

# THE ANTIDOTE

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## INFALLIBILITY.

We all of us count among our relations and friends a number of good people who neither have, nor claim to have, any special infallibility or moral superiority over good people in general; who are not conceited, not arrogant, not even, perhaps, self-reliant, but who are infallible. No matter who gave them their opinions, or how their tastes came, their own opinions and tastes are to them the certainties of primary intuition, "the bases of things in heaven;" they cannot conceive of them as only individual impressions like their neighbors', and cannot conceive of the individual impressions of their neighbors as in any way equally important realities to the said neighbors. Their faith is not in themselves, for they will often make no difficulty of admitting incompetence to judge some question they are ruling; and even the temperament of undue self depreciation is not always found incompatible with infallibility; it is a faith in their faith, the feeling is truly in them, and therefore it must be true, that is the reasoning of it. Under this sort of conviction they can never quite lose the impression that there is something morally wrong in any dissimilarity from them. It is not that they want to set themselves up as models, but, since their likes and dislikes, their beliefs, their desires, their ways of doing things, go by the absolute law of being right, there cannot but be some blame to any who depart from that law.

Infallible people do not usually fritter away eloquence in arguments. Why should they, having so simple and final a logic? There are only two sides to any question, the right and the wrong, and their side is the right one; and on the same good grounds they rarely accept discussion of their views, even as self-defense from one they may have arraigned; any attempt to change them is apt to be

looked upon with a holy, and not always patient horror. It does not follow that their views never do change; though inaccessible to direct reasoning they are not inaccessible to the edifying influence of intercourse and surroundings, which, with ordinary minds, do far more than any conscious deliberation to shape the course of thought, and they are, perhaps, rather more than less likely than are the people who for want of faith like theirs, test their own opinions by questioning them, to arrive at other than their earlier phases. The opinion from which nothing can make them swerve is, that the other people, who are not of their mind, are astray.



## ROMANCE OF A ROSE.

It was a tiny white rose which had budded into life so suddenly that it had not yet begun to comprehend the pure joy of living. Its white, tender heart opened wider every minute, and its perfume grew stronger. Then, when like all young souls it had begun to think that the whole of life consisted of beauty, perfume and warm soft air, a lady purchased it and carried it out of doors. The first breath of icy air chilled the poor young rose-soul so that it ceased to grow, but it bravely held on to life, and struggled for breath. And by and by it forgot its trouble and became interested in the world around it. The first thing it noticed was the cheek of the maiden upon whose bosom it rested. This was oval in form and pink in color; such a soft pink that it reminded the rose of the bud which had lain beside it on the florist's counter. And later, as a certain young man drew near, it turned the color of the huge crimson "Jacks," which had nodded to it from the window as the pretty girl had carried it away. "Oh, how do you do?" the young man exclaimed, and then they talked so softly that the rose could not hear what they said, although it guessed that the subject of their whispered conversation was its twin-sister, Love. When the young man went away the rose was pinned on his coat lapel, but alas for the maiden, in the next block another girl wore it. "Thank you, Jack," murmured its new owner, "How do you know just the flowers I like?" And when she was alone again she tenderly pressed the flower to her lips. "Poor little bud, how cold you are," she said, and opening her velvet cape, she laid the rose inside it, and drew a fold of her soft crape muffler over it. The rose, which was nearly withered by the young man's falseness, was warmed by her happy heart and revived. But when

the girl loosened her cape in the street car the rose dropped into her lap, and though, when she left the car, still lost in her happy dream, it clung to her gown with desperate longing, it was shaken into the mud and never knew of the tear she shed over its loss an hour later.

## Nursed Back to Life.

The car conductor picked it up and put it in his pocket, until he reached home, where his little girl nursed it so tenderly that when next morning she dressed for her music lesson, it looked so fresh and lovely, that she could not resist sticking it into her buttonhole. Half an hour later as her teacher, a young German, fresh from the "Vaterland," patiently tried to pilot her through the mysteries of a "piece" in "key of A natural, three sharps, 4-4 time," his eyes fell on the pretty flower and they filled with tears. His little pupil, who had the fine instinct some women possess, noticed his emotion, but said nothing until the lesson was over. Then she exclaimed, "Oh, Mr. Hememan, I wonder if you'd mind keeping this rose? It's so cold out, I'm afraid it will be dead before I get home, and I do hate to see a flower die. May I leave it?" "Certainly, miss, certainly," was the ready answer, and after the tactful child had gone her merry way, the lonely musician kissed the rose. Perhaps for a moment he fancied it was the face of the blue eyed girl he thought of so constantly. At night he took it to his boarding house, and seeing his landlady casting wistful glances toward it he gave it to her. She carried it, a great white beauty by this time, to her own little room in the basement (which the cook had declined to occupy), and many times that evening, as she sat patiently turning sheets as a restful change from catering to the appetites of thirty people on the lowest possible financial basis, her eyes turned lovingly to the snowy flower. Next morning she took it with her on her early trip to market, and in the butcher-shop its stem gave way and again it fell to the ground.

When the tired little woman dressed for dinner, she missed it, and felt she had lost a friend, but she hunted the house through in vain. Long before this, however, the butcher's boy in sweeping the store, had found the poor rose fading in the sawdust and placed it in the icebox. It woke a tender memory of his long dead mother, and his language and behavior for the rest of the morning was so subdued that his employer rallied him about being in love. That night he wore the rose, fresh and sweet again, though with some of its petals gone, to a dance, and it won him several partners who would never have danced with him, only the flower softened their hearts to the awkward boy. One of them slyly hid one