

Bound with the Cords of Love

Oh, the indefinable mystery that enshrouds and broods in the abysmal recess of the poor human heart! Who will uplift the veil from the heart's heart-secret, labyrinthine windings and operations? Who will register its unobserved, but certain transitions and periods, and explain to-day's self-sufficiency and buoyancy, and the morrow's utter prostration and enfeebling languor? Why, from its unfathomed depths, ever arises that muffled cry heard by the listening blood, that aching longing for a something we can not circumscribe or articulate; which to-day we believe to be comfort, or beauty, or power, only to find on the morrow how hollow have been our conclusions, how bitter the deception? Who will explain this feverish eagerness to sound and discover in each new change of circumstance, our resources and opportunities, hoping against hope to find at last an unfailing anodyne for the perpetual heart-ills festering within us? Why, in a word, this warp in our spirit-nature, this apparent flaw in the handiwork of the Divine? Here we are on our journey through this vale of tears, feeling within us yearnings for a something infinitely above us and without us, yet fully cognizant by sad experience of low earthly attractions no less real and effective. In the consequent personal difficulties and momentous struggle, is there no one to befriend us? Is there no hand stretched out on the way to raise to our lips, with the word-music of sympathy, that cup of comfort we need so utterly to sustain us? Is there no one interested, no one concerned whether we struggle to a happy end or, despairing, snatch at the base joys of earth, and in heavy, popped sleep dull the soul to dread consequences—death and retribution?

If succour were denied us, and consequently if none but the saddest prospect lay before us, if we were destined to toil to the end unbefriended and abandoned, our lot would be appallingly gloomy, crushingly hopeless. But the love that desired our existence, that formed our