an abiding place in Althea's soul, and to its sway all nobler feelings bent. The hearts of many bowed in homage to the graceful and gifted girl; and from his lonely cottage home, Sylvester dared to think and dream of the proud beauty—to love her with all the depths of his poet soul, that was so rich with love. For the proud maiden's sake he toiled incessantly; affection, hope and devotion, brought to his soul the answering genius of inspiration, and grandly melodious, powerful with strength, and deeply imbued with the magic hues of beauty, his poems found expression, and touched to the very founts of feeling the popular mind, that rewarded him with showers of applause—with the meed of fame, the approval of wealth.

He placed them all at Althea's feet, and she reached forth her hand to receive them—smiled sweetly and falsely on the giver, and bade him wait.

He had one sister—a gentle lovely and meek spirit, whose heart clasped all that life held of beauty, truth and aspiration. For some time the proud patrician refused all association with the humbly nurtured girl, then yielding to her lover's entreaties, masking the repellent haughtiness, the shrinking coldness by assumed complaisance, she received the pure Selina with conventional smiles.

One day there was a fete at the spacious mansion, and Althea reigned the queen of grace and beauty over her assembled votaries. But the crimson of her cheek deepened that night with a deadly anger; the flashes of her dark eye were enkindled by a fell remorse. Esmond, the secretly loved object of her affections, looked with eyes of love upon the gentle lily Selina. Amid the mazes of the dances, between the pauses of the music, still masking with smiles the torture of her undisciplined heart, Althea dreamed of vengeance, and staked life's happiness for its success!

She signed to Sylvester to approach her, as the night neared on the morn. She gave him a mission to perform in a distant city, and he obedient to what he deemed love's mandate, set forth immediately upon his journey. She sought Selina, and from her innocent lips received the confirmation of her fears. Esmond, the lofty and wealthy, who had withstood her charms and manifold fascinations, loved deep and tenderly the rustic girl! The soul of Althea was capable of sacrifice, for its voice whispered of the glory to be gained, but resolutely she cast forth the appealing angels, and looked the demons in the chambers dim, where they could revel undisturbed.

"You must be my messenger to your brother when he returns," she said, "for I feel that this must end. I cannot wed him, and you must tell him so."

"Lady! it will kill him!" replied Selina. "He trusts to your faith, your promise. Oh, why this sudden change? dear Althea, what have we done?"

She drew up her proud form, and refused the proffered hand of the lovely pleader. "Do you love your brother?" she asked.

"Can you ask me? is he not all—has he not been all of earth to me, since my dear mother left? Althea, you cannot retract your promise—Sylvester will die! You cannot be so cruel!"

"I never promised to become his wife—but I will on one condition."

"He will accede to all."

"It is for you to acquiesce, Selina!"

"For me? is there aught on earth I would not do for him, my best friend, my guardian, for whom my angel-mother bade me live?"

"Can you sacrifice your brightest hopes in life? your affection? Is your fraternal love so strong and true?"

"My brightest hopes? what mean you, Althea?" faltered the young girl, with paling cheeks.

"I mean what I say," she replied imperatively.

"Can you renounce your lover? take back your promise—vow never again to behold Esmond?"

"Oh no! I cannot—cannot do that!" cried Selina.

"I thought so! weak and silly girl—I knew it; but listen! Unless you renounce all thoughts of him, your brother shall never cross this threshold; my servants shall turn him from the door—and if he dies, as you have often told me he would were I to deprive him of my presence, the responsibility rests with you—not me."

"Althea—what can you mean? why are you so changed? what causes your eye to rest on me with such malignant glances? How have we injured you? Why demand of me the renunciation of my brightest hopes; have I no right to be loved, to be happy as you are?"

"Bring hither no comparisons! I compel me not to utter what would make you shrink from me in terror. I have an insurmountable dread of people of your class! Sylvester by talent and merit has written his name above his fellows; you are his sister. I admitted you to my home—my intimacy. You are henceforth strangers to me, unless you comply with my demand."

"You have no right, no power to enforce such a demand," cried Selina indignantly.

"I take the right, I have the power," replied the haughty woman. "Farewell, Selina," she continued, "henceforth you pass no more these gates. Sylvester may return to his rustic associates. And Esmond you shall never wed; take Althea's word for

that!" and with a queenly step and scornfully flashing eye she left the room, and Selina stood alone, bewildered by strange, thronging thoughts. She left the courtly mansion, never again to pass its portal; she returned to her modest home, to await her brother's coming.

He turned his footsteps towards the dwelling of her he loved; flushed with the success of his mission, proud of the confidence reposed in him, he sought Althea's presence; she refused to see him—henceforth he was forbidden to pass beyond that aristocratic threshold. Stunned, blinded and confused, he remounted his horse and reached his home; he fell into the outstretched arms of his sister, with a loud cry of grief.

Vainly she sought to soothe and comfort; the blow was too sudden—the shaft of cruelty aimed by that loved hand, sunk deeply into that trusting, loving soul. In presence of his anguish, Selina formed the vow of sacrifice; with bleeding heart she wrote to the inexorable woman who held her brother's life within her lily-white hands. But it was not to be; that missive, blotted with the holy tears of a sister's love—that record of exalted devotion, never reached her eye. For Sylvester found it, and read it with surprise and indignation. The idol was dethroned in his pure soul, but on his feeble frame the unexpected shock was direly felt. And as the light faded from his eye, as his strength departed day by day, Selina besought him with tears and pious entreaty, to permit her to apprise Althea of his condition; but he refused indignantly.

"She was not worthy of my love; she is not the embodiment of the ideal my soul had framed. She who could demand such sacrifice of a sister's heart, is less than woman. I once madly deemed her an angel! You, my Selina, will be happy, for untouched by her wiles, Esmond is, and ever will be, true to you!"

The prayers of that loving spirit could not retain him; when the skies of Autumn enfolded with subdued radiance the changing woods, and the fallen leaves rustled on the greensward, he passed from earth; passed calmly on, with cold hand resting in a farwelled benediction on his sister's head, with the promise of the believer in his heart, expressed in the last utterance to the faithful watcher by his side—"We shall meet again in heaven."

There was a gay assembly in the decorated halls of Althea's stately home; light feet were dancing merrily, sweet, tuneful voices mingling; fairy forms flitting to and fro. Amid the dancers glided, with flashing cheek and sparkling eye, attired with costly magnificence, gems gleaming from her hair and arms and neck, the peerless Althea, who saw not how the recording angels marked her regal vestments with the impress of a fearful sin! She danced on, feeling not the past anguish of the faithful heart she had ruthlessly trampled upon; thinking not that the coronet of jewels encircling her brows would be replaced by the fiery hand of remorse, steeped in her victim's tears, heated by the flames of sacrifice, ascending straightway unto heaven.

Of all this Althea dreamed not, for worldliness had steeped her soul in oblivion, and pride issued still his mandates of defiance. She was guilty in the angels' sight, this woman of rare gifts; for she sinned not ignorantly. Glimpses of soul consciousness illumined the inner path; duty whispered of return of expiation; womanhood and truth rebelled beneath the fixed mask of conventional form; and uneasy conscience cried aloud, when men applauded the most loudly. But for fame and the world's voices of approval, the angel-monitors remained unheeded, and the spirit of pride assumed his sway.

With pale face and quivering lip, Esmond passed silently amid the throng, and stood before Althea, who, in careless and graceful attitude, was reclining on a soft divan. She looked up in sudden surprise at the pale and disturbed countenance, the accusing eyes bent on her; she grew pallid with a sudden misgiving, a secret weighed down her soul.

"Sylvester died this morning," he said, and his voice trembled with emotion. "Althea, duty bids me tell you that you have been cruel, wilfully, wickedly cruel, to that noble heart! You were unworthy of the love of so pure a nature! Dying, he forgave you, but you must ever feel that you have caused the death of one who should have lived long years to bless you."

He spoke in whispered tones. The merry company around deemed he was paying homage to her peerless beauty. Even then the iron fangs of remorse seized on her heart-strings, gloom fell upon the face of life, and low and falteringly, with clasped hands and eyes timidly upraised to the rebuking face of Esmond, she said:

"I did not expect this! I thought not it would end so; I hoped he would forget me. Do you, then, thoroughly despise me?"

The proud head drooped low; there was pathos in the usually imperious voice; breathlessly she awaited his reply.

"Until you prove yourself possessed of the womanly attributes of tenderness and forgiveness, I do," he sternly replied. "Farewell, now, Althea. I have fulfilled a painful duty."

She arose and grasped his arm. "Where go you?" she exclaimed.

"To share Selina's watch by the departed; tomorrow I take her to my mother, after our dead is given to the earth. In a few months she will become my wife."

"In vain—in vain!" murmured Althea. "I have sacrificed a life in vain!"

"And with a moan of suffering, riven from the very depths of her soul, she sank back senseless; and the young and the thoughtless crowded around, and with

officials had restored her to the consciousness she would willingly have foregone. Pleading sudden indisposition, she retired to her chamber, and with a weight upon her heart, losing sight of faith and prayer, she paced the floor all night, invoking death, maligning destiny!

The young Selina had escaped from her threatened vengeance. Three years of happiness, pure, unalloyed, fell to her lot, and the grateful heart sang aloud its thanksgiving songs. Then shadows fell; and the death-angel's wing darkened the sunny hearthstone. With all the intense affection that had blessed their life gathered in one last fond, farewell glance, the spirit of Esmond left its mortal tenement, and Selina, with her infant son, stood alone on the broad earth, a stricken and forsaken thing!

All the angel faculties, the slumbering energies of that devoted, heroic nature, were awakened by the force of circumstances, the pressure of stern realities. From her watch beside the casement, from which she gazed up to the stars, fondly deeming his spirit dwelling there, in one of the celestial aisles, she was called by the feeble cry of her sickly infant. Vigils of love and pain claimed that young mother; nights of solitary watching, when her soul held communion with things unseen, when melodies unheard by the ear of sense, upbore on swelling waves of beauty, her spirit to the immortal shores. Then words of deep mysterious import fell on her listening heart—thought-echoes, for which language has no sign, and revelations swept the lyre chords of the inner life so wonderfully clear with promise—so powerfully imbued with strength, the mourner's eye grew bright with hope; her smile became luminous with a holy, spiritual joy.

But days of trial and hard necessity claimed the patient disciple of adversity, and the youthful bloom departed from cheek and lip; and the posture of sorrow, the drooping head and downcast eye, became habitual. Yet often the breezes would waft the welcome perfume of his favorite flower, and with the spirit token of remembered love; often the moon-beams fell athwart the silent chamber, as they had fallen while his presence gladdened earth; and thrillingly melodious, sweet, unutterable, came a message to her soul, promising reunion, happiness, and deathless love. The widow felt the near presence, unseen by the eye, recognized by the conscious spirit, of him, who, on earth as in heaven, was ever the star of life to her.

CHAPTER II.

Still proudly beautiful, imperially defiant, Althea reigns the queen of fashion—the heartless, cold coquette. They tell of one, young and promising, the only joy of his widowed mother's heart; who, enslaved by that fatal beauty, knelt in worship at her feet, to be discarded with repellent scorn—with taunts and mockery. He left his native land, and sought forgetfulness beyond the seas; and amid the storm he perished, with the rest of the gallant crew of an ill-fated ship. The mother's invoked retribution haunted Althea's sleep, and in her dreams uprose two graves—one shadowed by the willow-tree in the quiet country churchyard; the other rising proudly in the depths of ocean, formed of the accumulated wealth of pearls, and gems, and glistening gold; the coral stems twined over it, and thick seaweed formed the monumental wreath.

