

were attractive, yet he could choose but one. One was a pearl, which at first might seem of little value, but the more you looked at it, the brighter it grew, until you saw it was the pearl of great price,—the love of God. The other was a yellow gem of most goodly seeming, burning with a fervent radiance, and was the love of gold.

Years passed away; springs were succeeded by summers, and summers passed into cold autumns and cold winters. And as the years came and went, all the time the boy's heart was busy with him. He was now a bold-browed youth with flashing eyes, but their fire was dimmed for a time, for his mother faded, and, at length withered away. Birds sang, and shadows danced, and the silvery water-bells tinkled in the streams, and dandelions spangled the green turf upon his mother's grave, and the youth's heart was softened. The mildly beaming pearl seemed lovelier in his eyes, for his mother's voice had blessed it. He would have taken it to his heart, but the spirit of the other love was close beside his ear. Wilt thou choose that, and with it poverty and contempt among thy fellow men? Look! this shall bring thee happiness, for it rules mankind. It shall bring thee power and honor with its riches. It shall fill thy coffers, so that men shall call thee honourable. It shall make for thee ready servitors, for thou shalt say to this one 'Go,' and to that one 'Come,' and all shall do thy bidding. It shall bring thee all that satisfies, for it shall bring thee homage from thy fellow men.

And then in the boy's ears sounded his mother's words, 'Fear God rather than man.' 'Seek first the kingdom of God.'

The boy became a man, yet begun to pass unheeded among men, for he had not gold. His proud spirit could not brook the world's neglect. The pearl was offered him again. Would he choose that and walk obscurely, or the other, and be rich and honored for his crown of gold!

He forgot his mother's words, he forgot the all-seeing eye, he forgot the yearning tenderness of Him who became poor that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. He forgot all, and he took to his heart the other love! and so subtle was its nature, that, unconsciously to him, it supplanted all other affection! The desire for gold, that he might command the homage of men, burned deep in his heart. It corroded and consumed the memories of his early life; and the long grass sodden with rain, over his mother's grave, wept the only tears which were now shed there.

The earnest, tender light had faded from his eyes—they were now cold and hard; and instead of the open glance which had been their wont, they had now a repellent suspicious gaze. His form was bent, too, and the brow furrowed and knit with care. In the worn repulsive man, you scarcely recognized the frank and noble youth; for those powers which might have given him a high place in the intellectual world were prostituted to the base, sordid use of money-getting. His heart was canker-eaten.

But he gained his ends. Gold freely, lavishly, flowed into his money-chests, and men—low-minded—bowed, but they revered him not! When those who had early loved him died, he lived unloving and unloved. For he had lost all generous impulses, and he was now only a miser. Other men had treasures in the household, he had none but in his drawers and chests and bags. Other men had treasures in friends; he had no friends, and no treasures in any human heart. Other men had treasures in heaven; he had laid up none there, but hoarded them all on earth. He was offered the Pearl of Great Price, but refused it. He was offered the Love of Gold, and accepted it. He chose for what he should live, and lived for it. And then he miserably died! The first spirit came to his bedside and wept; the other came also and mocked. 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?'

### 3. TRANSFORMING POWER OF VICE.

You have heard the story of the Italian artist, who, meeting with a child of exquisite beauty, wished to preserve its features for fear he should never see such loveliness again. So he painted the charming face upon canvas, and hung it upon the walls of his studio. In his sombre hours that sweet, gentle countenance was like an angel of light to him. Its presence filled his soul with the purest aspirations. "If I ever find," he said, "a perfect contrast to this beautiful face, I will paint that also, and hang them side by side,—an ideal of heaven and hell." Years passed. At length, in a distant land, he saw in a prison the most hideous object he ever gazed upon—a fierce, haggard fiend, with glaring eyes, and cheeks deeply furrowed with lust and crime. The artist remembered his vow, and immediately painted a picture of this loathsome form, to hang beside the picture of the lovely boy. The contrast was perfect. His dream was realized. The two poles of the moral universe were before him. What was the surprise of this artist, on inquiry into the history of this horrid wretch, to find that he was once that lovely

little boy. Both of these pictures, the angel and demon of the same soul, now hang side by side in a Tuscan gallery.

