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God and the Soul. As one who looks on the boundless wastes of snow When all the earth is white, and through the sky The driving flakes in blinding currents fly, Upcaught by winds that eddy to and fro, And piled in drifts that ever higher grow, In one great whirling sheet deep buried lie, Sees with glad heart, afar his hearth fire glare, Conscious of the warm love that nestles there; So human souls, looking on wintry space, And chilled by nicker blasts of time, turn where Through all the dark and doubt and woe God's face Appears eternal, patient and all fair, Though in the gloom His form they dimly trace. —Right Rev. J. L. Spalding.

The New Man at Rossmere.

CHAPTER XXV. RETROSPECTION.

She got up and walked over to where Agnes was still sleeping heavily. She bent over and touched her upon the forehead. She would not have been sorry if the touch had awakened her, which it did not. She moved away, with a restless activity urging her to action of some sort, if it were only circulating round about the room. She bestowed an absent-minded but minute examination upon the several commonplace chromes with which Squire Thorne had gratified his own crude artistic instincts and disfigured his walls. She tip-toed to obtain a nearer view of a framed photograph of some Confederate general whose individuality was lost in the blurry picture. Her zeal for information brought disaster to a standing work-basket that belonged to Mrs. Thorne, against which she inadvertently leaned. It was one of those top-heavy, spidery-legged things whose normal condition seems to be toppling, and which seems purposely invented as trials to one's patience and tests of one's dexterity.

The basket toppled promptly, and the contents rolled in every direction, a promiscuous heap of spoils, thimbles, scissors, cushions, and all the *et ceteras* of a lady's work-basket. Sula gave one startled glance toward the sleeping woman. Agnes was unconscious of the noisy catastrophe. Sula righted the basket on its untrustworthy legs, and knelt down to replace the contents. Her task was purely mechanical until she laid hold upon a soft silken and morocco object which seemed to arouse her instantaneously to a high pitch of interest and excitement. Hereafter she had been arranging Mrs. Thorne's belongings quite methodically, but now, holding the object that had so excited her in a tight grasp, as if fearful it might elude her, she threw the remaining article into the basket pell-mell, and, going back to the chair by the fire, she dropped rather than seated herself in it.

Only a little faded "housewife." A trifle, composed of silk and morocco; faded, dingy, worn, and valueless intrinsically; but to her who held it a revelation, a silent message from out the past, a voice from her dead, the missing link in her chain of evidence. She turned it over and over in her hand, sorely tempted to untie the faded green ribbon that kept the creased folds in place. She wanted to examine the interior, although nothing could add to the sureness of her conviction that the housewife in her hand was the one she had made for her husband, Henry Ralston, when tearfully equipping him for departure with the first trunks that had left the country for the seat of war in Virginia. She could tell with her eyes closed how that little "soldier's companion," as they were grandiloquently called, looked inside. It was lined throughout with a piece of the plaid silk that her "second day dress" was made of when she was married. The pockets were all of plain green silk, and on the three white flannel folds, for needles, notched all around about, the initials "H. R." were worked in red crewel. She turned it over and over in her hands, impatient to make assurance doubly sure.

She must satisfy herself on this point. Agnes would forgive her. She could explain it all to her. With trembling fingers she loosened the bow-knot of faded ribbon and opened the housewife. The initials "H. R." stared her in the face, giving confirmation strong as Holy Writ of her expectations. She instantly retied the strings, and sat there with her hands tightly folded about the cooled morocco.

How did it come into Mrs. Thorne's possession? and what light might she not be able to throw on the mystery that had enveloped her husband's fate for six years?

Memory reverted to the day when she had clung about his neck, loth to see him go, but not daring to bid him stay. Only three or four letters had ever come back to her. Then silence; a dead unbroken silence, that had lasted now for six years. That Henry Ralston was dead she believed in common with all her friends; but so far, the belief remained unsubstantiated by one iota of proof.

A mightier, deeper love had come into her life than the girlish affection she had bestowed on her young husband, and it seemed as if treason to Henry's memory that she should recognize what was good and noble in Stirling Denny. She had been a new-made bride when Harry went away from her, so dashing and gay that even the sadness of parting with his month-old wife could not quite dampen his exuberant spirits. Of course he was dead, but until she could say, "I know it," nothing should ever tempt her to marry again.

