

are in bright sunshine again, with fleecy white clouds below us, and a deep blue sky above. Here we are all alone, in perfect silence, in the depths of a great abyss—massive clouds towering up on all sides, a snowy-white mass below. But no sign of earth—no sign of anything human. Not a sound, not a sign of life! What peace! what bliss! Horrors! what's that report? The balloon must have burst. Oh, nonsense; keep still, it's only a fold of the stuff nipped by the netting being suddenly released, that's all. Well, we are falling, and we must take care, for the coldness and dampness of this cloud will cause the gas to contract, and we shall fall rapidly. So get a bag of ballast ready, for we are already in the darkness of the cloud. Now the gas-bag shrinks and writhes, and loose folds rustle together, and it gets darker. You can feel the breeze blowing upwards, against your face or hand held over the edge of the car. Well, that's not to be wondered at, for remember we are falling, say, 1,000 feet a minute, which is as if we were going ten miles an hour sitting in a dogcart.

We are already nearing the treetops. We are into them, what's more! Hang on, now! and mind your hands or they will get scratched. Hish! the green twigs come in all around us, we crash among the branches, stop dead, and then the balloon, as if suddenly thinking better of it, lifts us with a tug right up again, and we are soaring away over a field. A little more ballast. That's it. We are just going over a farmhouse—see the ducks and chickens flying in all directions and making such a cackling. "Come down, come down!" we hear the people shouting. "Come up here!" we shout in reply, though we have already passed over the house and are skimming along now pretty close to the ground, for a big open hill has appeared before us. We glide up the side of it and pass over its top. But see, there is a large village ahead of us. We must rise again, else some damage may be done to the chimney-pots. There is the town now laid before us—there is the church, then the main street, and the big mill in rear. What place can this be?—I haven't followed the map sufficiently carefully. We'll ask. There is a man standing in the High Street, looking up at us. "What town is this?" we shout at the top of our voices. It is immediately replied to by a perfect chorus of voices, each obliterating the other. One forgets that though you ask the question of one man, every person in the village of whom the greater part are looking up at the balloon, hears one equally well, and all shout back in

answer. Well, see! there is the railway, and it is time we were getting down. So we will come down as near to the station as we can. Now open goes the valve and down we go. We are falling a little too fast, so out with some ballast. Hear it spattering on the trees below! There is a nice open field just beyond those trees. We are nearly in the tree-tops; but out goes the grapnel, and, relieved of its weight we shall just clear them. The grapnel falls into the trees where it is bound to hold and we sink gently into the field.

A CONSERVATIVE.....*Charlotte Perkins Stetson*

The garden beds I wandered by
One bright and cheerful morn,
When I found a new-sledged butterfly
A-sitting on a thorn,
A black and crimson butterfly,
All doleful and forlorn.

I thought that life could have no sting
To infant butterflies,
So I gazed on this unhappy thing
With wonder and surprise,
While sadly with his waving wing
He wiped his weeping eyes.

Said I, "What can the matter be?
Why weepest thou so sore?
With garden fare and sunlight free
And flowers in goodly store"—
But he only turned away from me
And burst into a roar.

Cried he, "My legs are thin and few,
Where once I had a swarm;
Soft, fuzzy fur—a joy to view—
Once kept my body warm,
Before these flapping wing-things grew
To hamper and deform."

At that outrageous bug I shot
The fury of my eye;
Said I, in scorn, all burning hot,
With rage and anger high,
"You ignominious idiot,
Those wings are made to fly."

"I do not want to fly," said he;
"I only want to squirm,"
And he dropped his wings dejectedly,
But still his voice was firm;
"I do not want to be a fly;
I want to be a worm."

O, yesterday of unknown lack,
To-day of unknown bliss.
I left my fool in red and black;
The last I saw was this:
The creature madly climbing back
Into his chrysalis.