

this troubled world, from the blissful consciousness of Adam when for the first time he saw the fair being whom he might woo at his leisure, amid embowering roses, without fear or thought of a rival.

To Dennis the fact of his love, so far from promising to be the source of delightful romance and enchantment, was clearly seen the hardest and most practical question of a life full of such questions.

In his strong and growing excitement he spoke to himself as to a second person,

"O, I see it all now. Poor, blind fool that I was to think that by coveting and securing every moment in her presence possible, I was only learning to love art. As I saw her to-night, so radiant and beautiful, and yet in the embrace of another man, and evidently an ardent admirer, what was art to me! As well might a starving man seek to satisfy himself by wandering through an old Greek temple, as for me to turn to Art alone. One crumb of warm, manifested love from her would be worth more than all the cold, abstract beauty in the universe. And yet what chance have I? What can I hope for more than a passing thought and a little kindly condescending interest? Clerk and man-of-all-work in a store, poor and heavily burdened, the idea of my loving one of the most wealthy, admired, and aristocratic ladies in Chicago! It is all very well in story books for peasants to fall in love with princesses, but in practical Chicago the fact of my attachment to Miss Ludolph would be regarded as one of the richest jokes of the season, and such a proof of country rusticity and folly by Mr. Ludolph, as would at once secure my return to pastoral life."

Then hope whispered, "But you can achieve position and wealth as others have, and then can speak your mind from the standpoint of equality."

But Dennis was in a mood to see only the hopeless side that night, and exclaimed almost aloud—"Nonsense! Can it be even imagined that she, besieged by the most gifted and rich of the city, will wait for a poor unknown admirer? Mr. Meilen, I understand, approaches her from every vantage ground save that of a noble character, but in the fashionable world how little thought is given to this drawback, and in his perturbation he strode rapidly and aimlessly on, finding some relief in mere physical activity.

Suddenly his hasty steps ceased, and even in the dusk of the street, his face gleamed out distinctly, so great was its pallor. Like a ray of light, a passage from the Word of

God revealed to him his situation in a new aspect. It seemed to him almost that some one had whispered the words in his ear, so distinctly did they present themselves—

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Slowly and painfully he said to himself, as if recognizing the most hopeless barrier that had yet been dwelt upon—

"Christine Ludolph is an infidel."

Not only the voice of reason, and of the practical world, but also the voice of God seemed to forbid his love, and the conviction that he must give it all up, became as clear as it was painful. The poor fellow leaned his head against the shaggy bark of an elm that stood in a shadowy square which the street lamps could but faintly penetrate, and watered the gnarled roots with many hot tears.

The night wind swayed the budding branches of the great tree and they sighed over him as if in sympathy.

The struggle within his soul was indeed bitter, for though thus far he had spoken hopelessly, he had not been altogether hopeless, but now that conscience raised its impassable wall high as heaven, which he must not break through, his pain was so great as to almost unman him, and only such tears as men can weep fell from his eyes. In anguish he exclaimed—

"That which might have been the chief blessing of life has become my greatest misfortune."

Above him the gale caused two fraying limbs to appear to moan in echo of the suffering beneath.

"This then must be the end of my prayers in her behalf—my ardent hope and purpose to lead her to the truth—she to walk through honored sunny paths to everlasting shame and night, and I through dark and painful ways to light and peace, if in this bitter test I remain faithful. Surely there is much to try one's faith. And yet it must be so as far as human foresight can judge."

Then a great pity for her swelled his heart, for he felt that her case was the saddest after all, and his tears flowed faster than ever.

Human voices now startled him—some late revellers passing homeward. The tears and emotion, of which we never think of being ashamed when alone with Nature and its Author, he dreaded to have seen by his fellows, and hastily wiping his eyes, he slunk into the deeper shadow of the tree, and they passed on. Then, an old trait asserting itself, he condemned his own weakness and waver-