

A LESSON IN A DREAM.

The labor of the busy day was done.
And in the twilight's deepening shade I sat
With folded hands, my heart and thoughts at rest.
Like some old half-remembered cradle song
The night breeze murmured, and its low, sweet notes
Lulled my tired soul to stillness. And the stars,
Those tireless watchers of the fateful night,
Laid one by one their filmy veils aside,
And bent above me with their holy eyes
That seemed to question and reprove, and yet
Withal, to look sweet messages of hope
And heavenly trust and comfort into mine.
Thus sat I in the twilight. And methought
I heard, borne faintly on the passing breeze,
A low, sweet strain of song. So low it was
And soft, I scarcely heard it, yet so sweet
You might have thought heaven's pearly gates were left
Ajar, and these soul-thrilling notes had floated out.
And while I listened wondering, suddenly
One stood beside me. White her vesture was
And clasped with bands of gold. Upon her brow
Of lily whiteness gleamed a starry crown,
And in her hand a glittering gem she bore.
"Mortal," she said, "commissioned by my King,
Heaven's King, thy sovereign Lord, I come to thee.
This hath He sent thee." And upon my brow
The lustrous gem she placed. "Behold how fair!
Its shining depths are founts of golden light.
And brighter and more beautiful 'twill glow
While thou dost wear it. Lay it not aside
Lest all its lustre fade, and thou deplore
Its vanished loveliness with unavailing tears."
Thus spake my visitant, and bending low
Laid her light lips upon my forehead. Then