

"The light that never was on sea or land.
The consecration and the poets dream."

Markham's mysticism has wings but at least the tip of its toe never leaves earth. It dreams shadowy dreams enough, but when it subsequently sings of them it is wide awake. It beholds very unusual visions, as "through a glass darkly," but the language in which they are described "he who runs may read" and quite comprehend without stopping.

Full illustrations of the foregoing assertions are, I think, furnished by the poem "At the Meeting of Seven Valleys"; so that it becomes incumbent upon me to give it in its entirety:

"At the meeting of seven valleys in the west,
I came upon a host of silent souls,
Seated beside still waters on the grass.
It was a place of memories and tears -
Terrible tears. I rested in a wood,
And there the bird that mourns for Itys sang—
Itys that touched the tears of all the world.
But climbing onward toward the purple peaks,
I passed, on silent feet, white multitudes.
Beyond the reach of peering memories,
Lying asleep upon the scented banks,
Their bodies burning with celestial fire.
The strangeness of the beatific sleep,
The vision of God, the mystic bread of rest."

It has been said of Nathaniel Hawthorne that he heard melodies too fine for mortal ear. Hawthorne heard no more ærial strains than Markham, but, as this little poem clearly shows, the latter's form of expression is not above mortal comprehension, and I wish I could say as much of every passage in Hawthorne.

The poet's socialism, like his mysticism, is strictly confined within the limits of what prosy people call, sanity. It appears to be a direct result of looking upon the awful inequality in life. It probably came to the poet when he gazed upon the dread tragedy of human misery, and perhaps shared in some of it. He believes in the progress of the race, but that dogma is no more than the central idea of such an uncompromising stickler for law and order as Alfred Tennyson. If the thoughts of men are to be "widened" at all, it may not be by a sudden surgical operation, like that by which the Rev Sydney Smith proposed to get a joke into the head