But stifling conscience, and shutting close the gates of memory, Althea revelled in the world's delights, and feasted on its applause, its lavish encomiums, its proffered meed of fame and flowers. The sorrowing angel of her better nature, often drew from the quiescent chords of feeling, deep, tender strains of love and melody, over which the good and pure wept freely; for which the laurel wreath of poetry was twined around her golden tresses. Men called her angel and divinity; her fond, proud parents gazed upon her with love and pride. She alone knew the depths of falsehood within; she alone shrank from the darkness of her own spirit, and wept for its desecrated shrine!

With supreme disdain, with a pride boundless in its presumption, she turned from all of life that moved not in the charmed circle of her gilded worship. The beautiful of fashion, grace, and elegance, the poetry of wealth, the perfection of high-born beauty, found favor in her eyes, and response from her heart and hand. But the beauty of humility, the untutored grace, the nature untouched by the refining hand of art or genius; the lowly virtues and sweet beatitudes of humble life, these found no answering melody of affection, trust or pity, from the exclusive soul.

She had turned in bitterness never revealed, even to her mother's heart, from the first vain dream of love; and the lesson had not purified and exalted the rebellious spirit, that disclaimed all need of teaching. Drinking deeply of the intoxicating draughts of fame and adulation, the thirst for pre-eminence, for worldly distinction, possessed her fully. Sacrificing, therefore, every impulse true and womanly, stifling every regret and every holy aspiration; laying strong injunctions on the protesting heart that wildly called out against the outrage, she was led a willing bride to Mammon's altar, there bound for life—by none many years her senior—a haughty, irritable, misanthropic man, who, won by her excellent grace and beauty, was proud to exhibit her to the world as the prize his wealth had won.

She left her early home, and with her husband traveled much over her native land; then settling down to domestic life on a scale of unequalled splendor and extravagant expenditure, she held unlimited sway over his vast wealth, his many possessions. She was mistress of many servants, of almost regal robes and jewels; mistress of all things rare, costly, and beautiful—of all things, save herself. For the watchful master guarded her with a jealous eye; she dared no longer smile, and dance, and sing, as in the days of her maidenhood. She had bartered freedom for the golden chains that bound her; oh! so fearfully! and escape was impossible. Like a caged tigress, her unruly spirit chafed and pined, and then dark, terrible, endowed with mighty strength, a full temptation assailed her, and she tottered on the brink of a fearful precipice!

Angry words, loud recrimination, had become habitual between the ill-matched pair; reproaches and accusations were matters of daily occurrence, until the desire for freedom grew overpowering in Althea's soul—until bitterest hatred of the man she called husband possessed her unto madness. She had long nurtured strange, evil thoughts; and they were seeking form in action; reckless of the future, she was about to steep her soul in crime, when a saving angel—one of earth's human angels—interfered in time. One cold and stormy winter's night, the master of that palatial home sat in his study, reading not, but thinking deeply; and Althea, locked in morbid dreams of happiness, slept on the sofa. Her husband's eyes were closed, but his mind was

litten couch. Well had the aged husband noted the fearful flashes of her eye, the shuddering of her frame, when his voice aroused her from the deep reveries she indulged in. Words of terrible meaning had she uttered in her sleep; and now, with shrinking heart, and hands clasped to his aching brow, Villandot sat alone at midnight, and took counsel of his thoughts.

Twice he started from his recumbent posture, and going to the window, looked out upon the night, with its descending shower of snow-flakes, thinking that he heard a human voice amid the wailing of the wind. Cold and stern as he was, his heart was not all closed to human pity; he could be moved by the aspect of visible suffering—by the appeals of the stricken; and one pure fount of sympathy gushed up to the sunlight in music: he loved the angel presence of a little child.

"She threatens me with her looks; they say plainly—'Beware of me!' What can she mean? I have seen her start, and conceal something amid the folds of her dress as I entered;—no she premeditated murder? There is no softness—no touch of womanly pity in her nature! I have seen her turn, with a gesture worthy of a Satan of pride, from the poor who came to our gates, gathering closely around her her satin robe, lest the child of poverty should touch it with her wasted hand. I dare not trust her. I will watch her narrowly, and if I find her guilty, no law shall judge between us; no gossiping tongues shall bandy her name and mine. But I will take vengeance! such revenge as shall bow her proud spirit, lower than even the beggar's garb she shrinks from. But, hark! that sound again; it is a human being in distress; it is a moan of pain! Some one is perishing of cold outside! perhaps some unfortunate has turned from the shelter of her lordly home. Rouse up, Merlin! awake! there is a cry for help outside!"

He shook the sleeper—a young man who waited on his person—and bade him call some of the household, and go in search. His orders were promptly obeyed, and Merlin, returning soon, reported to his master that a woman, with a child in her arms, had been found, crying wildly amid the storm, just underneath his study window. He ordered them to bring her in, and when, feeble and tottering, she was led towards him, his heart melted in pity, in view of the wan face still so lovely, the blue eyes imploring glance, the tattered raiment wet and fluttering, the embers of sweetness and dignity shining forth from the wreck of beauty, health, and happiness. He placed her in a seat; he tenderly removed the wet coverings from her head, and the light-brown hair fell down, a shining, silky veil over the tearful face, and hid awhile her grief. But as the grateful warmth restored her scattered thoughts, and life came to her nearly frozen limbs, she cast aside the veiling tresses, and there upon her bosom, secure in the sweet faith of infancy, lay sleeping, with smiles upon its wasted face, a little child! At that sight the ever-awaking angel touched the rich man's soul, and tears welled up from the sealed recesses, and he took the infant from its mother's arms, and kissed it gently and tenderly as a woman would; nestling to his bosom, awoke by his caresses, his quick tears raining on its innocent face, the child looked up to him and smiled, and a thrill of more than mortal goodness coursed through the old man's frame, and uplifted his soul!

"Poor child, poor suffering lamb!" he murmured fondly, stroking its jetty hair, kissing its fair white brow. The mother knelt at his feet, speechless with gratitude, overcome by the unexpected kindness—her white hands clasped, her blue eyes raised to his face with such unspeakable thanksgiving in their depths; her pale lips murmuring vainly with the tribute of her heart. Villandot gazed upon her with a whelming tide of emotion beating away, far hence, the barriers of his soul. He gave her his hand to assist her to her feet; he led her deferentially, as he would a princess of the realm, to his own recumbent chair; he poured out a strengthening potion, and held it to her lips, and the infant, smiling, fearless and content, clung to his velvet robe, toyed with the costly diamond on his finger; unawed by the glitter of wealth, attracted by the gleam of sympathy, the light divine upon that wrinkled face called so cold and stern, and fair women pronounced so ugly and repelling.

"Rest here, good woman, while I procure some dry raiment, and see to a chamber for you," he said. In passing her, the friendless wanderer caught his hand and warm tears, and holy kisses were showered upon it. Again uplifted from the sordid cares, the miseries of life, Villandot felt that angel thrill of consciousness pervade his being; he gave the child into her arms, and hastened from the room. A female attendant was summoned, and the stranger led to a warm and luxuriant apartment; clean garments were put upon her and the little one, and a soft bed prepared. She refused all food; but, watched by the kind and pitying Martha, soon sank into quiet and dreamless sleep. Villandot sought not his couch, but snatched a few hours repose in the silence of his study—where, as his eyelids drooped, appeared to his dream-vision peopled by angelic forms, and one among them, towering in the beauty and stature of his angelhood, and holding towards him the outcast's child, said, in a voice thrilling with pathos and solemnity: "Inasmuch as thou hast done unto this little one, hast thou received of my spirit!" and the sleeper bowed his head in reverence, and felt the supreme beatitude of which, in ages past, that presence bright had spoken unto man.

In the morning, refreshed and strengthened, the old man sought his pensioners. The soft glow of gratitude suffused the pale cheeks of the mother; the child extended his little arms, and ran towards him; he caught the totterer. In his arms, and drew him to the heart that was fast becoming humanized and elevated by that purest of all earthly spells, a child's sweet love!

It was Selina who had found a shelter in the mansion of her bitterest foe! The once cherished wife was now a friendless wanderer, cast out upon the cold waters of life. With the death of Esmond's mother, her last stay departed, and, worn with toil and travel, foot-sore and heart-weary, she had been driven from the inviting mansion's portal the day before. Villandot never had heard her name, for Althea never spoke of the past; but, when sitting at the sumptuous breakfast table, he spoke of her to his proud, unempathizing wife, a sudden crimson flushed her cheeks, and a sudden glitter of the eye betrayed her.

"You know this woman, this lady I must call her, for dignity and refinement dwells in every motion, and in every word she utters. Your manner seems to indicate some knowledge of her?"

heard of her. The wealthy and honorable Esmond sadly lessened his dignity by a marriage with her," she said, with studied, haughty indifference.

Her husband made no reply. He was accustomed to these outbursts of pride.

"You would pity her, were you to see her now," he said.

"I have no desire to meet with squalid wretches, to hear pathetic stories of poverty and starvation; they sicken me! Selina is justly punished for her arrogance and presumption in mating above her condition."

"But you will see her, Althea, will you not?"

"No! You may give her alms, and send her away when your romantic fit is over," she insolently replied.

"I wish you to see her; I desire it, Althea!" said Villandot, gazing steadfastly upon the cold and beautiful statue before him. "Men call me cold and harsh, but I were less than human could I resist that gentle creature's appeal. Think, Althea, think a moment, of a creature fair and delicate as yourself, exposed to the midnight storm, dying of cold and exposure before your very gates! There must be some spark of divine compassion, some remnant of womanly sympathy in your soul, wife! Think of that poor, forlorn one, once a cherished, guarded, worshiped thing! Contrast your boundless means, your life of ease and luxury—"

"How dare you, sir, contrast my life with that of the beggar—the low, vile creature you speak of? My life! it is one of horrible torture; the roses are filled with thorns, they pierce me at every turn; the chain is trebly gilded, but it eats into my very soul! My castle of luxury is guarded by worse than the fabled dragon! Cease to taunt me with the recollections of the empty splendor that surrounds me; for, old man, you will drive me to a course your blindness sees not! Beware in time! give me my liberty, or by all there is in heaven, of light and freedom, in hell, of darkness and slavery, I will avenge my wrongs!"

She had risen from the table; with a face convulsed with passion, with a Medusa-like fixedness of eye and purpose, with outstretched hand, that seemed invoking the unseen temptation to draw nigh, and steel her heart—the crimson robe that fell in loose folds around her queenly form, the rich lace veil that drooped around the braided mass of golden hair, the flashing, threatening glances of the dark eye, rivaling in brightness the diamonds that lay upon her bosom, the piercing shrillness of her voice; the old man started from his seat, in sudden terror; he deemed her transformed into a spirit of evil, beautiful to tempt, and powerful to destroy!

"You are mad, Althea!" he said at length, "and care must be taken of such as you. I fear neither your menaces nor revellings. You willingly became my wife; abide by your destiny, become gentle, obedient, faithful, or rue the day you ever passed these gates!"

