

my childhood—with a light step and a joyous heart; pleasure smiled upon the present, and hope shed its halo round scenes of many days to come. I was, indeed, a favored child of fortune; yet, Eva, yours is a more enviable lot,—true, your parents are not rich in this world's goods; but, what is better far, they are rich in faith; heirs of the promises of God's holy word; and their prayers and instructions, with a blessing from on high, will prove a much better inheritance for you than silver or gold, or all that this earth can afford. My parents were wealthy and indulgent, and I was an only daughter. I had one brother, a noble minded and affectionate boy, two years older than myself—the companion and playmate of my childhood, and the fond associate of more mature years. It is not surprising that the warmest affections of my heart should have clustered around him—in fact, I almost idolized him. Lately we had been separated a great deal, as I had been attending a seminary at a distance, while he was pursuing his studies in our native town, and now he was the first to welcome my return; and as he pressed the fraternal kiss upon my cheek, he reminded me, that, my school days being ended, we should once more be united as the brother and sister of former days. Many were our pleasant remembrances the past, of and many the plans we formed for the future, as we wandered together through the favorite haunts of our beautiful home, and revisited the scenes of our infantile sports and childish glees. The sun of prosperity shone brightly upon us, and we thought we were happy; but as yet we knew nothing of those nobler motives for action, and those higher sources of enjoyment which are found in the love and worship of God.

A year passed quickly and pleasantly away, and we were again called to part.—Henry had devoted himself to the study of the law, and it was now high time that he should attend the university in a distant city, in order fully to prepare himself for receiving the honors, and entering upon the duties of his profession. Sad, indeed, was the time of parting—a strange foreboding seemed to have come over the hearts of each; and even my brother was low-spirited. Never shall I forget the last walk we took together—though, then, I little imagined it might be indeed the last. We had been rambling along for some time in silence, and at length paused beside a small and silvery stream, which, but a short distance below, emptied its quiet waters into the noble river which swept past our dwelling—Henry gazed awhile upon its transparent waters, and then turning towards me with an expression of deep solemnity in his countenance, such as I never before observed—"Amanda!" said he, "see this sweet rivulet; how quietly it has meandered through our meadows, with scarce anything to oppose its course, or raise an angry ripple upon its surface—behold it now, mingling its waters with that mighty stream, which at length shall bear them on to the almost boundless ocean—thus, hitherto, have passed my days and years, as smoothly and peacefully as this silent brook; but now I am about to launch my bark upon the hurried stream of busy life, and who shall say how swiftly it may bear me on to the vast and fathomless ocean of eternity." I was so much struck by his words, but particularly by his manner, that I could make him no reply, but leaned my head upon his arm and wept. He then strove to cheer me by speaking of his bright hopes and brilliant anticipations, and of the path of fame, which, opening fair and wide, allured his youthful vision—and it was this alone—the hope of seeing him hereafter the pride and honor of his father's house, which consoled us all during his absence; for each fond parent also sadly missed their best, their oldest child.

After a lapse of some months he once more returned; but oh! how changed! The rosy hue of health had forsaken his cheek; the light of hope and pleasure no longer beamed from his eye—constant fatigues and a too close application to study, had strengthened the seeds of a fatal disease already implanted in his constitution, and consumption was fast gaining upon its victim. He did not long remain with us, but passed quickly to the tomb. But our loss was his gain—during his absence from his earthly home he had learned to prepare himself for a better, a brighter home above, and death presented nothing frightful to his imagination. Much did he strive, during his illness, to lead me also to embrace that religion which could make him willing

to resign life, even in its brightest, happiest moments—but our minds were dark, and it was long ere we could understand, and longer still ere we could accept the offers and claim the promises and consolations of the gospel. I was naturally of a light and cheerful disposition, but impatient, and having scarcely ever been crossed in any thing, sorrow and disappointment were almost strangers to me. This was my first real trial, and truly, it was a severe one. There, beside the death-bed of that darling brother, was learned my first lesson of submission—submission to the will of God—and as I stood beside his coffin, and gazed upon that much loved form, now cold and motionless in death, was breathed my first prayer—a prayer that we who had been so united on earth might at length be reunited in heaven.

The death of my brother was the beginning of a new life for me—a life of faith on the Son of God. Since then, varied and often trying, have been the scenes through which I have passed; but that grace which was my consolation then, has never forsaken me, but has proved a source of peace and happiness to me, even amid trial and disappointment, and light and joy have beamed upon my path in many a dark and stormy day."

Simcoe, December, 1848

LATONA.

Insect Architects.

THE ground spiders may be well ranked among the wonderful native architects of Australia; they are of various sizes, and differ in their color, form and markings. They hollow a circular hole in the earth, adapted to the size of their body, and more beautifully formed, and perfectly round, than any engineer with all his scientific instruments could have made it. Within it is nicely tapestried with the finest web, woven closely over the wall of this subterranean drawing room, the depth of which I never accurately ascertained, as at a certain distance they seem to curve, or perhaps lead into a side cell, where the feelers of fine grass I have introduced could not penetrate. Some of these tunnels terminate at the surface with merely a slight web spun over the grains of soil close to the aperture, as if to prevent their rolling into it; the holes being from one sixth of an inch to an inch in diameter. Some of them boast of the extraordinary luxury of a front-door; these I imagine to be rather first rate kind of spiders, and the doors are as beautiful instances of insect skill and artifice as any that our wonder-teeming world displays to us. When shut down over the hole, nothing but the very most accurate previous knowledge could perceive any difference in the surface of the soil, but perhaps if you remain very still for some minutes the clever inhabitant will come forth—when you perceive a circle of earth, perhaps the size of a wedding-ring or larger, lifted up from beneath, like a trap-door; it falls back gently on its hinge side, and a fine, hairy, beautifully pencilled, brown or grey spider pops out and most probably pops in again to sit just beneath the opening, and wait for his dinner of flies or other eatable intruders. Then we see that the under side and the rim of his earthen door are thickly and neatly webbed over, so that not a grain of soil can fall away from its thickness, which is usually about the eighth or tenth of an inch, and although so skilfully webbed below, the upper preserves exactly the same appearance as the surrounding soil. The hinge also consists of web, neatly attached to that of the lid, and box. I have the greatest respect and admiration for these clever mechanics, and though I very often with a bent of grass, or a soft green twig, try to persuade one to come up, and be looked at (which they generally do, nipping fast hold of the intrusive probe,) I never was guilty of hurting one. I have picked very large ones off the ground that the plough had just turned over, and have carried them to places unlikely to be disturbed; and I generally have two or three particular friends among them, whom I frequently take a peep at. They often travel some distance from home, probably in search of food, as I have overtaken and watched them returning, when they seldom turn aside from hand or foot placed in their way, but go steadily on at a good swift pace, and after dropping into their hole put forth a claw, and hook the door to after them, just as a man would close a trap-door above him when descending a ladder.—Mrs. Meredith's New South Wales