

later the soul comes to earth, and takes up its abode in its tabernacle of clay. Its nature then becomes threefold—sensual, rational, and spiritual. The glorious vision of heaven has been lost, but as there is one abstraction, beauty, which has a visible existence here, the soul is not without a chance of regaining its former state. At the sight of earthly beauty it is reminded of the heavenly. But its sensual part does not, and cannot rise above the present. To it there is no suggestion of the heavenly vision in the earthly, and it rushes with eagerness to revel in the enjoyment of what it sees. Then the spiritual element of the soul, which lives constantly in the air of heaven, steps in to restrain the sensual, and, in the man who aspires to higher things than the grovelling pleasures of earth, is aided by the rational part, or reason. In such event the victory rests with the spiritual. It becomes strengthened by the struggle. A brighter view is gained of the heavenly beauty, and with it of the other abstractions of the celestial landscape, and so the soul slowly agonizes along the road of restoration. Each successive victory marks a step forward, until finally the lost vision is permanently restored to its longing eyes. Heaven and eternal joy are at length regained.

This was Plato's doctrine, different in many respects from that of Wordsworth. According to the former the child knows least of the glories left, the experienced philosopher most. The recollections become more frequent and more enduring with advancing years. But, according to Wordsworth, the child, whose soul is but a star that set in heaven to rise on earth, is the best philosopher; and, though deaf and silent, "reads the eternal deep, haunted for ever by the eternal mind." He is the "mighty prophet," the

"Seer blest, on whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost—the darkness of the grave."

Over him "immortality broods like the day, a master o'er a slave, a presence which is not to be put by." He lives more than half in the light of the heaven he has left. But soon the things of earth begin to engross his attention, with ever-increasing demands, and the walls of his prison-house gradually rise to shut out the view of ante-natal glory. Each succeeding year finds him travelling farther from the east, but he is still attended by the glorious vision, until he reaches manhood, when it is lost in the ordinary scenes of life. Thus from infancy, through boyhood and youth, to manhood, there is a gradual lessening of the ethereal splendour, for Earth,

"His homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came."