His voice had now lost its softness; it, too, was harsh and threatening.

"Tyrant! grey-headed jailor!" she cried, stamping her foot, and gazing on him with eyes ablaze with fury, "dare you accuse me of faithlessness?"

"Not in deed, fair tigress," he responded, sneeringly, "for I have watched and guarded you for the honor of my name! But in thought and intent, how often have these broad lands and rich domains passed into younger hands you deemed more worthy than your lord's? I have often read your thoughts, Althea! You married me for my wealth; enjoy your triumph, submit to your destiny!"

"Submission is the rule of slaves!" she retorted. "I will free myself from your tyranny; you shall not gloat over my miseries forever."

"How will you free yourself?" he asked her, mockingly.

A fearful expression swept over the beautiful face; unconsciously her hand grasped the carved hilt of a hunting knife that lay upon a table beside her. Villandot's quick eye perceived the movement. He laughed aloud, a scornful, mocking, defiant laugh.

"You will not, and you dare not!" he said, "for I will have you closely watched. Your fair head to the block, my wealth to strangers, if your evil spirit tempt you to but the appearance of crime. I know you now, Althea! I shall take care that you neither poison my food, or strike me to the heart. You are a fiend incarnate, woman! but you have found your master! And now it is my desire, my command, that you see this poor mother; that you take pity on the delicate child; that you, as well as I, dispense your bounties, and see that it is done without scorn or insolence!"

"Has she a child—this woman? Oh, yes! I will see her; I will give her charity! Villandot, conduct her to my presence. For once I will be good and charitable."

Vellandot's bitter irony, the fell resolve, her husband, deceived by the calm, almost gentle tones, looked searchingly into her face; the cloud had passed; it was serene, composed, and she continued quietly to sip her chocolate.

"Oh, Althea!" he cried, looking in admiration upon her, "how doubly beautiful you are when pity and gentleness come to your heart. How happy we yet could be if—but I will bring Selina hither," and he left the room, murmuring to himself: "After all she may not be as bad as she appears; her temper is fiery; her pride indomitable; her heart may not be evil. But at all hazards I must watch her, for my own safety and hers."

He returned, leading Selina by the hand, with little Esmond clinging to his neck. A vivid flush mounted to Althea's brow a moment, then her powerful will conquered all signs of emotion or surprise; she even rose to greet the poor woman, who, as she raised her eyes to the mistress of the mansion, started back, as if struck to the heart, exclaiming:

"Althea! can it be possible?"

"Yes, it is I, and this good man who, succor you is my husband," she replied softly, taking Selina's hand, and pressing it. "Truly I am grieved to behold you in this strait. Rest here as long as you please; you and your child are welcome."

But Selina shuddered at the cordial words, and shrank from the beaming eye, whose covert meaning was too truly read by the intuitive soul. She could not frame her lips to utter a false reply; she could not yet forget her brother's fate. If he were living, would she now be the houseless wanderer, demanding shelter of his direct foe?

"She would have taken her infant and fled that moment; but her eyes encountered the sorrowful and tender gaze of Villandot. She remembered all his kindness, his paternal goodness, and, covering her face with her hands, she wept aloud."

"Do not weep, Selina; I will grant you shelter; you shall go hence provided for. I take charge of your future—you and your child," said Althea.

But the heart of the suppliant was not to be deceived; her guiding impressions whispered: "Be wary!" the warning angel said aloud: "trust not!" She looked up into the proud beauty's face; it was unchanged in its fixed and statuesque loveliness; the brow was untouched by the finger-marks of time or care; the braided golden hair still wound around the queenly head, a magic coil of living sunbeams; the dark eyes' fire was all unquenched; the bony hand of privation had never touched that sculptured arm, or taken one line of grace from the regal form. Erect, defiant, strong, and unbent by trial, she stood in mocking contrast to the drooping figure, the wan and wasted face, the departed youth, with its roseate light of beauty, that, meek with folded hands, soul-rending eyes, and pure, though care-worn brow, confronted her! Selina's eyes bent on her haughty face, read deeply of the secrets of that shrouded soul; and as she read, she trembled, for her own angels shrank affrighted from the phantom shapes engendering her, the queen of wealth and beauty! her pure heart contracted with a dread, vague and indefinite, and warning voices whispered: "Fly hence! fly quickly!"

Althea, returning the questioning glance, revealed her soul, and read that of her innocent foe. There, innocence and purity, forgiveness, meekness, charity, called hosts of angels from above, to thwart her evil plans, to resist her dead resolves, to bring to naught her impious hopes. Each read the other, and Selina, turning with a pale and troubled countenance, beheld the old man's eyes fixed on her with a pity that promised security.

As if some vague, impalpable danger, near and threatening, hung above the cherished heart of her darling, Selina clasped him to her bosom, and the child, affrighted, shrank from Althea's touch, from the proffered refreshment, the carefully modulated voice. But he sprang into the fondly outstretched arms of the childless Villandot; he nestled closely to the old man's bosom, and toyed in childish glee with his sparkling rings. Althea left the room, casting one long and warning look upon Selina, noticing not again the boy.

"You appear to shrink from my wife's approaches; there is some mystery here. Althea's manner is strange, unfathomable. Why do you tremble before her?"

"I fear her," whispered Selina.

"I, too, sometimes," he replied. "But you must remain here—at least until your strength is recovered, till I have you properly clothed, and you are rendered well by rest. Althea knew you in her girlish days. By the hospitality I have shown to you, tell me what you know of her?"

"Naught that should disturb the peace and harmony of your domestic relations," she said. "My poor brother died of a broken heart, in the prime of life and genius, for her sake. This is why I cannot look upon her face unmoved."

"And she—did she ever love him? tell me that, Selina?"

"She never acknowledged love for any one, but she trifled with his feelings, and in depriving him of her presence, snapped the frail thread that held his life."

"I have heard something of this rumored before; I have heard of a sailor-boy who lost his life for her sake, whose mother came nigh to lose her reason. Cold, cruel and inhuman! Will her heart never yield to love and gentleness? Yet she received you kindly; perhaps she would atone for the past."

Selina made no reply, but her heart misgave her; in Althea's breast there could be no forgiveness, pity or desire for expiation.

"I entreat you, daughter, remain with me awhile! I know not why, but I feel a sense of security in your presence, as if heaven had sent you to ward off danger from this house. You have no home, poor wanderer! I will be a friend, a protector to your fatherless one. Stay with me only a few days; as a favor I implore this of you!"

She looked upon him in amazement; he, the rich, influential, honored man, supplicating for her presence in his lordly home! Then, sudden, overwhelming, as a strong sense of duty, as an obligation of gratitude, came an inspiration to her soul, and with firm voice she replied:

"Kind, generous friend! I will remain as long as you desire; I will not ask to go until you send me forth. The God of the orphan, the Father of the widow, will reward you for your dealings unto us! My heart is full; I cannot utter thanks, but the prayers of my life shall be offered up for you, who saved us from perishing in the storm!"

For all reply, Villandot gratefully pressed her hand, and said, cheerfully:

"You consent to remain? Thanks! a thousand thanks, my daughter!"

TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.

A WICKED JOKE.

A few years since, some roguish boys persuaded "Joe" to attend a Sunday School. Joe was an overgrown, half-witted, profane lad, and the boys anticipated considerable fun out of him.

Joe was duly ushered in, and placed on a settee in front of the one on which his friends were seated, and the recitation commenced. The teacher first questioned the class on their regular lessons, and then turned to Joe.

"My friend," said the teacher, "who made the world we inhabit?"

"Eh?" said Joe, turning up his eyes like an expiring calf.

"Who made the world we inhabit?"

Just as he was probably about to give an answer, one of the boys seated behind, inserted a pin into his (Joe's) pants, about nine inches below the ornamental button of his coat.

"God Almighty!" answered Joe, in an elevated tone, at the same time rising quickly from his seat.

"That is correct," replied the teacher; "but it is not necessary that you should rise in answering. A sitting posture is just as well."

Joe was again seated, and the catechism proceeded. "Who died to save the world?"

The pin was again inserted, and Joe replied, "Jesus Christ!" in a still louder voice, rising, as before, from his seat.

"That is also correct, but do not manifest so much feeling; do more composed and reserved in your manner," said the teacher, in an expostulating tone.

"What will be the final doom of all wicked men?" was the subject now up for consideration; and as the pin was again stuck in, Joe thundered out, with an increased elevation of his body, "Hell and damnation!"

"My young friend," said the instructor, "you give the true answers to all these questions, but we wish you would be more mild in your words. Do endeavor, if you can, to restrain enthusiasm, and give a less extended scope to your feelings."

Written for the Banner of Light.

TRUST IN GOD.

BY MINNIE MARY MAY.

When dark borrows crowd your pathway,
And your way is lost in night,
And this world seems lone and dreary,
Rest of all its former light,
Then "Trust in God."

When the clouds of trouble gather,
And affliction's storms descend;
When the ties of love are broken,
And thou needest a true friend,
Then "Trust in God."

When temptation's voice assails you,
Urging you in error's way—
Striving to allure your footsteps
From the path of right to stray,
Then "Trust in God."

When your fondest hopes deceive you,
And your highest aims are crushed,
When the tones of love and friendship
That have greeted you, are hushed,
Then "Trust in God."

When the cares of earthly duties,
And the din of busy life,
Weigh upon your mind and body
With their trials and their strife,
Then "Trust in God."

When amid earth's feelings pleasures,
Sunshine bright surrounds your way,
And this transient, earthly life,
Seemeth one long, joyous day,
Then "Trust in God."

May we, 'mid all earthly scenes,
Look for aid from Heaven above,
Ever seek our Father's blessing,
And our hearts be filled with love
And "Trust in God."

EAST MEDWAY, MASS.

Written for the Banner of Light.

Time Works Wonders.

BY OPHELIA MARGUERITE CLOUTMAN.

Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt were pupils and room-mates in the day and boarding-school of Miss Rebecca Flint, situated in the town of Lewes, and known for miles around as an institution possessing peculiar advantages for the moral and intellectual culture of the minds of the young and inexperienced. In this "fashionable and select boarding-school," as Miss Flint always proudly designated the establishment over which, for a period of twenty years, she had so faithfully presided, almost convent vigilance and strictness were practised. Being exclusively intended for the education of young ladies between the ages of twelve and twenty, all intercourse and communication with the opposite sex was entirely suspended, except when in the presence of the staid and over-fastidious preceptress of the Lewes Academy.

Too much restraint exercised over the actions of the young, is never good policy upon the part of either parent or guardian; for, draw the reins as tightly as you may, they will always find some way to break the traces and escape. But not even the experience of nearly a quarter of a century had taught Miss Rebecca Flint this great lesson; and to hold in closest subjection the young and impulsive hearts that were yearly confided to her care and tutorage, was deemed an especial duty by this conservative woman.

But of all the pupils whose Lewes Academy contained, there were none who tried the patience and temper of Miss Rebecca Flint, so much as did Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt, who, as the annoyed and perplexed preceptress often said, "seemed actually bent upon bringing ruin and disgrace upon the entire institution."

