

"Is it a soul?" said the boy.

"I do not say so," was the reply.

"Will it live forever?"

"I dare not say so."

"Why not, my father?"

"Because neither nature nor revelation has given us any positive answer."

For a time my little master was silent, and then he began again:

"Father, dear?"

"Well, my boy, what is it now?"

"I heard you talking with mother dear about what is called 'The astronomic system of the universe.' What do all those big words mean?"

The father feeling that perhaps he was on sure ground here, readily replied,

"It is the theory of many wise men, that every ray of light flashed out, and every sound once uttered, be it a shout of gladness or a cry of pain, still continues somewhere in this great universe, even if we see not the light nor hear the sound."

"Father," said the boy, "have these rays of light or sounds any souls like ours?"

"Certainly not!"

"Have they in them that which Hector has which makes him love us so loyally, and that causes him to feel sorry for Billy?"

"Certainly not!"

"And yet," continued the lad, "the rays of