

in set words the poetry latent in his nature.

There is the poet and the poet. There is the bird that sings in the cloudscape, because it cannot help itself, pouring to earth, in very deed, a flood of liquid melody, and there is the barn-door fowl whose homely chuck, chuck, serves naught but to group round her matronly presence the fluffy objects of her care. Yet I maintain that the hen in her humble way is as fine a poet as the lark that carols herself from mortal gaze into the sunlight.

Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh, and if the soaring bird trills its orison to nature five thousand feet above the sea-level, it is no more an orison than is the instinctive call of the Dorking to her brood below, scratching the face of mother earth for the barley-corn; for both are but giving expression to the same sentiment, from the heart-casket of each is issuing the same treasure, love; and love is the soul of poetry, love for the sunshine and the green earth and the blue sky, or love for the callow nestlings with the fragment of egg-shell yet armoring their otherwise defenceless backs.

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For love is heaven and heaven is love."

It is hopeless for the barn-door fowl to emulate the lark, for the lark was created—born to fulfil her high mission. From her place in the clouds she was destined to pour her joyous notes to earth, in full jubilee of song. But, if the fowl cannot hope to emulate the songster as lark, she can at least equal the lark in the matter of poetic sentiment as hen. There are kinds of poetry and degrees of poetry as there are kinds of beauty and degrees of beauty. The roughened and russet cheek of age, seamed with the lines of many cares, the scanty locks whitened with the snows

of many winters, are as beautiful to some as the blooming cheek that knows no wrinkle but the dimple of joy, and the rippling tresses whose only reminiscence of time is the virgin gold of youth and sun. But mother is as dear a name as bride, and the poetry of age is oftentimes more beautiful and expressive than the doggerel of youth. So there is the poetry of high art, festooning with exuberant wealth the exalted spirit of cultured genius; art and yet nature, but art that has learned to train nature and make her, perhaps, not more beautiful, but more apparent. Every block of marble or granite hides in its strong womb some beautiful conception, a hundred beautiful conceptions, but the mallet of the sculptor must smite them from the darkness to the light, else will they remain unknown and unappreciated. Again, there is the poetry of nature, without any art at all, looking out of the honest eyes of simple rustics, and lingering beneath cottage eaves, where the scent of honeysuckle and eglantine makes amends for the silent heart-voicings that are there, but which, like the other ripples in space, bear only a silent light on their gossamer wings. There is the poetry of expression and the poetry of suggestion and the poetry that makes no sign, unless, perhaps, some chance misfortune or bereavement or ecstasy of joy crushes it, as the casual foot the aroma from the wild thyme, out of the heart that had hidden its secret so long from the eyes of the curious world.

So the poet is born, not made, and this fact is answer sufficient to the second query, "are all men born poets?"

Every infant smiling into its mother's eyes is a poet, transmitting the electric messages of love in eloquent glances, that intercepted by counter messages, are mingled with