Florence Hastings was the only daughter and child of an humble but respectable tradesman of Lewes. Having lost his wife some eight years after the birth of the single child with which Providence had blessed him, William Hastings began to look about him for some suitable person to whose care he might with safety confide the educational interests of his motherless girl. A little reflection seemed to suggest Miss Flint as the woman best fitted to assume so great a responsibility, and a month or two after the decease of Mrs. Hastings, beheld the little Florence an established inmate of Lewes Academy.

Perhaps honest William Hastings was a trifle ambitious in regard to his only child, and, rightly, too, for a more precocious and beautiful girl never was seen than Florence Hastings, at the period of the commencement of our story, when Time, that ancient Prospero, had succeeded in transforming the shy and petite child of eight summers, into a merry, mischief-loving beauty of seventeen. Hair of a pale golden hue, fell in luxuriant curls over neck and shoulders, whose faultless symmetry and marble whiteness would have intoxicated the gaze of a sculptor. A complexion in which the lily and the rose were equally blended; a brow fair and expansive, and eyes of a witching hazel color, that were in strange contrast to her blonde style of beauty, gave a brilliant and ever-varying expression to a face that otherwise would have been pronounced a trifle too cold and classical.

Minnie Burt, on the contrary, was quite the reverse in personal appearance of her particular friend and room-mate, Florence Hastings. With a figure a little below the medium height, and remarkable for its plainness, rather than grace; a brunette complexion, and hair and eyes of the same jetty black, Minnie Burt was still what many would have called beautiful, in a physical sense. Her fair, low brow did not indicate the possession of great or superior intellect, but there was an earnestness and depth of feeling about the dark, full eye, that told of the warm, true heart that slumbered beneath. Unfortunately, Minnie Burt was an orphan, and entirely dependent upon the bounty of Miss Flint, whose niece she was, being the daughter of that lady's sister (for several years deceased), by an American gentleman, who had married and settled in Cuba. Mr. Burt survived the death of his young and beautiful wife—whom he had accidentally met with while visiting London, and to whom he was most devotedly attached—but a few weeks. At his demise, the business affairs of Mr. Burt were found to be in a terribly embarrassed state, and as he had died suddenly, without having made any will, the small amount of property that remained after the settlement of his estate in Matanzas, reverted to the Spanish government.

Penniless and doubly orphaned, Minnie Burt, at that time a child of ten years, arrived in England under the auspices of a London gentleman, whose business oftentimes led him to Cuba, and who, as luck would have it, chanced to be in Matanzas at the period of Mr. Burt's death.

As the mother of Minnie was the only and younger sister of Miss Rebecca Flint, it was by natural that

the latter should transfer the deep affection which she had felt for her while living, to her orphan child. That the stern preceptress of Lewes Academy, her kind-hearted little niece sincerely, neither Florence Hastings or even Minnie herself doubted for a moment; but never having known what it was to be gay and mirthful in her childhood's days, (her lot, from infancy, having been a continual struggle against poverty,) Miss Flint, with her prudish notions, condemned each innocent frolic or bit of mischief as a criminal thing.

As I have previously stated, Florence Hastings was seventeen years of age, at the period of the opening of our story. Minnie Burt, her sister companion in juvenile wickedness, was just one year her junior.

About this time the intelligence spread throughout Lewes, that the nephew of Sir Charles Winterton, (a wealthy bachelor who, tired of London life, had recently purchased a splendid estate in Lewes, made vacant by the death of its proprietor, and settled down to the calm enjoyment of rural life,) had come down from Oxford, to spend his college vacation with his uncle, and had also brought with him a fellow classmate.

How such news were first communicated to the pupils of Lewes Academy Miss Flint was unable to tell, unless it was through the agency of some half-dozen day scholars, whose parents, residing in Lewes, preferred that their daughters should return home each night, instead of boarding at the institution which fostered their rising talents. This fresh bit of gossip, which soon passed from lip to lip among the several inmates of the Lewes Academy, was in no degree reliable to the ears of Miss Rebecca Flint, who at this new announcement, felt it her duty to exercise increased vigilance over the actions of her youthful charges. Accordingly all walks outside the Academy grounds were for a time suspended, and the day scholars were strictly forbidden to communicate with their sister students; (who had the misfortune to live—or, rather, exist—among the scenes of their educational labors,) upon any subject foreign to the affairs of said establishment.

But Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt were not content to pass their youthful days amid the seclusion and quiet of a village academy, without straying themselves from time to time, with some stray bits of fun and adventure. A rare opportunity now presented itself to their unsophisticated minds, and both girls, who in thought and act were as one, determined to embrace it, even at the risk of incurring the everlasting displeasure of their teacher. Report said, and truly too, that Sir Charles Winterton was a cold, stern man, who, for some unknown reason, had completely isolated himself from society, of which he had once been the charm and ornament. His peculiar reserve, and great pride on account of his high birth and worldly wealth, were ill-calculated to draw about him many friends, and thus it was that after a year's residence in Lewes, Sir Charles Winterton found himself quite as much of a stranger among the inhabitants of that town, as he had been upon the first day of his arrival.

Minnie Burt and Florence Hastings, like most young girls of their age, were on the *qui vive* to see this nephew of Sir Charles's, whom they doubted not was even better looking than his uncle, who, though full forty years of age, was counted by most people a handsome man. The personal appearance of his collegiate friend, was still another subject, well calculated to exercise their powers of imagination upon. How to get a peep at the strangers, was a question which baffled the united skill of both heads to solve, but which chance decided for them, at an unexpected moment.

Miss Flint was ill; so much so, as to confine her to the house for two or three weeks. This was a source of deep regret to one who was naturally fond of the open air, and who was, for a woman of her "rather uncertain age," the greatest female pedestrian in all Lewes. It had been Miss Flint's practice for several years past, to pay a daily visit to the village post office, for the purpose of extracting therefrom such epistolary documents as might be addressed to the various young ladies under her care and guardianship. It was some time before Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt succeeded in convincing their persevering and self-willed teacher, that she was really too ill to think of walking the distance of a mile and a half to the post office.

Their united attentions and seemingly heartfelt sympathy for her in the hour of affliction, at last touched the cold and stony heart of the preceptress of Lewes Academy, and made her, for the time being, quite subservient to the will of her favorite, though mischief-loving pupils.

The second morning of Miss Flint's sickness, accordingly, found the two young girls wending their way toward the village post office. Besides the novelty of being allowed so great a privilege, each cherished the fond hope of gathering some further information concerning the strangers, whose arrival some three days previous, had been so generally trumpeted throughout Lewes.

To accomplish their purpose they made several errands into the principal stores of the town, where scandal mongers "most do love to congregate," thinking thereby to learn some fresh bit of gossip about the young nephew of Sir Charles Winterton, and his college chum. But in this they were doomed to disappointment, as little or nothing had been learned by the odious villagers, of the intentions and movements of the young travelers, since the hour of their installment as guests of the Winterton mansion.

School-girls are not easily baffled of their intentions, as may be proven by the fact of their extending their walk some considerable distance, in order to pass by the splendid residence of Sir Charles Winterton. Here their eyes were rewarded by the sight of the handsome and aristocratic proprietor of Winterton estate, who was wandering alone amid the flowery labyrinth of his extensive garden.

Heartily vexed at not having caught even a glimpse of two persons whom they most desired to see, Florence Hastings and her friend hurriedly retraced their steps toward the post office, stopping on their way for a moment or two, at the clothing store kept by the indulgent father of the former.

Arriving at their place of destination, Florence Hastings received from the hands of the old postmaster a large package of letters, and was turning away from the spot, when Minnie called her attention to two handsome and elegantly dressed young men, who were coming down the road towards them.

A deep blush rose to the cheeks of both the young girls, as Clarence Winterton and his friend, Ralph Harcourt, in passing, gracefully lifted their hats from their heads, in true London style, as Florence and Minnie believed. With a consciousness of having been absent an unnecessary length of time, the young girls hastened back to the Academy, with

Cinderella speed—only they were not so unfortunate as to have glass slippers on to lose.

With beating hearts and trembling steps, the fair culprits entered the presence-chamber of their sick and ill-tempered teacher. She had grown both nervous and impatient at their long delay; but, to her numerous inquiries in regard to the cause of their long absence, Florence frankly replied, that they had made some two or three calls at stores on their way, one of which was their father's.

This explanation of the matter was, strange to say, readily accepted by Miss Flint, who was, generally speaking, never satisfied with even a reasonable excuse. Minnie and Florence returned to their lessons; but their minds involuntarily wandered from mathematics and Latin, to the handsome youths their eyes had beheld a few hours before, and whom instinct told them at a glance were none other than the nephew of Sir Charles Winterton and his collegiate friend.

The next morning, the delighted girls were again despatched to the office for letters, to the great envy of their sister-pupils, who declared that Miss Flint was certainly guilty of partiality, in allowing the two worst-behaved girls in the school more privileges and greater means for enjoyment than the others.

As if the young men had anticipated the coming of "those bewitching rustic beauties," as they termed them, they had taken their stand just outside the post-office door, where they could catch the first glimpse of their stray hats and muslin frocks, the moment that they turned the corner of the narrow lane, which led into the main street of the village, where nearly all the business of Lewes was transacted.

All things had evidently been arranged by the students, previous to their appearance, for, no sooner had Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt entered the office, and called for the letters directed to Miss Flint's care, than the old postmaster, re-adjusting his spectacles—as the girls thought, to look over the package of freshly received letters—stepped from behind his counter, and, moving towards Florence and Minnie, introduced them to Clarence Winterton and Ralph Harcourt, who, at a sly wink from the old government official, had entered, and now stood, hat in hand, smiling and bowing low before the pleased, but confused, school-girls.

A light conversation sprang up between the young men, (who seemed bent upon making the acquaintance of the two prettiest girls in Lewes,) and their fair companions; and when all four left the office in company, kind-hearted Mr. House, the village postmaster, looked after their slowly retreating figures with a satisfied air, and an expression of countenance, which seemed to say, "There, I've done my part. I hope they'll be mutually pleased with one another, for two handsomer couple never were seen anywhere—not even in London."

Clarence Winterton and his friend Ralph accompanied Florence and Minnie but a short distance—for the latter, though wild and adventurous, had still enough of prudence and caution left in their giddy brains, to know that it would not be safe for their future peace and happiness, if they were seen in company with gentlemen in the vicinity of Lewes Academy. Before parting, however, the deeply interested youths were pretty thoroughly informed of the way in which matters and things stood in that well conducted and over-nice establishment.

For a whole week, the apparently enraptured students and the fair objects of their spontaneous but growing affection, continued to meet daily at the village post office. Clarence Winterton was, to all appearances, warmly in love with Florence Hastings, the youthful and beautiful daughter of the humble tradesman, while equally well satisfied with his choice was Ralph Harcourt, who was ready to swear eternal fidelity to the cause of the little dark-eyed gipsy and orphan girl, Minnie Burt.

At the end of a week's time, Miss Rebecca Flint surprised and terrified her favorite pupils, as the remainder of the scholars had significantly christened Florence and Minnie, by telling them that she had been terribly deceived by those in whom she had heretofore placed the most implicit trust and confidence.

It was all day with them now, as the girls countenances plainly indicated, though both were too much frightened and mortified at their exposure and discovery, to say so. Some lover of mischief had indeed addressed an anonymous note to Miss Flint, who was still unable to leave the house, informing her of the sudden acquaintance which Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt had recently made with the nephew of Sir Charles Winterton and his Oxford friend, and of their daily meetings at the post office.