Perhaps that sleeping woman could solve the doubt of years. Perhaps when Agnes awoke she might have that to tell her which would give her the blessed privilege of unsaying the seemingly heartless words that had sent Stirling Denny away from her, only a few moments ago, in wordless resentment. She smiled as she tried to fancy herself maneuvering for an opportunity to tell him that it might be more instead of less. "He will ask me once more," she said, secure in her woman's prerogatives. "Men always do when they are in earnest."

had laid upon her shoulder. It still felt hot and dry with fever. "I do not see why you should go in your present state. Major Denny wished to leave the decision entirely with you, but he—" "Where is he? Not gone!" Agnes glanced around in surprise. "Yes, he seemed to— I believe he decided very suddenly that he must return to the village. I suppose he thought I would be all the company you would need."

There was a flush on Sula's face and a hesitancy in constructing her sentences that betrayed her. Mrs. Thorn impulsively put her hand under her friend's chin, and looked searching into the eyes too honest to aid and abet the duplicity of the tongue. "Surely you have not been so cruel? You have not—"

"Jim," said Mrs. Ralston, in a louder, firmer voice, "I thank you a hundred times for your decision, and tell Major Denny Mrs. Thorn is not well enough to leave home."

"Will not a written message be kinder?" Agnes asked, coaxingly. "If Mr. Thorn wants me—I will go." "Perhaps it would be best. You will write it?" "No, you. Ah, friend, let me feel for one little day the blessed sense of unresponsibility that has made this morning so restful. You will write it for me. He will think your decision right, whatever it may be. Why— what— you haven't been at work?" Her eyes rested for the first time on the housewife Sula still held in her hand.

"I accidentally upset your work-basket while you were asleep," Sula said, with a tremor in her voice, "and—and—wait." Rising hastily, she walked over to the squire's desk and wrote: "Mrs. Thorn still has fever, and is otherwise in too excited a condition to be of service to her husband. The trial to her nerves which his condition would entail would be a grave risk. I strongly advise against her going to the village; but if her husband expressed a direct wish for her presence, she will come. I will remain as long as she needs me.—U. RALSTON."

She read it over, undecided whether to send it or not. It was entirely non-committal. She might just as well have written it to Mr. Harris as to Major Denny. Better, for Squire Thorn was at the lawyer's house. She submitted her doubts to Mrs. Thorn.

"Why should I not refer this matter to Mr. Harris rather than to Major Denny?" "Why should we take all and give nothing?" she answered, enigmatically, smiling sadly into Sula's perplexed eyes. "I do not understand you."

"Ever since my arrival in this neighborhood," Mrs. Thorn said, explaining, "the man whom we have all tacitly agreed to regard as a traditional foe man has been spending his time and his energies in quiet, unostentatious efforts for the good of the people among whom he has cast his lot. Every unselfish act of his has been accepted as a sort of peace offering, and a certain amount of recognition, more or less meager, has been accorded by way of striking a balance. He has pursued his own even-tempered way, without fear or favor, doing what his own clear head and generous heart have dictated. And now, when he asks for the first time something in the shape of reward, it is denied him."

"What reward has he ever asked?" Sula asked, dashing off hieroglyphics on a blank sheet of paper with fierce energy and down-dropped eyes. "Only a woman's heart!" says the squire's wife, dropping the words into Sula's ears at close range.

"Sula folded her note, addressed it to Major Denny, and, going out to the gallery, where Jim had discreetly withdrawn pending their decision, she dispatched it, feeling quite sure she had done all that politeness demanded. She hardly waited to be seated, on returning to Agnes, before laying the housewife in its owner's lap, as she asked: "Mrs. Thorn, will you tell me how that came into your possession?"

Agnes viewed the article in question with indifferent eyes as she answered, carelessly: "This, yes, I remember perfectly well how I came by it, and I believe I have some other belongings of the same poor fellow somewhere."

"What was his name?" Sula asked, with husky voice and tumultuously beating heart. "Indeed, I do not remember, though I suppose I knew at one time. I know it was during the first year of the war that this housewife came into my possession accidentally. I was living with a brother, since dead, in Richmond, Virginia, at that time. He came home one day, bringing a sick soldier with him. You know, in those times, every house was opened and every hand stretched forth to care for the wearers of the gray. I nursed the owner of this little housewife through a terrible and protracted attack of typhoid fever. He was barely able to be about when he was ordered back to his company."