### 4. A BEAUTIFUL FAITH.

"Beautiful, exceedingly," is the burial of children among the Mexicans. No dark procession or gloomy looks mark the passage to the grave; but dressed in its holiday attire, and garlanded with bright, fresh flowers, the little sleeper is borne to its rest. Glad songs, and joyful bells are rung; lightly as to a festival, the gay group goes its way. The child is not dead, they say, but going home." The Mexican mother, who has household treasures laid away in the *campo santa*—God's sacred field—breathes a sweet faith, only heard elsewhere in the poet's utterance. Ask her how many children bless her house, and she will answer; "Five; two here, and three yonder." So, despite death and the grave, it is yet an unbroken household, and the simple mother ever lives in the thought.

### 5. THE INDELIBLE NATURE OF INFLUENCE.

If a wafer be laid on a surface of polished metal, which is then breathed upon, and if, when the moisture of the breath has evaporated, the wafer be shaken off, we shall find that the whole polished surface is not as it was before, although our senses can detect no difference; for if we breathe again upon it the surface will be moist everywhere except on the spot previously sheltered by the wafer, which will now appear as a spectral image on the surface. Again and again we breathe, and the moisture evaporates, but still the spectral wafer reappears. This experiment succeeds after a lapse of many months, if the metal be carefully put aside where its surface cannot be disturbed. If a sheet of paper on which a key has been laid be exposed for some minutes to the sunshine, and then instantaneously viewed in the dark, the key being removed, a fading spectre of the key will be visible. Let this paper be put aside for many months where nothing can disturb it, and then in darkness be laid on a plate of hot metal—the spectre of the key will again appear. In the case of bodies more highly phosphorescent than paper, the spectres of many different objects which may have been laid on it in succession will, on warming, emerge in their proper order. This is equally true of our bodies and our minds. We are involved in the universal metamorphosis. Nothing leaves us wholly as it found us. Every man we meet, every book we read, every picture or landscape we see, every word or tone we hear, mingles with our being and modifies it. There are cases on record of ignorant women, in states of insanity, uttering Greek and Hebrew phrases, which in past years they have heard their masters utter, without, of course, comprehending them. These tones had long been forgotten; the traces were so faint that, under ordinary conditions, they were invisible; but these traces were there, and in the intense light of cerebral excitement they started into prominence, just as the spectral image of the key started into sight on the application of heat. It is thus with all the influences to which we are subjected.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

### 6. WHAT IS THE PALMETTO?

The South Carolinians have adopted the Palmetto as the emblem of their State. The Palmetto is defined as a cabbage tree. It attains a height of forty or fifty feet, and is the tallest of our palms. The summit is crowned with a tuft of leaves, varying in length and breadth from one to five feet, which gives it a majestic appearance.—Flowers, small, greenish, and disposed in long clusters. Fruit about as large as a pea, inesculent. Wood of no value, except for the construction of wharves. In short, it is as nearly worthless as a tree can well be. Its height, its "majesty," and flaunting pride, have probably commended it to the favor of the chivalry.

### 7. ORIGIN OF ENGLISH LAW.

The circumstances of society, the designs of rulers, and a variety of religious systems have created different codes of laws whose provisions have been so modified from time to time, and so interchanged, that it is not always easy to trace the channels through which particular legal forms or principles have come down to us.

Druid laws, from a remote and unknown antiquity, prevailed in Britain until about fifty years after Christ, when in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, Roman laws were established over that part which was held by the Romans, whose jurisdiction was gradually extended during the next thirty years, until in the reign of Vespasian they governed all Britain, which became a Roman province. For three hundred and fifty years England was subject to that magnificent body of laws which, during a long period of development and prosperity, the Romans had borrowed from other nations, or had