Of course Miss Flint was very indignant at so complete a violation of a law, which, with many others equally strict, constituted her school code. Any words in self-defence, upon the part of the disobedient and mortified girls, were entirely useless, and so, with crest fallen countenances, Florence Hastings and her sister culprit were sent to their chamber, which was to be their prison-house for two whole days, during which time they were to diet upon bread and water.

It is an old but true saying, that misery loves company, for even the worst confinement becomes endurable, if we are but allowed the society of some fellow-sufferer like ourselves, the rehearsal of whose sorrow seems sensibly to lighten our own.

While Miss Rebecca Flint was secretly congratulating herself upon the severe punishment which was being inflicted upon the heads of two of her oldest and most advanced pupils, Florence and Minnie were busily devising some plan, by means of which they hoped to acquit Clarence Winterton and his friend of their discovered secret, and of their strong desire to continue an intimacy so happily begun. On the morning of their release from solitary confinement, as Miss Flint contemptuously termed their two days' imprisonment in their chamber, Clarence Winterton was surprised at finding beneath his plate at the breakfast table, a dainty note addressed to himself.

Luckily he had overstepped himself, and was consequently breakfasting alone, while Sir Charles and Ralph were enjoying the pure morning air in the garden. Hastily breaking the seal, he ran his eye eagerly over the contents of the hurriedly written document, which, to his heart-felt delight, proved to be from the object of his deep admiration, Miss Florence Hastings.

By bribing one of the female servants at the academy, the persevering girl had at last succeeded in despatching a note to her newly-made friend and lover.

Romance-like, the two young men were willing to scale orchard walls, or any similar barriers, for the sake of obtaining a few moments' conversation with their lady lovers. Such an adventure savored strong-

ly of romance; and, with the ardor and enthusiasm of the impassioned Montague firing their hearts, Ralph Harcourt and Clarence Winterton rushed headlong into a love affair, whose happiness proved to be of but short duration.

Stolen interviews were now the order of the day—or rather night, for increased precaution in so precious an undertaking was necessary upon the part of Minnie and Florence, inasmuch as Miss Flint was almost constantly upon their track, as if anticipating some fresh outbreak from those who had once before betrayed her confidence.

Some two weeks later, the inmates of Lewes Academy were thrown into the greatest consternation, by the discovery that Florence Hastings and Minnie Burt were missing from the institution. Upon examination of the room, the bed was found to be undisturbed, while the greater portion of their wardrobe was also gone.

Amid the various conjectures concerning the remarkable disappearance of Minnie and Florence, Miss Flint seemed strangely impressed with the idea that an elopement had taken place between the young girls before mentioned, and the nephew of Sir Charles Winterton and his friend. Word was immediately dispatched to the father of Florence Hastings, informing him of his daughter's abduction from the academy, as also a note to Sir Charles Winterton, requesting his immediate presence at the institution.

Mr. Hastings, greatly distressed in mind at the loss of his only child, arrived at the academy just as the treacherous female servant was on the point of communicating to her mistress the particulars of the young ladies' flight and intended marriage.

Sir Charles Winterton was in a furious passion when he learned what a piece of folly his favorite and dependent nephew had been guilty of. His pride suffered most in the matter, and he swore that he would disinherit Clarence, and cut him off at his death without a shilling.

While the sensitive and aristocratic nobleman raved over his nephew's rashness and unpardonable error, Miss Flint and William Hastings were making active preparations for the pursuit and capture of the deserters.

A carriage with post-horses, was soon in readiness, and the exciting trio, entering it, were soon on the road to Southampton, the proposed place of destination of the infatuated lovers. After a tedious ride of several hours, accomplished partly by rail and partly by coach-riding, our little party drew up before the principal inn in Southampton. One glance at the house-register satisfied Sir Charles, who entered the parlor, where a justice of the peace was just on the point of commencing the marriage ceremony for the parties assembled, and, crying out in a loud voice, "I forbid the bans!" soon put an end to all further business upon the part of the astonished magistrate of peace, who seemed completely overcome with amazement. The words—"My father!" and "Miss Flint!" simultaneously burst from the lips of the affrighted girls, as, covering their faces with their white aprons, they clung for protection to the skirts of their lovers coats, who stood speechless as mummies before their captors.

Retreat was now impossible, and the youthful deserters were at once conveyed back to Lewes, the scene of their love and shame.

Three years have passed since the events just related took place. Time has wrought many changes both in city and town, during the rapid flight of thirty-six short months.

Lewes Academy has passed into other hands, and Miss Flint and her niece Minnie now make their home with Florence Hastings, who, since the death of her father, and a bachelor uncle in the East Indies, has become sole heiress to a large property. Past follies and past errors have long been forgiven, if not forgotten by Miss Flint, whom Florence Hastings now regards almost in the light of a mother. Minnie she looks upon as a dear, adopted sister, whose comfort and happiness is a thing as much to be regarded as her own.

Sir Charles Winterton still "pursues the even tenor of his way," living in his usual retired way among the natural and artificial beauties of his country home. Clarence Winterton had been sent to Germany to pursue his studies, after asking forgiveness of his proud uncle for the rash offence which he had so foolishly committed, and had doubtless long since forgotten his silly flirtation and elopement with an humble tradesman's daughter.

Both Minnie and Florence had read of the marriage of Ralph Harcourt, to a wealthy and distinguished English lady, in one of the London papers, some two years after his departure from Lewes. But of his friend Clarence's movements, nothing definite was known, as Florence Hastings, even in her days of prosperity, was too proud to court the favor and society of a man who would have scorned and failed to recognize the daughter of William Hastings, a few years before, as the chosen wife of his poor and dependent nephew. Thus three years rolled quietly by in Lewes.

At the end of that time, a happy party of three, consisting of Miss Flint, and her two beloved pupils, chanced to be taking a ride about Lewes, one fine afternoon in June. Of a sudden, the span of horses which Florence was herself driving, took fright at some dark object which lay by the roadside, and, becoming unmanageable, broke loose from their carriage, after first tipping out its occupants.

Miss Flint and her niece escaped unharmed, but Florence, who had been seated in front, had received a severe cut upon the side of her head, and was conveyed, faint and senseless into the mansion-house of Sir Charles Winterton, which chanced luckily to be near at hand. The kindness and hospitality of the haughty proprietor of Winterton estate was most thankfully received by the other ladies, as it was deemed unavoidable by the surgeon who had been called to dress the wound, to remove the patient to her home until the next day.

Amid the general bustle and confusion at Winterton house, the arrival of a stranger was announced. A quick step was heard in the hall, and the next moment Clarence Winterton was clasped in the embrace of his proud, but loving uncle, in the old drawing room. Casting a glance about him, the gaze of Clarence fell upon the pale face that lay enshrined in the crimson pillows of the sofa.

"That face!" cried Clarence Winterton, turning deadly white, and clutching at a neighboring chair for support; "if I mistake not, 'tis that of Florence Hastings!"

At mention of her own name, the young girl suddenly roused herself from the lethargy into which she had fallen, and looking wildly around her, inquired "from whence came that familiar voice; but Sir Charles Winterton, by a quick movement, had

seized his amazed nephew by the arm; and led him forth into the open air, on the plea of two much excitement being dangerous to the injured girl, in her weak state.

The following morning, upon presenting himself at the breakfast-table, Clarence inquired of his uncle how Miss Hastings was. But, to his astonishment, he replied that his guest had been conveyed to her home by special request, soon after day-break. With a degree of nervousness quite unusual for so cool and indifferent a man as Sir Charles to exhibit, the latter speedily changed the subject of conversation, and soon after excused himself from the breakfast-table, leaving his nephew to his own varied reflections.

For weeks Florence Hastings raved in all the delirium of a brain fever. Day after day Sir Charles Winterton was a constant attendant at the bedside of one whose beauty and grace of manner had won his heart, from the hour which had brought her, faint and injured, to his gate, for shelter and protection. Fruits and flowers were the daily offering of the once stern and proud man, to the fair invalid. Miss Flint and Minnie looked on in silence, at such strange proceedings upon the part of Sir Charles Winterton, yet could not help congratulating themselves upon the victory which Florence Hastings had almost unconsciously gained over the heart of the haughty and aristocratic Englishman.

In the first hours of her convalescence, Florence Hastings had asked for Clarence, and wondered that he had not even so much as called to inquire after the health of his old friend. Sir Charles, with great cunning, lightly laughed off the matter, with some slight excuse, which had the desired effect of rousing the young girl's pride of heart, and rendering her more subservient to his will.

Soon after, Sir Charles Winterton proposed to Florence Hastings, and was by her accepted. A morning or two later, Clarence Winterton called upon the now nearly recovered girl. His reception was at first a cold one, but during their long conversation, however, several mistakes were explained, and matters at last arranged to the entire satisfaction of both parties. Clarence was indeed true to his early love, but through the intrigue and jealousy of his proud uncle, had been made to believe that Florence no longer remembered or cared for him.

My readers may imagine the scene which ensued, when Clarence and Florence, some two hours later, sought the presence of Sir Charles Winterton, to relate to him the story of their deep love. This unexpected denouement was a terrible shock to the heart of Sir Charles, who had been taught his first lesson of love by a humble tradesman's daughter. From this blow he soon recovered, and with noble generosity and self-denial, gave his full consent and blessing to the happy pair on the occasion of their union. They are now living prosperously in London.

Minnie Burt is now Mrs. Charles Winterton, and still resides in Lewes. Miss Flint spends her summers with her niece, and her winters in London, with Florence.

THE APPOINTMENT.

THE WAVE WILL HEAVE AS NOW BENEATH THE STAR-BRIGHT SUMMER SKY,
THE SUNSET SHALL HAVE SPENT ITS GLOW, AND TWILIGHT'S SHADE PASSED BY.
When of the hundred years to come shall close the latest day,
And ten o'clock at night arrive, and the tenth day of May,
The hours the queen of Love that led a goodness to her home
Upward through each progressive step from primal ocean's foam,
Must yet their floral wreaths entwino and speed their mystic flight,
Till this day nineteen fifty-eight, and the tenth hour at night.
Then welcomed to the towers that glow
Above thy gulf, dim Mexico;
And welcomed to the halls and bowers,
That rise beneath those glowing towers—
How meet the five the pledged below
To meet a hundred years ago!
How? say ye? Free as springs that leave the mountain's hoary brow,
And o'er his rugged sides rush down in sparkling streamlets now!
Obscurity is on our sight, but at the spirit's birth
How joyous bound we into light to join the loved of earth!
The river—the eldorado, may often meet; but in those stately halls
Of glittering minarets, and domes, and gorgeous capitals,
Above thy fields, oh, dark, blue sea, where dwelt the dusky Cariboo—
They meet not till another age its mysteries unfold,
And till the star-decked horologe a hundred years hath told.
Then meet they—mark the nymph, oh, friends!
As from afar her way she wends:
No hour so sweet, so loved, so sought,
The floral bands have ever brought;
No tryst so longed for, as those halls
Mid palaces of sphynx walls,
To us by spirit hand foretold,
Of mountain brows and mouth of gold!
Triumphs of art, which breathed of yore from niche or pedestal,
Where old Palenque's ruins tower, or smiles fair Cozumel,
Or Guasconcelos rolls his side through tropic brues and bowers,
With dark green arches formed above of vines and woven flowers—
They, nor the architectural forms strewn o'er the endless plain,
Where priestly pomp and kingly power alike have ceased to reign,
Are polished—though their places here they know no more forever—
Transfigured in another sphere, they stand to perish never,
And far above your coral depths—oh, over-murmuring sea,
In fairer lands and brighter skies, they shine eternally!
And there—the cycle closed, shall meet
The river in harmony complete,
But who this river? We're two and three—
The two from former forms set free—
Buoyant of youth the eternal years,
Are with the free of spirit spheres,
The mouth-piece of their mystic spheres—
One of the three remaining is,
Through whom to multitudes are given
Harmonious truths dove-winged from heaven;
And one myself—the writer I
Of this unpolished melody:
And one is she—from youthful life
My own dark-haired and blue-eyed wife.

