

He sees nothing but the essence of perfection in his loved one. Love is the soul of ardent youth, its poetry speaking with truthful lips. It is, or should be, the sincere expression of the soul. It is the tie that binds for life two young throbbing hearts; a tie which death severs reluctantly. Love is a flower of slow growth. It is nourished in silence, very often in tears, and so frail that it drops and withers under the chilling influence of cold neglect.

At length it was whispered about the village that Eugenie was betrothed to Jean Ducette. Her father, whose sole companion she was, did not care to give up his loved Eugenie, but on mature consideration he considered he had no right through selfishness to thwart his daughter's happiness. He knew life was uncertain. He did not know when his child might be left fatherless as well as motherless. War was again raging between France and England, and nowhere more bitterly than in the colonies. Eugenie had never known the want of a mother, for her mother in giving life to her spent her own.

In the quiet French village of La Have there was great rejoicing, for it was on every body's tongue that Eugenie, the beautiful and good Eugenie, who was so kind to the poor and sick, so considerate of all, so unselfish, and in no respect proud, was to be married in June. The gossips never tired of talking about the interesting event. There was nothing but joy and good wishes in the hearts of the village folks for the young bride. No clouds rested upon the horizon of the future of Eugenie. Hope and joy alone were in that young bosom.

As the days passed and the wedding day drew near there was a feverish excitement in the small community. A fisherman had brought the intelligence a day or two past that he had seen a strange ship in the offing, but that she bore away to sea and disappeared. However he hastened to tell the commandant. The commandant did not think the strange ship was an English "man-o-war," as he had reason to believe that none were in those parts at present, but he took every precaution to guard against surprise, though he thought the English were far distant, and if they would make an attack it would be at first on Port Royal. The Indians in the neighbourhood were the devoted allies of the French, so there was nothing to fear from that quarter. It was the day before the wedding. An undefined fear passed the soul of Jean. But he said nothing to his friends. At length greatly to his relief the day drew to a close; night drew on, a beautiful night in June, when there is nothing to jar upon the tired spirit of man seeking repose from care, when Earth and Heaven are in unison.

The sentinel paced his weary rounds on the fort. The darkness deepened. There was no sound but the sigh of the winds and the ripple of the waves upon the beach. No enemy was feared, and the sentinel slept. As he slept he dreamed of his boyhood's home far across the ocean, in France, happy scenes of youth floated before his eyes, he heard again the songs which he had once loved to sing with his young and joyous companions. Suddenly a rifle shot awoke the echoes of the night, and the sentinel never dreamed again.

That shot alarmed the garrison and country. It was too late, they were taken by surprise. De La Main instantly was at his post, and put himself at the head of his men.

The English with a band of Indians were already assaulting the fort. But another detachment made a simultaneous attack on the commandant's house; Jean Ducette and a band of brave settlers defended the place and fought bravely.

Eugenie was terrified at all the noise and commotion, she had never seen real war before. She was encouraged by her lover not to be afraid. Jean however knew the house could not be held much longer, for it was already set on fire. He, therefore, resolved to place Eugenie in the fort for greater safety, retreating by a secret way. To do this he ordered his men to make a sortie, and draw off the attention of the enemy from him but Eugenie wished to be taken to her father. "Take me to my father," she cried, "take me to my father!"

Well for her she did not know the truth, that her beloved father was mortally wounded and dying. The men made the sortie, and Jean and Eugenie made their way to the fort. When near the fort in its rear they found the garrison already retreating in boats across the river, and the enemy firing at them in the darkness. There was no time to lose, the enemy was close upon them, there was nothing for it but to leap into the river in the hope of being picked up by one of the boats. He took Eugenie in his arms, but just then a ball pierced her bosom. Jean thought no longer of retreat, or of resistance. He sat down on the ground still keeping the dying Eugenie in his arms. The last words she said, were "Oh! take me home, take me to my father!" Then, pressing Jean's hand, she died. This would have been to her even a greater pain than that of dying. They bore her to the fort, and laid her beneath a tent together with her father. A deep sorrow fell upon the British officers and men alike when, next day, they saw the beautiful girl still in death by her slain father. Father and child were together in death. Poor Jean, her lover, was distracted. Nothing could console him for the loss of his loved Eugenie. He watched by her side with her cold hand in his, all day and all night. Everybody showed him compassion. On the morrow they were buried, a soldier's funeral and a soldier's grave were given to both. The English Chaplain performed the last sad rites in the French chapel. They were buried together, and the same military honours were paid father and daughter. Jean lingered round the grave for days, at length broken hearted, he left his native village forever. Such is the story of Eugenie De La Main, a tale of Acadie.

