

devout Psalmist was most filled with humility and adoration, while gazing, on such a night as this, at the heavens, spread out as a curtain above him. But that God has been mindful of us and that there did 'arise a star out of Jacob,' even 'the bright and morning star,' without whom we should all be as 'wandering stars,' reserved to blackness of darkness forever."

"But who is that one you think on with love, when you look on the moon and stars?" said the now thoughtful Augusta.

"Who but He that made that moon and those stars?"

"And what has taught you to love other objects than those we once both loved?"

"I have told you how much my love of fiction stood in the way of my progress in study. My tutor, saw this, and took unwearied pains to draw off my mind, and interest me in Astronomy. He was successful, and oh! how much I owe him. But he did not stop here. He taught me to look through nature, up to nature's God, and from the heavens that shall one day flee away, to him that made them, and to that heaven which shall be the home of the just forever. Often, when I have heard him describe the glories of that upper world, where God ever dwells, the centre of his unbounded universe, have I thought I should aspire to no higher place there, than to be a living, conscious star, in his crown of eternal rejoicing."

"And will you not teach me Astronomy while you remain at home," said Augusta, after a pause.

"Most gladly, and

'Thence higher soaring,  
We'll raise our solemn thoughts to him,  
The mighty founder of this wondrous maze,  
The great Creator.'

A FABLE.

An idle weed that used to crawl  
Unseen behind the garden wall,  
(Its most becoming station)  
At last—refresh'd by sun and showers,  
Which nourished weeds, as well as flowers:—  
Amused its solitary hours  
With thoughts of elevation.

Those thoughts increasing day by day,  
It shot forth many an upward spray,  
And many a tendrill band;  
But as it could not climb alone,  
It uttered oft a lazy groan  
To moss and mortar, stick and stone,  
To lend a helping hand.

At length, by friendly arms sustained,  
Th' aspiring vegetable gained  
The object of its labours;  
That which had cost her many a sigh,  
And nothing less would satisfy—  
Which was not only being high,  
But higher than her neighbour.

And now this weed, though weak and spent  
With climbing up the steep ascent,  
Admired her figure tall;  
And then, (for vanity ne'er ends  
With that which it at first intends)  
Began to laugh at those poor friends  
That helped her up the wall.

But by and by, the lady spied  
The garden on the other side;  
And fallen was her crest  
To see, in neat array below,  
A bed of all the flowers that blow,  
Lily and rose,—a goodly show,  
In fairest colours drest.

Recovering from her first surprise,

She soon began to criticize,—  
"A dainty sight indeed!  
I'd be the meekest thing that blows,  
Rather than that affected rose,  
So much perfume offends my nose,"  
Exclaimed the vulgar weed.

"Well, 'tis enough to make one chilly,  
To see that pale, consumptive lily  
Among these painted folks.  
Miss Tulip, too, looks wond'rous odd,  
She's gaping like a dying cod;  
What a queer stick is golden-rod!  
And how the violet pokes!

"Not for the gayest tint that lingers  
On honey-suckle's rosy fingers,  
Would I with her exchange;  
For this, at least, is very clear,  
Since they are there, and I am here,  
I occupy a higher sphere—  
Enjoy a wider range."

Alas! poor envious weed!—for lo,  
That instant came the gardener's hoe,  
And lopped her from her sphere;  
But none lamented when she fell;  
No passing Zephyr sighed, "farewell;"  
No friendly Bee would hum her knell;  
No fairy dropt a tear.

While those sweet flowers, of genuine worth,  
Inclining towards the modest earth,  
Adorn the vale below:  
Content to hide in sylvan dell,  
Their rosy buds and purple bells,  
Tho' scarce a rising Zephyr tells  
The secret where they grow.

THE MORAL.

"Let no man think more highly of himself than he ought to think." What a vast alteration would take place in society if this reasonable rule were to be attended to! If every one were to fall into his proper place in self-estimation, (as he must eventually do in the estimation of others,) how many mistakes,—how much mortification would be prevented! For it is in every sense true, that "he that exalteth himself shall be abased." They who value themselves on any account too highly, will certainly receive that mortifying request from one and another,— "friend, go down lower." How wise then, how secure are they, who voluntary take the lowest room:—

"He that is down need fear no fall."

But it requires years and experience to know ourselves: hence it is, that self-conceit is the fault of youth; while we look for true modesty among the wise, the learned and the venerable.

How much better would it be to learn our own insignificance by observation and reflection than to have it discovered to us by our friends and neighbours. Yet it often requires very broad hints from those around us, before we even begin to suspect that we had rated ourselves too highly; and sometimes even this will not do: rather than suppose themselves mistaken, some will imagine all the world to be so; and conclude that their merits are overlooked. But this is a kind of injustice that very rarely takes place in society: and even if, owing to accidental circumstances, it should in any instance be the cause that we are thought of more meanly than we deserve, let it ever be remembered; that nothing can be done on our parts to redress the grievance. In most things, indeed, the more we can help ourselves the better; and he that would have his business done must do it himself; but here, it is just the

reverse. If we set but one step towards our own exaltation, we shall assuredly have to take two or three downwards for our pains. To deserve esteem is in our power, but if we claim it, we cease to deserve, and shall certainly forfeit it.

Young people at the period when they are acquiring knowledge, are very liable to self-conceit; and thus, by their own folly defeat the great purpose of instruction; which is, not to make them vain, but wise. They are apt to forget that knowledge is not for show, but for use; and that the desire to exhibit what they know, is invariably a proof of their acquirements being superficial.

Besides, like most other faults, self-conceit is no solitary failing, but ever brings many more in its train. They who are very desirous to shine themselves, are always envious of the attainments of others; and like the weed in our fable, will be ingenious in discovering defects in those who are more accomplished than themselves. The vain have no rest unless they are uppermost, and more conspicuous than all around them. The most interesting pursuits cannot render retirement agreeable: concealment to them is wretchedness.

There is no generous sentiment, no amiable disposition, no warm affection, but is chilled and blighted by the secret influence of self-conceit: and perhaps, there are none who more frequently or more effectually transgress the spirit of that great commandment of the law—"to love our neighbour as ourselves," than the vain. How many are there, who, while they would tremble at the idea of defrauding a companion of any part of her property, will not scruple to use a thousand little artifices to rival and supplant her in the opinion of others; thus endeavouring to rob her of that which she probably values much more.

There are three things which those who are conscious of a tendency to self-conceit would do well to remember:—

First, That this fault is always most apparent in persons of mean minds, and superficial acquirements: a conceited person may, indeed, be clever, but never can become great.

Secondly, That however they may suppose this weakness to be concealed within their own bosoms, there is no fault that is really so conspicuous, or that it is more impossible to hide from the eyes of others.

Thirdly, That it is highly offensive in the sight of God; and wholly inimical to moral and religious improvement.

Now, is there any gaudy weed who would fain become a sterling flower? Let such be assured that this wish, if prompted by right motives, and followed up by sincere endeavours, will not be in vain. But let it be remembered, that such a change can never be effected by merely adopting the colours and affecting the attitudes of one. This would be but to become an artificial flower at best; without the grace and fragrance of nature. Be not, then, satisfied with imitation, which, after all, is more laborious and difficult than aiming at reality. Be what you would seem to be; this is the shortest, and the only successful way. Above all, "be clothed with humility; and have the ornament of a meek and lowly spirit."—for of such flowers it may truly be said, that, "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."