

CHAPTER XXVI

THE MIRACLE OLD AS EDEN

IT was early morning, and a weekday too, but a vast crowd was collecting at Fayette Avenue Church, handsome equipages and richly dressed ladies in line with humbler vehicles and shabbily dressed men and women. Florists were still busy banking the platform and aisles with heavily perfumed flowers, but so eager were rich and poor to secure a seat where no seats had been reserved for favoured classes, that they were early on the ground. Every pew was crowded, and the aisles as full as the good-natured policemen would permit, and still it wanted half an hour of the allotted time for the marriage to take place, when the pastor was to take, for better or worse, the woman of all others with whom he wished to make the pilgrimage of life. What a look of expectation there was on many a grief-lined countenance from the slums, and what a vision of beauty that white-robed woman, in her veil of lace and flowers, was to these people who had never dreamed that one could look like that! They did not study closely the