

best. Make the most of the world, and never endure evils till they come, are my maxims. Half of suffering is anticipation of possible or probable evil."

"Father," said Christine abruptly, "I believe you are right, you *must* be right, and have given me the best comfort and hope that truthfully can be given. But this is a strange, cruel world. We seem the sport of circumstances, the victims of hard, remorseless laws. One bad person can frightfully injure another person" (a spasm distorted her father's face). "What accidents may occur! Worst of all are those horrible, subtle, contagious diseases which none can see or guard against! Then to suffer, die, corrupt,—*faugh!* To what a disgusting end, to what a lame and impotent conclusion does the noble creature, man, come! My whole nature revolts at it. For instance, here am I a young girl, capable of the highest enjoyment, with everything to live for, and lured forward by the highest hopes and expectations; and yet in spite of all the safe guards you can place around me, my path is in the midst of dangers, and now perhaps I am to be rendered hideous, if not killed outright, by a disease, the very thought of which fills me with loathing. What I fear *has* happened, and may happen again. And what compensation is there for it all?—what can enable one to bear it all? O that I could believe in a God and a future happier life."

"And what kind of a God would He be who, having the power to prevent, permits, or orders, as the Bible teaches, all these evils? I am a man of the world, and pretend to nothing saint-like or chivalric, but do you think I am capable of going to Mr. Winthrop and striking down his daughter Susie with a loathsome disease? And yet if a minister or priest should come here, he would begin to talk about the mysterious providence, and submission to God's will. If I am to have a God, I want one at least better than myself."

"You *must* be right," said Christine, with a weary moan. "There is no God, and if there were, in view of what you say, I could only hate and fear Him. How chaotic the world is! But it is hard." After a moment she added shudderingly, "*It is horrible.* I did not think of these things when well."

"Get well and forget them again, my dear. It is the best you can do."

"If I get well," said Christine almost fiercely, "I shall get the most I can out of life, cost what it may," and she turned her face to the wall.

A logical result of his teaching, but for some reason it awakened in Mr. Ludolph a vague foreboding.

The hours dragged on, and late in the afternoon the hard-driven physician appeared, examined his patient and seemed relieved.

"If there is no change for the worse," he said cheerily, "if no new symptoms develop by to-morrow, I can pronounce this merely a severe cold, caused by state of system and too sudden check of perspiration." And the doctor gave an opiate and bowed himself out.

Long and heavily Christine slept. The night that Dennis filled with agonizing prayer and thought, was to her a blank. While he in his strong Christian love brought heaven nearer to her, while he resolved on that which would give her a chance for life—happy life, here and hereafter, she was utterly unconscious. No vision or presentiment of good, like a struggling ray of light, found access to her darkened spirit. So heavy was the stupor induced by the opiate, that her sleep seemed like the blank she so feared, when her pleasurable ambitious life should end in nothingness.

So I suppose God's love mediates good, and resolves on life and joy for us, while our hearts are sleeping, dead to Him—dead in trespasses and sins—benumbed and paralyzed so that only His love can awaken them. Like a vague yet hope inspiring dream, this truth often enters the minds of those who are wrapped in the spiritual lethargy that may end in death. God wakes, watches, loves, and purposes good for them. When most unconscious, perhaps another effort for our salvation has been resolved upon in the councils of heaven.

But ambition more than love, earthly hopes rather than heavenly, kept Mr. Ludolph an anxious watcher at Christine's side that night. A smile of satisfaction illumined his somewhat haggard face as he saw the fever pass away and the dew of natural moisture come out on Christine's brow, but there was no thankful glance upward. Immunity from loathsome disease was due only to chance and the physician's skill, by his creed.

The sun was shining brightly when Christine awoke, and by a faint call startled her father from a doze in the great arm-chair.

"How do you feel, my dear?" he asked.

She languidly rubbed her heavy eyes, and said "she thought she was better—she felt no pain." But soon she greatly revived, and when the Doctor came he found her decidedly better, and concluded that she was merely suffering from a severe cold, and would soon regain her usual health.

(*To be continued.*)