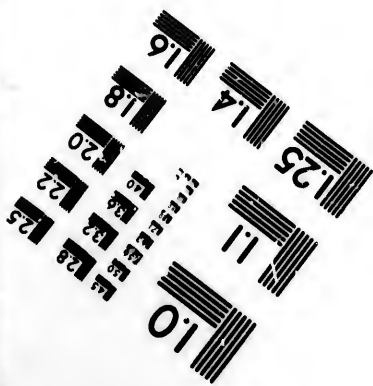
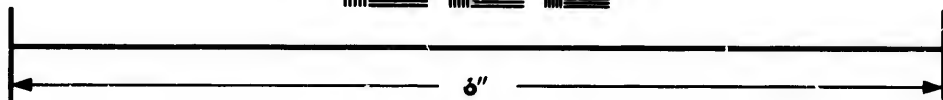
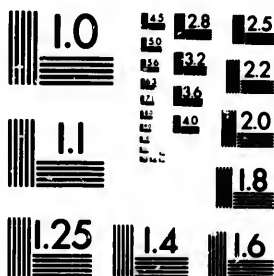


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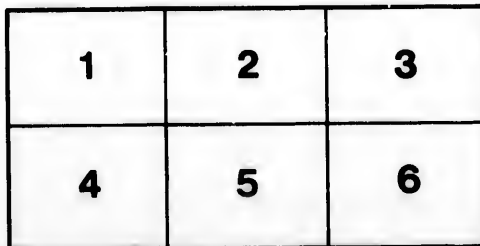
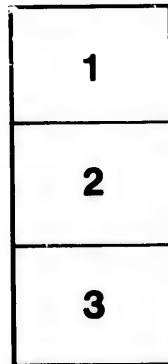
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CHAON ORR

PORTIONS OF HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY

MRS. EVA ROSE YORK.

"Wait: my faith is large in time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect end."

AUTHOR'S EDITION

1896.

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YORK. ER

DEDICATED

To my home dear ones,
to whom, near and far,
my heart sends

GREETING.

By love for them these pages came,
Nor do I need to write the name
Of each I hold so dear:
For he, or she, will read this verse,
And all my constant love rehearse,
And shed, from love, a tear.

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- IV. The Circus.
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- VI. Problems.
- VII. Alfred Corley.
- VIII. Entanglement.
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- XI. Shod.
- XII. Lena Hart.
- XIII. Clouds Gather and Break.
- XIV. Green Pastures and Still Waters.

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PREFACE.

This book is fragmentary. It is not intended as an attempt at a novel. The scenes are without location, and some of the characters to which the reader is introduced drop out of the narrative unceremoniously. I have endeavored to trace the development of the real life of Chaon Orr, and have made my people and events serve to this end only.

E. R. Y.

ERRATA.

Page 58, 18th line, for "truth which we accepteds," read "truths which we accepted."

NOTE.—The poem at the close of the tenth chapter is from the pen of my twin sister, Mrs. J. J. Baker.

E. R. Y.

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I.

THE TWINS.

ONE afternoon as my mother sat in a very easy chair in her own room, embroidering a garment not tremendously ambitious in its dimensions, Katie Graham entered and began to brush my mother's beautiful hair. When Katie related to me this incident, I gathered that my mother's hair did not need brushing at that particular moment. But whenever Katie wished to converse with my mother upon a subject of great importance, she always introduced the subject by a gentle brushing of that lady's hair. So while my mother embroidered, Katie brushed, and as she did so she hummed now and then a strain of what she knew to be my mother's favorite song. At length, summoning all her courage, she said :

"Law to goodness, Mrs. Orr, aint it time you was settlin' on a name? Accidents is liable to happen in the best o' regcolated families, an' it would be a shame to let the precious creature go for weeks with no other name than 'it.' An' it's my private erpinion that you're goin' to need two names, both boys.'" And Katie brushed steadily and gently.

"Why, Katie!" exclaimed my mother. "What makes you think that?"

"Law to goodness, ma'am! You're forgettin' how much older'n you I am—a great many years, remem-

ber. There is several things about you that I have been noticin' of late, an' between you an' me an' the gate post, it's twins! An' law to goodness, if you knowed how terrible tiresome it is to try to think when one's real weak, you'd get your names ready: both boys'."