A veil like a dense mist lies always between the present and the past, but when that is swept away we find the past is but another present.

C. T. EASTON.

THE ANCIENT MARINER AGAIN.

IN THE WEEK of the 28th ult., M. Middleton combats the idea put forward by Louisa Murray, of an allegorical meaning in the *Ancient Mariner*. In disproof of the "moral allegory" theory, your correspondent gives the causes that led to Coleridge's writing the *Ancient Mariner*, the intended nature of the poem—supernatural, but with sufficient human interest to throw a glamour of reality over the supernatural, and to procure poetic faith—and adds that, although "any story that deals, though ever so slightly, with our humanity may be used to point a moral," yet "no one dreams that all such morals are intentional." Now let us consider what weight these considerations have as against the "moral allegory" idea of Louisa Murray and many other lovers of Coleridge.

Is it "fair to conclude" in the face of the poem itself and of the impression it makes upon many, I think I may safely say most, of those who devotedly study it, that, because Coleridge on undertaking the poem defined its scope no farther than as a "supernatural" poem containing a "human interest,"—is it fair to conclude that the supernatural world did not often resolve itself into the spiritual before the poet's enraptured eyes, and the "human interest" into man's relation to God? All Coleridge's writings that do not treat of something distinctly objective are remarkable for what I may, for the sake of brevity, call spiritual suggestiveness. The bent of his mind was peculiarly towards spiritual metaphysics; and while in the supernatural mood, it would be all but impossible for him to avoid contemplating in their spiritual relations those conditions which he had at first conjured up as merely supernatural.

I do not mean to say that the symbolism, "of man's soul alienated from God" until restored by the new birth of loving sympathy, is sustained throughout, or that any such "unbroken undercurrent of thought can be found" concurrent with the incidents of the tale of the *Mariner*. Such open obtruding of the moral sentiment throughout the poem would be too great a violation of the unity of the original plan for a writer of Coleridge's finely critical mind to be guilty of. But I do mean to say that such symbolism stands out strikingly in several individual passages of the poem; and that many of the verses at the end are moralizings in language that speaks to us, as plainly as language can, of a preconceived spiritual world in which the *Ancient Mariner* has been wandering, and that can have no meaning in reference to a world from which the spiritual has been entirely excluded, and in which the supernatural alone has place. Let me quote a few verses in illustration:—

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the Kirk

And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends!

And then the beautiful stanza which Mrs. Oliphant exquisitely describes as "your child's moral, a tender little, half-trivial sentiment, yet profound as the blue depths of heaven":—

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

Surely there is a moral here, and a moral intended too, notwithstanding the plan upon which the poem as a whole is constructed.

Again with regret to your correspondent's remark, that "no one dreams that all such morals are intentional," let me just point out that in attempting to deny the intention of the moral he admits the fact. Does not the admission of the fact of the moral bear rather an odd relation to the modest hope with which he concludes, "that some people will, in consequence of this paper, enjoy their jam without dread of its containing any powder" in the shape of a moral at the end?

W. B. C. B.

WHAT COLERIDGE SAID.

From the *Table Talk* of S. T. Coleridge, under date May 31, 1830, I extract the following: "Mrs. Barbauld once told me that she admired the 'Ancient Mariner' very much, but that there were two faults in it—it was improbable, and had no moral. As for the probability, I owned that that might admit of some question; but as to the want of a moral, I told her that in my own judgment the poem had too much; and that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination. It ought to have had no more moral than the *Arabian Nights'* tale of the merchant sitting down to eat dates by the side of a well, and throwing the shells aside, and lo! a genie starts up, and says he *must* kill the aforesaid merchant, because one of the date shells had, it seems, put out an eye of the genie's son."

Amid the occasional flash and clash of ephemeral opinions on works that endure the remarks of the genius which engendered them may not be esteemed altogether valueless.

SAREPTA.

LITERATURE is the written expression of the life and inner nature of man. It partakes of his restlessness; it is influenced by his outward circumstances and environments; it follows the fashions his fancy dictates, and discards them in compliance with his will. That is, literature has no separate life of its own; it is an intrinsic part of man's history, and follows the course of his development.