"He did not die, then?" "No, though I hated to have him leave us when he was so weak. We got to be very good friends during his slow convalescence. He loved to talk to me about his home—Louisiana, if I'm not mistaken, so many events crowded upon each other in those eventful days that we easily forgot, and his pretty young wife. He seemed very grateful for the little I did for him. He was ordered back to camp very suddenly, and, with the proverbial carelessness of soldiers, left

several things behind in his bureau drawer—this among them. We never knew where to send them, if indeed they had been worth sending after him."

Sula leaned over and took the housewife out of her lap. "Poor Harry!" she murmured, opening it again, and smoothing all the creases out of the faded silken pockets. "Perhaps you knew him?" "His name," said Sula, mechanically, pointing to the letters H. R., "was Henry Ralston, and he was my husband. I have believed him dead all these years. I have no proof. Even this is none."

Agnes looked at her with sorrowful interest. This, then, she thought, is the reason why Stirling Denny's wooing went awry. "I will bring you the other things," she said, and left the room to fetch them.

She came back with a parcel done up in an old Confederate newspaper, and laid it in Sula's lap. "Each heart knoweth its own bitterness, dear. I wish I could pour balm into yours," she said, softly, and left her guest alone to examine the contents of the package.

They were mere trifles that contained, with one exception. That was an unfinished letter, the last one he had ever written to his wife, which Henry Ralston had penned at intervals during his weary convalescence, meaning to dispatch quite a budget when chance of getting it through the lines by some friendly hand should offer. It, too, had been left between the folds of the atlas he used as a portfolio, and found by his entertainers after he had gone back to the army.

"Poor Harry! careless to the bitter end," Sula said, with a pitying smile, when Agnes told her of his finding. She could not mourn for his friend. He had been dead to her now for many years. It was no longer a pain to talk of him freely, even cheerfully. After all, her fancied clew had only led her into fresh mazes in the labyrinth, had only added to the uncertainty. In this letter, which had reached its destination so many years after death, her husband said: "I am ordered to report for active duty, but where that active duty is to be performed you know as well as I do." That was all. She was no nearer the solution of her doubts than she had been before the discovery of the trifle which she had put into her soldier boy's pocket, with minute and reiterated instructions concerning the use of every article in it. How merrily they both had laughed at his clumsy efforts to use the big thimble, and to thread the package up carefully, and was laying the housewife back in Mrs. Thorn's basket, when Agnes re-entered. "Keep it. It is yours," Agnes said.

"No, I should prefer leaving it here." Sula dropped it into the basket, then encircled Agnes's slender waist with her arm as she said: "You, who were so good to my poor Harry, what a return have I made you. Twice this day have I been reproached."

"Be my friend, dear, Mrs. Ralston, in the days to come, and I will forgive you for misunderstanding me in the past. I have known, she went on, quite calmly, "for a long time past that I was unconscious of some sort of social ban. I was conscious of not deserving to be, but indifferent to setting things right. It was my visit to Rossmere one evening when Major Denny was getting well, was it not, that set the tongues of idlers wagging?"

"It was not prudent, dear," said Sula, with an upflaming of the old jealousy that she felt ashamed of. "I knew that at the time, but my case was a desperate one, and I took a desperate remedy. He understood, and he never blamed me."

"Then neither will I. I have been cruel."

"No, only ignorant," said Mrs. Thorn, sinking wearily into a chair, and resting her throbbing temples in her hands. A thought-crowded silence fell between the two women. They who had come very near to each other on that sad morning, in a pact that lasted between them for all time to come, felt no need of conventional complements.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS. Sixth Sunday after Pentecost.

THE DIVINE BOUNTY.

And they did eat and were filled, and they took up that which was left of the fragments, seven baskets. (St. Mark viii. 8.)

The Gospel to-day tells us of the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, whereby our Lord fed the multitude in the wilderness. Not only did seven loaves and a few little fishes satisfy the hunger of four thousand, but seven baskets were filled with the fragments that were left. This is the way in which God always works in the dealings of His providence with mankind. He is content with giving us enough: He gives us more than enough—full measure, pressed down, and running over. He hath opened His hand and filled all things living with plenteousness. Look at the earth which He has prepared as a dwelling for the children of men, and see how bountifully He has provided for all their necessities.

"Oh! that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men," quoth out with David: "How great are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all things in wisdom; the earth is filled with Thy riches."