My mother smiled, but the smile was followed by a sigh as she languidly adjusted the soft pillows at her back.

"I'll think about it, Katie," she replied. Then pointing to her table, added:

"Please give me that book of poems before you go down. And I think you might bring my bell up here."

My mother did think about it, and, that very evening, she talked with my father about it.

"Have you any choice, dear?" he enquired, as he held her hand and turned the ring upon her finger.

"No, James," replied my mother, "only I had hoped the little stranger would be a girl so I could call her Annette, or something with that pretty ending. Clochette I like, too."

It is probable that at this point my mother turned the leaves of the book of poems which for months had been her constant companion.

"There is no doubt," said my father, "that if his lordship arrives in a duplicate form, the young gentlemen will be opposite extremes in temperament." He said this with a mischievous little laugh that brought the bright color to my mother's cheeks. For she herself had been given to extremes during this particular period of her life. But whether in the extreme of

gladness or of sadness her charms never diminished. She was young and pretty and tender. My father loved her devotedly.

"You will not be disappointed," continued my father, "if Providence sends you one or two boys instead of a girl, will you, Maggie? I should think two boys would be as good as one girl."

"No, not particularly," answered my mother, "only I want pretty names for my children; not John, nor Tom, nor Jane, nor Rebecca."

My father's heart was tuned to the universal harmonies. He had what my mother called a "Theory of Universal Oneness," and pronounced views on prenatal influences. So he said:

"I think Chaos and Cosmos would be capital names for the twins."

Here my father broke into a laugh and my mother cried:

"Oh, James! The whole world would laugh at us. Those are not names at all."

"Certainly not!" replied my father. "But seriously, Maggie, I think if we changed the ending of those words, that Chaon and Cosmon would be good names. Now, don't you?"

"I do rather like them; and wouldn't they be so odd? And classic, too!"

My mother left her chair to search among her books. But Katie came to help her prepare for bed, so she whispered her secret to my father as he was leaving the room, then clapped her hands in glee at his serious reception of it.

"We have decided upon the names, Katie," said my mother, as she wound her watch. "They are to be Chaon and Cosmon."

"Law to goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Graham. "Why didn't yo' choose Jerusalem and Jericho?"

"Now, Katie! They are good names; and it is only because you are ignorant that you cannot see the beauty in them."

Here my mother "fell to pouting," as Katie expressed it, and for some time did not speak to her faithful nurse. But after Katie had left her, and she had said her prayers, she rang for the good woman and asked her to forgive her for being so disagreeable to her, adding that she should have remembered that Katie had never heard of chaos and cosmos.

We arrived one beautiful morning in September just as the sun was rising. I have learned that my mother was pleased with this circumstance. She said if we had been born on a cloudy day she could never have been perfectly happy. But great was the consternation when it was known that one of "the boys" was a girl. Certainly my mother's joy was unlimited and my father shared it. But the names! There were not two such striking names in any language, and the idea of discarding them gave my parents some sorrow.

It was finally decided that the boy should be given one of the two names, the one best suited to his temperament. Not many days passed before I evidenced an extreme vivacity, accompanied by an exhibition of self-will. I was immediately named

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Chaon. Then as my little sister slept peacefully beside her, my mother said to my father :

"James, dear, I have a name for our darling :
Cosmon-ette."

"Good, Maggie, Good!" exclaimed my father :
"Chaon and Cosmonette."

It was some time before Katie could become recon-
ciled to my name. She thought Cosmonette pretty
enough and something like a name. But Chaon! She
positively pitied me, and usually called me "the son,"
or "Laddie."

II.

KATIE GRAHAM.

KATIE was an invaluable member of our household. She was the widow of a sailor who lost his life saving from drowning a man who hated him. Katie had also buried a child in mid ocean. She came to our house a few months before Cosmonette and I were born, and remained there until she died. She was my mother's house-keeper, nurse and spiritual adviser. Often, too, she was her counsel in intricate matters of jurisprudence, and when my father was absent from home Katie was my mother's "right hand man." She tipped the scales at one hundred and eighty seven. To us children she was the wonder of wonders. There was no limit to the store of her fairy tales. She knew millions of things about kings and queens and warriors. She could give the names of scores of plants and animals, and knew all about ships and the sea. She was fond of children, but more especially of us, and had a most comfortable way of moving about in our bedroom, as if in search of something, until we were asleep. But her deepest love she gave to my mother, whom, in her most tender moments, she addressed as "Lovie."

