

Were Marriages Made in Heaven ?

SOME fond sentimentalists believe that marriage must be based on some subtle spiritual affinities, in order to be genuine, and they will go unmarried to the grave because they do not find twin souls, counterparts to their own peculiar forms of being, spirits having a subtle affinity with their own spirits. Poor Marie Corelli consoles such unfortunates by her creation of a spirit world about us, among the denizens of which the mate, never met on earth, may be found. She fancies that in most so-called marriages the souls really remain virgin and lonely, and can only find a true union by searching amongst the spirits in the air for the peculiar souls destined for them from the beginning of all things.

Most people will derive but little comfort from the prospect of such an immaterial spiritual union as this appears to be. But many who deny such a belief have in their own hearts hopes and expectations nearly as unrealizable. They fully expect to find the twin souls on earth, if not in the air. In short it is a common belief that marriages are made in heaven, that heaven interests itself in bringing together the right kinds of spirits for marriage, while in regard to fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, there is no such special providence at work. Marriage is supposed to be a matter of an ethereal love, infinitely higher than all other. The young flame their imaginations with poetic and romantic fictions concerning some mysterious soul-union, some delicate, intuitive recognition of the future life-companions. Some of them believe that there is one person in the world destined for each person of the other sex. As a result of such sentimentality, many a man is refused who loves in a frank, wholesome, earthly way, and who would make the object of his affections happy in a sensible, rational manner. On the other hand, some long-haired, poetizing scamp is accepted, because he is able to work on the imagination and shed tears over the supposed affinities of soul.

When this supposed twin-soul has been found and appropriated, in most cases a process of disenchantment soon follows,

and a rapid descent is made from the seventh heaven to the common earth. The fond wife discovers after the glamor is gone that conjugal love has no wonderful subtlety and heavenliness, that after all it is only a colored form of other love. The first ill-cooked meal often gives the house of cards a serious jostle, and little by little mere romantic love is worn away by the ordinary sordid cares of life. It leaves behind a good, substantial affection, or frequently no affection at all.

The idle, sentimental love, which exists in the prenuptial state arises sometimes from mere personal attractions, fancied perfections of mind, social distinctions, but in most cases from nothing in particular, merely some vague magnetism. Hence first love, having no sound basis, often fluctuates and vanishes in a very short time. As it came through nothing, it goes for nothing.

Why, then, is this unstable, irrational love so much insisted on? When there is much expected from it, and this much seldom comes, it leaves disappointment and discontent. Better look at facts squarely and not romance about soul-affinity. Esteem and solid liking, mutual interest, mutual trust, wear better than any amount of romantic passion, which soon passes away into oblivion, or perhaps into the moon, where old romantic writers held all best things departed.

—MRS. PLATO.



FROM WHENCE COMETH STRENGTH.

The bending pine trees on the rocky bluff,
The great white sea that beats against the
rocks
And wears its stones and shapes its shore
at will,
The gleam of sunshine on the breaker's
crest,
The bright, wet sands, the flash of sea-bird's
wing,
The rush of wind that gleams with tossing
spray,
The call of seagull beating toward the
cloud,
The distant mountains blue against the
blue.—
These are my battle hymn, my Marseillaise
Which hearing I may never brook defeat;
But keep my courage and endurance strong
Knowing that I must conquer at the last.

G. R. V.