NAMES.

PRINCES IN THOUGHT'S DOMAIN.

Home was a beggar; Pippa turned a mill; Terence was a slave; Bathus died in jail; Paul Borgese had fourteen trades, yet starved with them all; Tasso was often distressed for a few shillings; Camoens, the author of the "Lusiad," ended his days in an almshouse; and Vaugelas left his body to the surgeons to pay his debts. In England, Bacon lived a life of meanness and distress; Sir Walter Raleigh died on the scaffold; Spencer died in want; Milton sold his copyright of "Paradise Lost" for fifteen pounds, and died in obscurity; Otway died of hunger; Lee died in the streets; Dryden lived in poverty and distress; Steele was always in war with bailiffs; Richard Savage died in prison at Bristol, for a debt of eight pounds; Butler lived in penury; and died poor; Chatterton, the child of genius and misfortune, destroyed himself.

THE ECCENTRIC PAINTER.

Translated for the Banner of Light.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF GIASPARO GOZZI.

[The name of Giaspardo Gozzi is celebrated in the annals of Italian literature of the past century. He was born in Venice in 1718, and died there in 1780. The most noteworthy work of this valued author is the "Venetian Spectator," a periodical sheet published twice a week in Venice. This work is in imitation of Addison's Spectator; and the beauty of the style, and the descriptions of customs and characters, render it very valuable. The same merits characterize all his works.]

There was once a painter, I do not now remember in what country, who in eccentricity excelled all his peers; and although in his art he was a very deserving and skillful man, he was always so fickle minded that he would have tried the patience of Job himself. He was, above all other things, so skillful in painting portraits, that his works looked like nature itself; and if his pencil could have caused them to speak, nothing else would have been wanting to make living things of his pictures. He might have had the chief patronage of the city; but he was so completely crackbrained, that few were willing to fall into his hands—for, letting alone the fact that to-day he would willingly paint, and then for a fortnight would not even hear it spoken of, the worst of it was, that he desired every one who sat to him to regulate the expression of his face according to his particular humor, so that if to-day he was cheerful, he made his sitter put a smile upon his lips; and to-morrow, if his state of feelings was changed, and he was vexed at any matter, he expunged all he had done, and commenced anew after having half finished the picture. He never got through a work without changing it many times in the course of a few days, to suit his own feelings; so that one could scarcely tell how he could carry it to such perfection as he did. To this must be added the vexation of quarrelling with him, because one day he would give you the most agreeable reception in the world, and the next he would come near biting you, or throwing his paints and brushes in your face, and acting like an enraged dog.

He became at last so celebrated, as well for his skill as for his eccentricity, that he was universally known; and being the subject of conversation one day, in a group of persons, there happened to be among them one Pippo, a rather vulgar man, but of an agreeable temper, and a quick and curious inventor of jokes and bon mots, and who was every-where received and sought after. Pippo having listened to the new stories about the worthy painter, said:

"It strikes me, gentlemen, that I can give all who have been troubled with his humors a revenge, if some among you will dress me up so that I may appear for a few hours like some great lord?"

"Yes, yes," said every one; and, in short, they promised, whenever he wished, that they would dress him up, so that he should appear nothing less than a king; whereupon, as if he had just arrived in the city, he sent one of his friends, whom he had instructed how to proceed, to the painter, to tell him how wonderfully noble and rich he was, and to promise him nobody knows how many hundred crowns if he would paint his portrait.

The painter pricked up his ears at the idea, of so many crowns; and besides, the go-between gave him no small hopes of fine presents, affirming that the stranger had never been able to find in any part of Europe any one who could paint his portrait; and that having heard of his great fame, he had come post-haste over many seas and across great extents of country, in order to have a picture from his hand. The roughest and oddest of men, at the sound of money, and having their vanity flattered, are wonderfully tickled, and become very good humored. He consented; and at the appointed time, Pippo went to the painter's house, clothed like a duke, and accompanied by a masquerade of servants.

The painter gave him a most polite reception. Pippo was very gracious to him, complimented him on his great fame, took his seat, and drawing out a gold watch, made it strike, to indicate, as he said, the hour at which the picture was commenced; and in the movements of his fingers he showed that they were ornamented with splendid rings. The painter reckoned up the crowns in his mind, and imagined that he already had them in his hands, since the sitter appeared to be a very easy subject to paint. Pippo had a long visage, with certain features, or rather prominences, so bold, that any man could have drawn them with a charcoal; a large mouth, thick lips, a rather purplish complexion, than one of vermillion, great blue eyes, and a nose long, flattened towards the eyebrows, and pointed towards the mouth.

But the business was not so easy to do as the painter had reckoned. Pippo had a kind of natural power, cultivated by him in order to excite laughter, by which, whenever he wished, he could, with a slight touch of his hand, turn that nose of his now to the right and now to the left, so that that point of it would remain in either position he desired, just as if that had been its natural place. Having placed it one side when he sat down, and having taken the position desired by the painter, the latter commenced his design; he looked at the face, and then at the canvas, began the drawing, and had carried his first sketch almost to the end. It seemed to Pippo that it was time for him to operate; so, giving his nose a touch silly with two fingers, he turned it in the opposite direction, just as one would do with a weathercock on the top of a lantern. The painter raised his eyes to the face, and, finding a strange look, said within himself: "Have I made a blunder? What have I been doing?" He stopped a moment, rubbed his eyes, and was silent; but, seeing the nose still turned the other way, and believing that the error was his own, said nothing, and corrected the design. Pippo sat in that way for two hours, and the portrait was already far advanced, and he had also got up many times to look at it; and then, when he thought the right time had come, he touched the nose again, and turned it back, so that it looked straight and plumb. The painter gazed, and was stupefied; it seemed as if he was losing his wits. However, the crown had such an influence upon his mind, that he kept his temper, and the second time altered the portrait; but finally losing all patience, and no longer able to bear the sight of a nose that would not stay in its place, he threw down his brushes and the picture, exclaiming:—

"May all such variable noses go to the devil to be painted."

"And," replied Pippo, "may all those painters who are never twice in the same humor, have no other kind of noses to paint;" and then each one went about his business—the one with his eccentricities, and the other with his weathercock nose; the one to cure, and the other to laugh at the joke; he had played.

and stated that it was then in the mail, on its way, and would be received that evening in the post-office, all of which proved true.

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SEASONS, PORTLAND.—“Lull! Month, in his tirade against Spiritualism, reminds me of one of Byron's characters, who—
—say with his own eyes the moon was round,
—was also certain that the world was square.
Because he journeyed fifty miles, and found
No sign that it was circular anywhere!”

The Public Press.

SPIRIT INTERCOURSE.

[The following extracts from a lecture by Mrs. Julia H. Benson, of Utica, has been kindly sent to us for publication.]

Most ancient history reveals the fact that angels come to the inhabitants of this world on errands of love and mercy. The Bible, we all know, is filled with accounts of intercourse between men and angels. Traditions existing in the Roman Catholic Church—also traditions of Indians who received visions of their "beautiful spirit-land, with crystal streams meandering among the hills and leaping o'er the crimson onyx stone; towering forests filled with warriors brave, and orators sublime in their eloquence; beautiful beasts, and birds with celestial voices singing amid bowers of love,—these with more modern facts, present a glimpse of that chain whose links of spiritual influences connects past generations to the present, and elevate all in the great scale of progression.

During the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in the sixteenth century, is given a striking instance of spiritual influence. The massacre lasted in Paris eight days and nights, without any apparent diminution of fury. Charles the Ninth, who was then king of France, commanded the same scene to be renewed in every town in the kingdom. This done, Protestantism was thought subdued; but the crime produced neither peace nor advantage. Soon the civil war was renewed with greater force than ever. More abhorrence of the measure caused many Catholics to turn Protestants. Then, continues history, "Charles himself seemed stricken with avenging fate. As the accounts of the slaughter of old men, women and children were successively brought to him, he drew aside his first surgeon, to whom he was much attached, and said to him, 'Ambrose, I know not what has come over me these two or three days. I see everything as if I had a fever. Every moment, as well waking as sleeping, the hideous and bloody faces of the killed appear before me. I wish the weak and innocent had not been included.' From that time a fever preyed upon him, and eighteen months later he died; but not until he had granted peace to the Huguenots."

This circumstance was evidently produced by the influence of the murdered ones, and accompanying angels; not in revenge, but to awaken the king to a realizing sense of his crime, to prevent further torture and butchery, and to transfer him to a world where he could no longer use his power to paralyze and deprave humanity, but where powerful influences would overcome his malice, and elevate him to a plane where he could receive truth, and understand the proper means of salvation.

At a still later period, the manifestations in the house of John Wesley, were an evidence that spirits were hovering about him, permeating his soul with truth divine, which shone like the sun upon a darkened world, to aid in spiritual development. Also, the circumstance related in the Biography of John Murray, is an instance of spirit impression. Potter built a church for some unknown preacher, whom he knew, from impression, would be sent him. Murray came to his house, a stranger, to buy fish, when Potter declared him to be his preacher, saying also he could not leave until he had preached the true gospel, and although he insisted upon going at a certain time, he told him it would storm, and he could not go, and so it proved. Now, from whence came these impressions, but from ministering angels, who were laboring to erase the dreadful picture of future and eternal misery, which hung upon the walls of nearly every soul within the form? Murray and his followers did, and are still doing much, and Spiritualists more, to wipe away the horrid scene of an Omnipotent, angry Being, high on his great white throne, surrounded by a chosen few, who have nothing to do but sing praises to his name eternally; a wide, deep gulf intervening, beneath which is the dreadful hell we have often heard described as paved with infant skulls, o'er which the tide of burning brimstone never ceases to roll, while the souls of the condemned are in the midst of the boiling waves, some clinging perchance to rocky walls of sin, calling ever, ever for help; the devil abroad tempting and securing more souls, while his angels plunge them into the dreadful ocean as they pass from earth; and, towering on his throne, the Great Revengful sits, laughing at their calamities, possessing all power to save.

To what nobler work could angels aspire, than to erase such a picture, and produce a blank upon which to paint a glowing scene that will gladden the souls of millions, inspiring them with a longing to press onward, never fearing, but ever relying upon an Omnipotent Being of Love?—a living picture of man's true life, in time and eternity, portraying those golden steps which the lowest of our species commence to ascend, each plane possessing new beauties and excellences adapted to the wants of those who are there, led onward by loving seraphs to places of unspeakable beauty and grandeur, where angels dwell, advancing still upward upon those beautiful steps, thronged with the celestial host, never stopping, never reaching the summit, and ever approaching nearer to perfect knowledge and happiness, and to the God of infinite love, wisdom and power.