But if God has thus lavishly provided for the bodily wants of man, He has been even more bountiful in providing for the needs of his soul. He hath satisfied the empty soul and filled the hungry soul with good things. Just as air, water and food, the things necessary for the sustenance of our bodies, are found in the world in great abundance, so also does God's grace abound, which is necessary for the life of our souls. Just as we must breathe the air in order to live, so we have but to open our mouths in prayer, the breath of the soul, and God's grace, which is as plentiful as the air of Heaven, is poured into our hearts, filling us with new life. And as we must breathe the breath of prayer, so also we must drink the water of salvation which, mingled with blood, flowed from the wounded side of Jesus. That living water which He promised to give is His Precious Blood, shed for all upon the cross, yet continually flowing in copious streams through the sacraments to cleanse and refresh the souls of men. We have but to approach and drink and our thirsty souls shall be satisfied. "He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him," said Jesus, "shall not thirst forever. But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Draw near, then, with joy and draw this water from the Saviour's fountains, the sacraments which He has ordained in His Church. Wash therein, and you shall be clean; drink thereof, and your soul shall be refreshed.

And for food He gives us the Bread of life, the living Bread which came down from Heaven, even His own most Precious Body and Blood in the blessed sacrament of the Eucharist. "He that eateth of this Bread shall live forever; but unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you." His grace would have been enough to sustain us; but He is not content with giving us His grace alone, He must give us also Himself. This is the greatest instance of the wonderful prodigality of God towards us. After creating the world, and providing it with all that is needful for our bodily life, after giving us His grace in an almost overwhelming abundance, He might think that His generosity would have spent itself. But no, He goes still further, and His last and greatest gift is Himself to be the food of our souls. Surely there is nothing beyond this! God could not do more for us than He has done. In giving us Himself He has done the utmost that is possible.

When, therefore, we behold the wonderful works of God in our behalf our hearts should swell with thankfulness to Him who gives so abundantly unto us, above all that we could ask or think. Since God has been so good towards us, let us not be guilty of the base ingratitude of despising His gifts, and rejecting the mercies He holds out to us. Rather be generous towards Him, and as He gives us Himself, striving in all things to please Him, offering ourselves daily unto Him, soul and body, as "living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God, our reasonable service."

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THE CITY OF TORONTO. AN ALLEGORY. (ALBA). CHAPTER I. My experiences now, a serious reflection on my merits, as I endeavor to great difficulty, to extricate from the intricacies of the return to Sapphus-land, a question—at least for me—might I live there contented but I could not. The already spent there had rendered endurable by nourished hope of something had sought that something "Happy Valley," and suit! There remained, the City of Mammam as exertions, and a Land my aspirations. The received in my native pointed in that direction. Forben Valley so a the I began to entertain for the judgment of Sapphus-land. I had, however, I had, descent into the Valley direct road to the desired prosperity; and there riving for it but to follow of a dry river course ultimately bring me in many by-ways that led Mammam, although, as in turn, would bring me end of the town. It a solitary journey; a nett stars could be seen thro cloud of lamp smoke, a gully glow, as of the served somewhat to en should have broken n times but for the aid of However, I summoned to the task, and made situation. But my exnd night were not yet something to learn of the "Happy Valley."

I had travelled a c down the dry river-cou in the dark against shelving rocks, when, bluff which stood above the Valley where it de road leading to the ci that the faint glow ab was not, as I had hop down, but proceeded building, whose pilla vealed the brightly richly adorned interior number of persons wer The approach was b marble steps; and of travellers who seeme down the road, many had were ascending these few were descending their way. There w music or of laughter, the dead silence, exci lect. Stopping to re served that those who were in an extremel dition. One was u another had lost his barefoot. Seized with desire to unravel the up the stair and e Straight facing the gilded throne, when a robed figure, her hea a gaily-colored tunic. Her eyes were blindl closely, I could see was tit-tat over the r in a way to escape a In her hands she hel work, through the could be seen a var similar bags of wool from every finger; both arms outstretche her gifts to the hun eyes of her courti throne stooey, a sort were inscribed in ga "Give and you will was a large stool on the Diva rested; and I perceived that a from it to a small w as the Diva presse communicated, in th able top of the al company crowded First, they laid mo it; then, watches, sakes. Then they themselves of their course, with articles. It was all pressed the spring round, the movel offering after offer into a semin ceptacle, while the still hung inviting Once or twice she at some votary who enough of it, and w but in every case and the gold-pieces moveable top, w merciles receptac

I had now diffi for the beggared whom I had seen to on this temple of amazed me, muc remain; and, imp more than curiosi a pillar to watch From where I sto of the hall, and w way at an end, v side entrance. Th very dark, and some one sitting i which reminded the three sister ha note of these thi a fearful cry—n company, but th single voice; a centre of the ha

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