When Cosmonette and I were seven and a half years old, a little sister was sent to us, a beautiful child whom my mother named Leonora. But the fever came

and stole her away. Then Katie used to rock my mother in her arms as she would rock a child, and quiet my mother's grief by telling of her own.

"Lovie," she would say, "there is somethin' in your singin' that reminds me o' my own dead baby. I wonder why it is that I never hear you hummin' a toon about the house but I think of her! Maybe it's because it's tender like an' beautiful as be all children before they've told their first lie. Anyway, I think of her. I shet my eyes an' I see her own two bright ones close before me, an' her hair like wavin' gold. But bye an' bye I see her goin' farther an' farther away, an' them two eyes gets dim and dimmer like stars goin' out in the mornin'. The wavin' golden hair disappears, an' baby Nina's gone. Then if you keep on singin', the pearly gates opens an' I go in an' wander up an' down the streets o' the Celestial City. It's all awful uncertain, an' I seem to be walkin' on air. But presently somethin' comes towards me like a line o' light turned into a heavenly bein'; an' the eyes brighten up, an' a voice says, 'Mamma! Mamma!'" Then I know it's baby Nina, spirtalized. I hear music all the time, an' for all there's so much light there ain't no shadows nowhere. Then when I come to my senses, I'm layin' on the lounge in my room with your voice hangin' about me. Don't cry, Lovie, for that's where baby Leonora is to-night, spirtalized, Lovie, spirtalized. If yo' could but once see her there yo' would not wish her back here. Think o' all the things she would have to suffer if she stayed: all the children's diseases, and then the disappointments o' young folks

who never find life what they expected; then maybe the sea, Oh the cruel sea, Lovie. But now it's everlastin' singin' an' sunshine, singin' an' sunshine, Lovie."

Here Katie would brush away a tear, and then break into a song which if not artistic was certainly inspiring in its way. Having thus freed her overcharged heart she would continue:

"Now there's the twins. Cosmonette won't have much trouble. I think the Lord'll let her down real easy, for she's pretty nigh the kingdom even now. Yo' can't look into her face nor listen to her words without seein' that there's a spirital hankerin' about her. An' law to goodness! if she aint a beautiful character it's because beauty's run out. But I guess there's enough left for her even if her mother was born before her. But Chaon! May the Lord have mercy on that boy. He wants to do right, but Laddie's one o' them misfortunate creatures that's always in trouble—I mean in their souls, an' that's the worst kind o' trouble. Fightin' for bed an' bread aint nothin' to fightin' with them foes which nobody sees but God an' us. An' no one can be as lovin' as Laddie an' not get trouble over it. So we must be patient, an' try an' show him the right way, an' not always be expectin' him to be in the wrong. For if Laddie aint happy he is miserable, an' if Laddie is miserable the Lord only knows what he might do."

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III.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD.

SINCE penning the previous chapter I have sent my thoughts farther back into the years, and I recall a long white road which, covered with small stones, some smooth, some sharp, reflected the light of a midsummer afternoon sun. The road began at a group of massive buildings, and terminated in front of a smaller square building over the door of which appeared these comfortable words: THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Cosmonette was with me. I think we must have been playing in my mother's garden—she always had one—when we were seized with the wild idea of crossing that road. The project was no sooner agreed upon than we began to put it into operation, and I remember seeing little boots tossed in the air as they were drawn excitedly from little feet. Proud and brave we went together, Cosmonette and I, hand in hand.

A board walk lay along the street in front of my father's house. With a heroism that must have been truly beautiful, we had anticipated some difficulty in crossing the gravel road, but who would have dreamed that a dragon lay in ambush right at the outset? It was a painful bit of business, for the midsummer sun was merciless. Even to-day I can feel the blistering heat of those rough boards beneath our baby feet.