Numerous are the facts of past ages evincing the influence of unseen spirits. No true poet ever wrote, who did not confess a high and holy inspiration poured into his soul from an influence far above the material world. What are poets' muses? Mythology informs us they were the daughters of Mnemosyne—the goddess of Memory—who divided among themselves the treasure of wisdom their mother alone possessed. Real inspiration cannot originate from an imaginary cause; but the ancients, being ignorant of the true cause, gave them this embodiment, placing them among their deities, and an ancient bard thus sings in their praise:—

"They pour on the lips of man whom they favor, the dew of soft persuasion; they bestow upon him wisdom, that he may be a judge and umpire among his people, and give him renown among nations; and the poet who wanders on the mountain top, and in the lowly dale, is inspired by them with divine strains, which dispel sorrow and grief from the breast of every mortal."

Who will deny in this enlightened age that this is not the mission of angels? Methinks no poet will, who has felt their power.

It was also the idea of the ancients, that the muses inhabited the heavenly mansions; it is evident that impressions were correct, and had they possessed the knowledge of heaven, its inhabitants, and their acquaintance with which this age is blessed, they would have only had to supply the word angel for muse; for the expenditure of all power, prove them not beings of

Imagination, for their influences are realities, and how could an effect exist without a cause?

Did we possess a clear spiritual sight we could discover that from the commencement of human history, angels have been aiding in the progress of the world, guiding the pen of the poet, who so gently captivates the souls of myriads, moulding them in love, purity, and refinement, impressing the orator with eloquence divine, upon which, perchance, hung a nation's destiny, giving strength to the philanthropist, and inspiring all true reformers with a love and capacity to promote the world's advancement. The more perfect its development the nearer will it approximate the plane of Heaven; consequently, as a whole, it is more susceptible to spiritual impressions, and possesses the power to communicate with disembodied spirits to a greater extent than ever before. True, it has had its prophets, its poets, and its Christ and his followers, who were in the immediate circle of his spirituality. Still, not until the present, has the mass received impressions and communications, seen disembodied spirits, and produced a multiplicity of physicians to bless and restore the suffering everywhere. We thank God the world has arrived at this exalted state of development, and may we, his instruments, improve our powers to hasten this unfoldment.

The darkness which so recently filled the house of death, is now dispelled by light from above; the mourner, no longer reaches for the phantom, faith, which cannot satisfy the longing soul, for the impression which pervades all churches, that ministering angels hover about us, is now verified by their manifestations, their appearances, and the truths they reveal to us of man and the material world, of God and the Universe. The valley of death is radiant with beauty. The Spiritualist sees her darling infant pass into the arms of angel-mothers, and knows her love will attract it to her bosom still, where she will instill her own wisdom of this mundane sphere into its budding spirit, and this sweet consciousness stimulates her to action, and elevates her soul, engendering purest love and happiness.

A daughter, weeping for the waywardness of earlier years, despairing that she did not hear that fond mother say, "I forgive you all," before her lips ceased to move, receives a mother's message, "Weep not, my child, I forgive you all at the time. Be thankful for the experience you have acquired and profit thereby; for 'tis requisite in the unfoldment of your better and higher nature, and for the fulfillment of your duty to your own offspring." Such is the depth of a true mother's affection which never ceases to flow into the spirits of her children. Would that orphans could always realize they are not motherless, for her love will not permit her to be severed from them, but she is ever near, endeavoring to impress them with pure thoughts and sentiments.

Oh, what bliss to the lone-hearted husband, to see his beloved in his dreams, feel her hand upon his forehead, drink once more the dew of affection from her lips and hear again her musical whispers, as she says, "Be not sorrowful, dearest, I am still there, and with you ever. Soon I will lead you to our home I am adorning amid the glories of the spirit-world; be patient, for we have much to accomplish, there and here, before the re-marrying of our spirits, sanctioned by God and angels." What consolation is this to the bereaved companion, and for what noble purposes will he labor the remainder of his days.

A brother, who saw the beauty of his sister's form fade away, her spirit shining radiantly as she communed with the companions of her final home, meanders with her by the brook and pond, gathering the lily, analyzing its parts, and inhaling its essence of divine love—communes again with her spirit, enjoys with her again the crimson west and purple east, the flower and the mountain, the music of birds and waterfalls, seeing, feeling God everywhere, and penetrates, with her aid, the depths of nature and God's vastness. If he obeys the intuitions of his spirit, ever giving attention to the voice of his spirit, his soul is continually exalted, and his life one of untiring zeal and action, giving his energies and his possessions to the relief and elevation of humanity.

Have we not, each of us, a parent, child, sister, companion, or some friend, among the pure and blest of heaven, who watch over our spirits, impressing us with lofty aspirations, and love and charity for all of our Father's children? Are we not prone to subdue the noble impulses of our souls for selfish aims? Ah, could we count the imperishable treasures we might acquire, and estimate the lasting joy they would yield, with the accuracy we do our perishable possessions, methinks we would strive more to unburden the spirit of this material curtain, which so shuts out the light and warmth of divine love, that we might discover our place in relation to the human family; the object of the Creator in placing us here, and the joys that await us in time and eternity, should we prove good and faithful servants in the advancement of His purposes. We must disrobe our spirits of the dark and heavy draperies of selfishness, ignorance, and sin, ere the faces of our angel friends can shine fully in our own, filling our souls with light and happiness. If we occupy a room of filth, with dingy windows, or suppose we are in one of luxury, darkened by a display of heavy curtains, in either, the light of the sun is dimly seen, the beautiful landscape shut out from our vision, and the strength we derive from the sun and the free air is wasted, and we become feeble and useless, possessing a morbid appreciation of the objects and amusements of the room. So, also, our bodies—the tenements our spirits inhabit, must be pure from foul stimulants, and free from luxurious food, or the inner sun cannot give light and strength to our spirits; we cannot look upon Nature, and clearly discover spiritual beauty, nor can the radiance of angel faces beam in upon our spirits; consequently we must be comparatively gloomy, unable to fulfill our mission, and relishing most the gratification of a material nature. There are natural laws governing all things, from the anatomical structure of the simplest conifer, to the wonderful mechanism of the universe; if we do not obey those which govern us, discord and unhappiness must ensue. Let us bless God that we are permitted to learn his ways from wise angels, who are free from the contaminating influences of the mundane sphere. If we heed their teachings, forsaking that which produces disharmony, praying ever for more light and purity, for the influence of elevated spirits, and for a union with those in the form, who are likewise striving for the higher life—our prayer will be answered. We cannot pray too earnestly, nor labor with too much determination, and we will not only be happier here, but what a wealth we will have in our possession, and multiply when we reach our acquired, to possess and multiply when we reach our final home. We will then have means to fulfill our

mission there, and penetration and refinement to fathom the depths of the Universe, and perceive the glories of a still more exalted life where naught but spirit dwells, and drink the very essence of love and science, never ceasing in our search for more beauty, more grandeur and more knowledge of the infinite, but never attaining the ultimate of perfection, God the Father and mother of all, within whom all things exist.

THE AGE WE LIVE IN.

We live in an age when it has become imperative upon every independent and honest man to declare fearlessly and boldly his sentiments upon every question involving the freedom and progression of humanity. Mankind have too long been held in leading strings—too long thought by proxy; it is time to think for ourselves; no longer admire the playthings of our mental babyhood, but exert the energy and independence which become our manhood and womanhood. Among the obstructions to the mental elevation of the race, I consider none more potent than the following, of which I wish briefly to speak. First, the Bible as a finality, and the moral guide and instructor for past, present and coming generations. Second, belief in the Vicarious Atonement. I know no reason why we should receive the Bible as a finality, or an infallible guide, more than many other books. The clergy inform us that it is inspiringly inspired; but if the testimony of the most learned Christian writers, together with the ablest historians, are to be credited, such is not the fact. So far from this being the case, the early history of the Bible is shrouded in almost impenetrable darkness. It was entirely unknown to any of the human races except the small nation of the Jews, until so late a date as the year 287, B. C. Neither Hesiod, Homer, Herodotus, nor any of the immortal minds of antiquity, make any allusion to it. The great Phœnician historian, Sanchoniatho, makes no reference to the Bible, or even to the Jews as a nation. The celebrated Wendenbach, in his reply to Josephus, (Opuscula, volume second, page 415,) shows that the Jews only came into notice in Greece, after the time of Alexander the Great. He establishes the important fact, so tenaciously concealed by Christians, that the Jews were unknown to the world as a nation until they were subjected by the Romans. Professor Cooper observes, "No authentic historian of ancient times, Josephus excepted, has ever mentioned the Jews as an independent nation."

But who were these Jews so highly favored?—the only nation entrusted with the holy word? Were they among the scientific and learned nations of those times? On the contrary, they were held in sovereign contempt by every nation acquainted with them. Apollonius says of them, they were the most trifling of all the barbarians, and they were the only people who had never found out anything useful for life. Dr. Burnet in his Archæological Philosophy, says—"they were of a sluggish nature, and bereft of humanity. A vile company of men—an assembly of slaves, who understood no art but that of making brick." Josephus admits his countrymen were so illiterate as never to have written anything, or to have held intercourse with their learned neighbors. No people of antiquity were more ignorant than the Jews. While the Chaldeans, Arabians, Egyptians, Grecians and Romans produced their men of science and erudition, the Jews added nothing to the glorious pyramid of human knowledge. Yet are we called upon to believe, even in this nineteenth century, that an all-wise Being, and all-good, selected them as his chosen people, and especially entrusted them with his divine word.

But history further informs us the Jews themselves, and their priests, were ignorant of this book for many centuries subsequent to the time when it is supposed to have been written. The first time any mention is made of any book answering to the Old Testament, was in the year 623, B. C.; the story is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the second book of Chronicles; and the whole story rests upon the bare assertion of the Jewish priest, Hilkiah. It is further evident that there was but the one copy at that time in possession of the whole Jewish nation, and they were indebted for this one copy to this priest, who offered no authority, save his own word.

Professor Cooper, in his admirable letter on the Pentateuch, observes, when referring to the account of Hilkiah finding this book: "We are not informed," says he, "where he found it, and no account whatever is given. It is a fact of some importance, and one with which the people are generally unacquainted, that the Bible is not a book of great antiquity; neither is it the first, or the best, that was ever written; there were other composers who flourished before Ezra, the real author of the Old Testament; he lived only four hundred years before Christ, while Orpheus flourished nine hundred years before Christ; Hesiod and Homer, eight hundred; Zoroaster and Belus, seven hundred; Lycurgus, Numa, Thales, Pittacus and Bias, six hundred; Pythagoras, Æsop, Solon, and many of the Grecian philosophers, three hundred—not mentioning the ancient books of the Chaldeans, Arabians, Hindus and Chinese. It becomes every lover of truth to carefully examine history—to examine into the character of the men who collected and drew up the Jewish writings. We must know whether they were inspired or not."

