

of her grief: nay, more, he told her there and then that she was dear to him, dearer than ever now that he had thought of her for so long, and never seen her; he promised to be all she could wish, to love her all her life, and—but the girl, glancing up at the bright stars, remembered Who was listening, and knowing how truly her heart belonged to Will, said him Nay. She confessed to him how foolish she had been, and Arthur listened, wondering the while at the perfect innocence and truth which had prompted her to speak. He was not heart-broken, and yet I think he loved her more than he ever had thought to love any one. Perhaps, too, he learnt a lesson from Rachel's simple words; at any rate he never sought her again, and granny, who was dying, knew nothing whatever of the matter.

Well, the end came for granny soon after the new year had dawned. Her children were all there, but to Rachel, who had shared her joys and sorrows in the last years of her life, she now turned more than to them. They were alone when the messenger came to call her home, and with her eyes resting even then upon the glass of eternity, she saw perhaps more than those who have many years to live. "It'll all come right, dearie," she whispered to Rachel, who, having summoned the rest, came quickly back to her dying charge. "It'll all come right! I can see it, and—peace will come."

Rachel was back once more in her old home; but the freshness which for a time had seemed to satisfy her was now wearing off, and again her life was becoming colourless and sad. Old thoughts and feelings would crop up, and fresh and bright before her came the evening when Arthur Darrell had come with his kind words and promises. It seemed almost to her that she had made a mistake then. His love seemed to her as a great thing now—partly, I suppose, because she had put it aside, and partly as compared with the trouble she had undergone. And yet she had been true; but then, was she not treating him even as Will had treated her? Still, Will had an excuse for his conduct; she had none, and tears burst out afresh as she remembered how foolish and heartless she had been. True, she was young and could afford to wait; but still, with her sorrow fresh upon her, life seemed just then to be very dark and drear. Then granny's words came back—her dying ones I mean—and so she took heart again, and performed her present duties quite bravely.

Granny's dog, Spot, had accompanied Rachel to her father's house; and the girl clung to the animal, and loved it more and more, for it alone seemed a connecting link between the past and the present. She and Spot went for rare long rambles in the shady lanes, as spring and summer advanced and came in turn, and Rachel's smile was bright with the gladness and hope which a clear conscience brought her. Many a village lad smiled upon her, and—well, never mind! Rachel took no heed of them whatever; she was learning to be true and steadfast, and this it was which cast a new light and glow about her path. She would wait and hope, and if, by-and-by, Will's image faded from her memory, well, then she might perhaps think of another; but not while she loved him, not while there was a chance of his loving her as well.

It was a sweet evening in summer, and Rachel, having performed her accustomed home duties, was free to do as she pleased; so, calling Spot to her side, she sauntered forth towards a secluded lane; for, truth to tell, her heart was full of Will this evening—she could not forget him, turn which way she would. And yet it seemed not a sad remembrance; it was as though he were near—near with the old love which she had now learned so dearly to prize. Spot ran in front of her till there came a turn in the lane, then he sprang forward with a joyous little bark, and the next moment Will and Rachel were face to face.

"Oh, Will, Will!" was all she said—it had been her cry inwardly all through the dreary time of waiting, and now her lips could frame no other.

"Rachel, I have been home, and Arthur has told me all; but—but you love me, don't you, Rachel?" and he kissed the happy face upturned to his.

"Yes, oh, yes!" And there and then it was settled that each should remain true to the other for a while, and that then there should be a merry wedding, ending all doubts for them for ever.

And during the waiting time the girl had learnt a mighty lesson, even the same which granny had learnt from little Meg—that if we but trust and hope, if we but keep our hearts alive, warm and pure, we need never grow desponding or weary of life; for somewhere the sun is shining for us, somewhere a glory awaits us, and a loving smile will greet us.

One dream after another may fade and grow dim, may even utterly pass from our sight; but *somewhere* is a sweet reality, *somewhere we shall be satisfied*. So faith and hope triumphed, as they ever do, if only duty is close by and nobly performed, for—

"He that hath light within his own clear breast,
May sit in the centre and enjoy bright day."—*Milton*.

THE LAW OF GIVING AND RECEIVING.

THERE is a sense in which no man can live to himself; indeed he can no more live without air than he can without influencing his fellow-creatures, whether he will it or not. He is a link in the great chain, and can't wholly sever himself from the other links. The hearty and devout Christian does not wish to isolate himself from those around him, or to retain what he has, he willingly and lovingly gives to others what he receives from God; he obeys the law of giving and receiving, and hence he is distributive, as well as receptive. There are laws planted in the constitution of things, and obedience to them is the condition of life, progress, and happiness. Temperance is the law of health, industry is the law of competency, thought and truth is the law of intellectual progress, faith is the law of moral excellence, love is the law of happiness, and prayer is the law of Spiritual blessings. God has not created anything in vain. Some end is answered in all things, they hold a more or less intimate relation to, and are dependent upon, each other, and one condition of life, usefulness, and happiness, is *obedience* to the law of giving and receiving. It is worthy of note that all the orders of created beings known to us form a kind of scale or chain, wherein the lower is always related or linked to that above by something common to the nature of both. The nature and qualities of lifeless matter are found in plants, the vegetable life of plants in animals, the appetites and senses of animals in man, and the reasoning faculty of man in angels, and thus he becomes the connecting link between the irrational creature on one hand and the angel on the other. And this relationship is sustained among higher beings in the world of spirits, and ascends higher and higher to the archangel, or the Being that always basks in the radiance of the Divine throne. The material creation may be compared to a complicated piece of mechanism having a great number of wheels of various dimensions, the revolutions of each contributing something to that of the other, all dependent upon the moving power, and under the constant supervision of the Great Constructor. The elements, air, water, light, and heat, operate upon the earth, and the earth gives itself to vegetation, and vegetation gives itself to the animal, and the animal gives himself to man, and man should give himself to God; thus the end of the creation would be answered. The law of giving, as well as receiving, must be obeyed before harmony, peace, and substantial happiness will be secured. The non-observance of this law will result in discord, misery, and death. God never designed anything to live to itself. This is manifest in the *realm of nature*. On the fourth day He lighted up the sun, fixed him in the firmament, made him the focus of all light and heat, and ever since a flood of light and heat has emanated from him, and this, year by year, has quickened nature, roused it out of the sleep of winter, made it smile with all the freshness of youth, and vocal with the thoughts of God. The sun does not confine his light to this world; he gives it to the moon and the surrounding orbs, and those orbs catch his rays and throw them further. What so beautiful as a beautiful flower? And why?—"Because it is God's thought of Beauty taking form to gladden mortal gaze." It does not retain what it has; it gives of its beauty to the eye, and of its delicacy to the touch, and of its smell to the scent; it gladdens the eye, refines the taste, and perfumes the air with its sweet fragrance. The grain is deposited in the earth—placed in a developing condition—and though it dies in the struggle, it gives what it has, and multiplies itself twenty or thirty fold. The bosom of the earth is a repository of gold and silver, copper and lead, coal and precious stones, and it gives these invaluable treasures to man. How kind is nature! It gives its outer garment that teams with life to the creatures that tread its surface, and these again are made means of human subsistence; indeed, almost everything enjoyed by man is made up of Nature's cast-off clothes. Thus law is seen in the *realm of the irrational creation*. The sheep