Cosmonette looked very sad and ready to cry. I suppose I distorted my features beyond recognition as I stood first on one foot and then on the other, clinging to Cosmonette's hand. The thought of retreat, however, never came to us, and after a few moments of painful effort—which seemed like so many hours—we reached the strip of green grass beyond the board walk. Cosmonette was wise, and dropped my hand as we took our first step upon the gravel road. What a revelation this was to us! Another step seemed impossible. The pain was intense, as the sharp points of the broken stones scratched our feet. To add to the bitterness of the situation, we heard the rattling of a wagon, and beheld two immense horses coming towards us, prancing and snorting, looking blacker than the ferocious beasts of the jungle.

"Oh help! help! help!" Cosmonette screamed violently, and the brusque farmer lad, who had come to town to show off his pet mares, held them back while he enjoyed the scene. The more violently Cosmonette screamed, the more I endeavored to drag her on with me. For what choice had we between torn and bleeding feet and a cruel death? None whatever. By dint of muscular strength, I succeeded in getting Cosmonette as far as the middle of the road. But O misery of miseries! there she fell, and lay a victim of despair and those horses. However, her cries had brought Katie, and she was soon in the arms of that dear woman. But the disgrace of the situation was unbearable. As a soldier, rather than suffer defeat, would rush to victory at the point of the

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bayonet, so I rushed to the other side of that gravel road at the point of those sharp stones. It was a triumph, but bought at how tremendous a cost! Katie's love followed me, and made room for me in her arms. When we reached our house it was discovered that Cosmonette's little pink and white feet had received several bad scratches. And so had mine, but in my left foot there was a deep wound which bled profusely.

That night as Katie rocked us for a few moments before we were put to bed, she whispered to me :

"Laddie, darlin', never try a rough road unless yo' be well shod."

* * * * *

We had celebrated our seventh birthday, and were spending it close in the garden with our father. And here I must make a confession. At this time I had a disagreeable habit of being "rough" with Cosmonette. I know that I loved that little angel as I loved my own life. I used to give her nearly everything I possessed, and was almost too wretched to live when she was out of my sight. I loved her hair and her eyes, and her dear little hands, and listened to her chatter with a sort of reverence. But it was not in my manner to be gentle. I pinched her when I only meant to embrace her. I punched her when I only meant to caress her. I pushed her over when I only meant to take her with me. All the sorrows of this period of my life resulted from my rough manner

towards my little twin for whom, I do believe, I would have died.

"Chaon, dear, will you never learn to be gentle with your sister?" my mother would sometimes ask. Then Katie would plead :

"'Taint in him, Mrs. Orr, 'taint in him—only in his heart." And glancing at me, she would add :

"Law to goodness, no! 'Taint in him."

We were playing in the garden, and my father was watering his flowers. My mother came to the door and called Cosmonette to come to her, but the little girl was not inclined to obey at once. My mother called the second time, and still Cosmonette stayed with her flowers. When the third call came I awoke to the seriousness of the situation. I thought my mother the most beautiful woman in the world, and was pained that no one paid any attention to her words. And then Cosmonette might be punished for this disobedience, might be shut up in her room and not allowed to join in our half hour's romp with Papa. Taking it altogether, the situation was too much for me, and putting my arms around my twin I attempted to drag her to her mother. Evidently my father had not taken in the situation, but hearing my sister's cries, he hurried towards us, and taking me by the ear, led me away rather roughly, I must admit. And this act was accompanied by harsh words which pierced my heart like a poisoned arrow. I turned towards my father and made an attempt at utterance, but anger and sorrow had complete mastery of me, and with flashing eye and quivering lip—and a paining ear—I

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crawled away around the house and sat down upon a long, narrow board. And there I passed the first absolutely black hour of my life. What was there now to live for? Never before had my father used such words to me. I was a "cruel, wicked boy, and did not deserve to have a sister." Had I misunderstood my father? He never spoke harshly to any one. Why, there had never lived so great a man as my father, excepting Napoleon, and even he had gone away and left the Empress. Where would I spend that night? Not in my father's house, for he hated me. Then where? Chaon, my boy, God knows that the heart of Chaon the man bleeds at the remembrance of that night.