What says the eminent Christian writer, Le Clerc, upon this vital point. In his disquisition upon inspiration, he remarks: "It may be said that the books in the Jewish Canon ought to be acknowledged as divinely inspired, rather than the Apocrypha that never was in it. He says that no clear reason is brought to convince us that those who made the catalogue of their books were infallible, or had any inspiration whereby to distinguish inspired books from those which were not inspired." Such is the testimony of a writer, admired by all Christians, showing that we have only the testimony of mere fallible men, and ignorant and cunning priests, for the genuineness of the Old Testament.

It is conceded by the most learned Christian authors, Du Pin, (author of a complete history of the Books of the Old Testament,) St. Eucherius, etc., that we have but a small part of the original manuscripts, and the few we possess were collected by the priest Ezra. Up to the year 287 B. C., this Book of Life had been confined to the Jews alone, when it was translated into Greek by order of the Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philadelphus, and from this most of our present copies are taken; and Archbishop Usher, a man of vast Biblical knowledge, maintains that the Septuagint is a spurious copy; that the genuine one, translated by the seventy-two men, by direction of the above-mentioned king, was lost at the burning of the Alexandrian Library. Therefore, calculating our salvation from the amount of God's word, now in our possession, we should be one-quarter saved, and three-quarters damned. Let us read the Bible

with an honest desire to glean from, and benefit by, all the truth it contains, but not regard it as a finality.

Would it not be more modest at least, to say these are parts of the great system of truth; but the infinity of his wisdom, who can tell? I will now briefly state some objections against the popular belief in atonement through a vicarious sacrifice. This belief is founded upon the assumption, that the Author of mankind, on account of transgression, became offended, and demands satisfaction from the offending party; but, as the offending party had no means of satisfying the demand, the benevolence of God was aroused to act, and by incarnating himself in the form of man, accepted the curse of a violated law, received the chastisement demanded, and thus propitiated himself by an acceptance of the substitute for the sake of man. This system only makes it possible for man to avail himself of this means of deliverance, to become reconciled to the supposed offended party. Spiritual science objects to this, which is but an external system, for the following reasons: First, because God is not, nor never can be, offended with man; second, because man is not guilty, as this system supposes; third, because it is naturally, spiritually, and philosophically impossible for an innocent person to assume the guilt of another, and justly bear the penalty of the offender; fourth, because justice could never demand it, nor mercy grant it. Love can never operate against eternal principles; fifth, because the demands of justice could never be met, according to the system. Justice seeks only to adjust all things—in other words, justice is a principle of the Divine government, and can never relinquish its claims upon anything until its demands are fulfilled; sixth, according to the Orthodox system, God only satisfies himself in the atonement offered; it is an incarnation of Deity offering a gift to himself; seventh, because it offers a reward to wrong, and is immoral in its tendency; eighth, it makes special legislation a part of the divine government, whose rules of operation are without change; ninth, because this system is against works, causing man to look to means and influences outside of himself, as incentives to benevolent actions, disregarding the operations of his own spirit; tenth, it is opposed to the normal development of his spiritual nature. No man who believes in true spiritual philosophy, can receive the Orthodox view of salvation. Still, I recognize the birth of a Saviour and redeemer into the heart of universal humanity, wherein Deity is incarnated, dwelling in the interior of man's soul, and continually imparting love and wisdom to the internal, or spiritual man. Thus, I believe each man and woman is born with his or her Saviour within them; for man is a universe in epitome—he contains in his soul an incarnated Deity, which must, and will, unfold in harmony, order, and beauty. The germ of immortal unfolding resides within the spirit, and, when touched with the celestial rays of divine love, it shows the expanding and elevating powers of the soul, its latent beauties are called forth, which impel it onward towards its original source of an eternal life. While I can see no necessity for the shedding of innocent blood to placate the supposed anger of an offended Deity, I can see the vital principles of divine love, with their redeeming and saving influences, raising the soul's lofty aspirations to those serene heights of supernal blessedness, and becoming more and more assimilated to its divine archetype.

Dr. E. L. Lyon.

DEATH.

Death in all ages has been a terror to mankind. The pains and tortures supposed to be endured, and the dread of that endless punishment of which theologians teach, consequent on bad deeds on earth, are well calculated to fill the mind with awe and anguish. It is also written and taught that sin entered the world, and death by sin. This is an error; for death or change existed in the commencement, and operated on all organizations—such as sea plants, fishes, land plants, reptiles, birds, and mammals,—long before the introduction of the human form into existence.

The event of death in man's life, is only such an event as takes place in all organizations; and is only a change of existence. The body being matter, must of necessity change as all other matter—being subject to the same laws. Wise and scientific men will tell you that this change, death, or transition, is imprudent on it by laws, or is fraught with, or is inherent in all substances; as plainly visible in the bursting of a bud into a flower, as it is in the vast pavilion of all life. Every transition of form is a death to the old, and a birth to the new.

The world is constantly changing in all its forms—old ones are going out of existence, and new ones coming in—and this great "Zan" is, by turns, evacuated and replenished by troops of succeeding forms and generations. The bursting of a rose bud into a flower—the dewdrop absorbed by the sun—the worm becoming a butterfly—the frog at first a water, and afterwards a land animal—all these are but instances of the vast number of changes, or deaths, going on in the vast creation.

Everything is being born again. The natural process of dying is really nothing more than passing into a pleasant and dreamless slumber, represented by night in the natural world. The worn spirit toils during his day of life, and seeks repose in the night, which we liken to death or change of condition—night is only the index of another day. The spasms and contortions of the body sometimes witnessed, are not indicative of pain and distress, but only efforts of the whole frame to retain its animating soul. Two such friends as these have been in earth-life, cannot separate without some trial. But these movements of the spirit, are indexes of unutterable delight; for, when the body gives forth its last possession, we see expressed a smile on the countenance, an evidence of the brightness and splendor pervading the spirit's home. Death or change, then, is but passing through an open door to a more perfect existence.

Do you fear to die? Why, you commence dying when you have had all your powers and faculties fully developed. Death is imperceptible, though it is constantly taking place when your powers of mind become impaired—when your vigor begins to fail—when strength begins to depart—then are you dying.

J. COVER.

Life is fleeting as a shadow—

Make your mark.

Marks of some kind must be made—

Make your mark.

Make it while the arm is strong.

In the golden hour of youth;

Never, never make it wrong!

Make it with the stamp of Truth—

Make your mark!

PROPHECY.

It follows, as a matter of course, that the Divine Being, who knows what train of events will happen at any future time, however distant, may declare the fact that they will happen at any time anterior to their occurrence. This declaration is prophecy, or prediction, and may be made by the agency of men divinely inspired for this purpose, or in any other way that it may please the Deity to adopt. These prophecies, according to the Bible, have been made at different periods of the world, for the purpose of furnishing additional attestation to the truth of some revelation, which was to be accompanied by their fulfillment; or, as affording evidence of the general and constant superintendence of Divine Providence over the universe, and that nothing can happen without the Divine presence.

The prophecies related in the Bible, must, from their very nature, be either unknown to the persons who are to assist by their agency in their fulfillment—or, if known to them, must be clothed in such language as to leave them entirely ignorant how they are to be fulfilled, and that they themselves are to be the instruments in their fulfillment. It follows, then, that it must be a matter of impossibility for any one to discover, beforehand, how they are to be fulfilled, and that the fulfillment itself can be the only way of explaining the prophecy. The accuracy of these remarks will appear from the following considerations.

The fulfillment of the prophecies contained in the Bible, is effected by the moral actions of men, no less than any other transactions in which they may be engaged—by actions for which they are held accountable, and made the subjects of reward or punishment. Now if the manner in which prophecies were to be fulfilled, was to be known previously by those who were to take a part in their fulfillment, it would destroy altogether their free agency in regard to them, and, of course, their accountability; for they would either consider themselves as under a Divine injunction from the prophecies themselves, to pursue that course which would effect their fulfillment; and so, instead of incurring any guilt from their conduct, would, in fact, be serving God and executing his commands—or else they would omit altogether to take those steps which the fulfillment of them required, and which, in fact, constituted their fulfillment from the apprehension of committing a crime, and incurring the punishment consequent upon it; and, in this case, the prophecy would either not be fulfilled, or they must be compelled by some irresistible influence to assist in its fulfillment, and so not be free agents, and, of course, not responsible for their conduct—not subject to reward or punishment for it.

And the foregoing views do not militate at all with the benevolence of the Deity, or the moral liberty of his creatures: It is not necessary for the purpose to be effected by the fulfillment of any prophecy, that the manner of its fulfillment should be known beforehand. Its purpose is effected by its fulfillment, and not by the manner of its fulfillment being known previously. And so long as the Deity does not exercise any compulsory force over his creatures, in obliging them to pursue that course which will tend to its fulfillment, the fact that they are actually employed at the time in fulfilling a prophecy made by him, does not at all destroy their free agency in regard to it.

From the preceding remarks it will be clearly understood why it is that the prophecies contained in the Bible are so highly metaphorical and ambiguous, and how perfectly vain it is to attempt an interpretation of them, by giving a perfectly literal, or, indeed, any construction to them, anterior to their fulfillment. That they were not intended to be understood beforehand, is evident as well from the very fact of this kind of language being used, as from the foregoing considerations—for there is no reason for such language being employed, except purposely, to conceal the manner of their fulfillment, until it had taken place.

To illustrate the foregoing reasoning, suppose the prophecies relating to Jesus Christ in the Old Testament had been clothed in such language as clearly to designate him beyond all manner of doubt, as soon as he should make his appearance among the Jews. It is perfectly evident that neither he, nor they could have sustained their respective characters in the events of that period. If the prophecies relating to him had been so explicit and precise, as to convince them without any reasoning that he was their promised Messiah, to fulfil them, they would either have considered themselves as directed to persecute and crucify him by the prophecies themselves, and so instead of being the objects of Divine wrath for so doing, they would in fact be discharging their duty, and be the objects of the Divine complacency—or else they must have been operated upon by some supernatural force for this purpose, and so lose their free agency, and of course not be justly the subjects of punishment. And in either case, the effect of his conduct and his sufferings would have lost their chief efficacy, since, instead of then being a return of good for evil, forgiveness for injury, and benevolence for cruelty, he would be merely submitting to a fate in which he and his enemies were alike acted upon by some supernatural influence, which they neither could control nor resist. Both would have been mere machines, acting the part assigned to them, and so neither meritorious nor criminal. This is, however, altogether different from the fact. Both parties were moral agents, acting according to their own will and pleasure, though at the same time fulfilling the prophecies contained in the Old Testament respecting them; and the one was punished, and the other rewarded, as having acted in a manner to have deserved the one or the other recompense.

It will follow, from the foregoing remarks, that prophecy in its own nature, and for the purpose to be accomplished by it, must be at the same time in the terms of it, so minute, that it will clearly be perceived, when it is fulfilling and has been fulfilled, that such is the case, and at the same time not so minute that the manner of its fulfillment shall be known before the time arrives, so as to control the actions of men and thus destroy the free agency in that conduct, which is to precede the fulfillment, and render it necessary that it should take place. By necessary, I mean that there should be this dispensation of the Deity, called for by the existing state and conduct of mankind, or that portion of it to be affected by it in the course of his moral providence. The reasons why prophecy should not be too minute, have been just stated. The reason why it should be sufficiently minute, is perfectly obvious, for otherwise it could never answer the object of prophecy, as it could never be satisfactorily determined, when it had been fulfilled.

W. B. A.

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