I sat upon the narrow board until the darkness closed about our beautiful home. Then my father came to look for me. He spoke to me, whether kindly or unkindly I cannot now tell. His voice sounded far off, and upon my heart there was a heavy, cold weight that made it pain. I think he spoke two or three times, but I could not answer him. I had no words, and besides, although he stood so near to me, he seemed too far off to hear me. He must have said something about my bed, for I followed him into the house and went to my room. I had no light, but nothing could have lessened my darkness. I sat upon a low chair by the window; the full September moon sailed by indifferently. Surely Mamma and Katie would come to kiss me good-night! And I wondered if Cosmonette could really go to sleep when she knew I was in sorrow. When she ran the tiniest splinter under her nail I

cried nearly all night, and the next morning I gave her my largest scrap-book and both of my oranges. But she was not asleep. No doubt she was crying now; indeed I believed I heard her crying. But I waited in vain. The slow, heavy hours dragged on, and when midnight came everyone in the house was in sleep as deep as my sorrow.

I drew aside the curtain of my window, and began to make preparations for my departure. It was the work of only a few moments for I could not take anything heavy with me. There were a few small toys, three or four photographs, my two small scrap-books, a silver top, three gold coins, a New Testament in large print, a toy revolver, and a clock which showed twelve soldiers, fully armed, every time it struck. The clock and the silver top were my most valuable possessions. Of course the clock was worth more money, but how many happy hours Cosmonette and I had spent with that silver top! Yes, I would take them both. Fortunately there was a small basket in my room which Mrs. Graham had unintentionally left there. This, I thought, was Providential; so I placed in it my household gods, also my boots.

I left my room weeping bitterly. As I turned for a last look, the moonlight fell upon two pictures at the head of my bed. "Oh Papa and Mamma!" I sobbed, "you think I don't try to be gentle, but I do, I do. Why wasn't I born little and sickly so I would have to be gentle?"

I went back into the room and closed the door behind me, lest this fresh outburst of grief should arouse the

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household. Then having taken another farewell of my room and of my parents, I again turned my back upon them.

It was smooth sailing until I came to the door of Cosmonette's room. I had not intended going in, but her face was turned towards me, and the moonlight fell full upon it. I slipped in noiselessly and went to her bedside. Oh, the angel! I think I shall never again see such beauty. My little heart was nearly broken. Cosmonette, my sister, my twin, part of my life! To be torn from her in such a way had in it the bitterness of death. I kissed her forehead again and again while my tears fell upon her pillow. But she should have some token of my love. She should know that I was not angry because she cried when I tried to carry her. Stooping down, I took from the basket my silver top, and placed it in one of her little hands. Then I kissed her again, and taking with me all that I could call my own, I went down stairs, unlocked the front door quietly, put on my boots, and left my father's house.

Still sobbing bitterly, I reached the gate which opened upon the street. This was a considerable distance from the house, and I felt quite safe in waiting there until I could determine upon some course of action. A beautiful elm stood by the gate and covered me with its shadow. It was an act of kindness, for somehow I felt that Cosmonette must have missed me by this time, and would probably soon be looking for me. But no one missed me, and, as I began to feel very sleepy, I urged myself on. I could not sleep

under that tree, for it belonged to my father. But there was another tree some distance up the road, and the grass beneath it was soft. I would sleep there for just a few moments, and then travel on and on, and perhaps some farmer would take me in and let me do chores for him. But I must keep from him the secret that I was "cruel and wicked."

Mrs. Graham slept but little that night, and as soon as the morning broke she went to my room. My bed had not been touched, nor was I to be found in the house. As at that time my mother was again given to extremes of joy and grief, Katie could not tell her that I was missing, nor could she awaken my father without disturbing "Lovie." So she went alone in search of me. She found me at sunrise, fast asleep. My little clock had stopped at seventeen minutes past twelve.

"Law to goodness, if the little darlin' ain't been out all this chilly night!" she cried, as she held me close in her arms beside the fire which my father had built in the kitchen stove. My father looked very pale, and, after giving me a warm drink, wrapped around me a large woollen shawl and rocked me in his arms. There were no words spoken, and I soon fell asleep. But when I awoke my father's cheek was pressed close to mine, and there were tears which I thought were his. Was he grieved because I was so "wicked"? Then all my sorrow came back upon me. But at that moment my father kissed me and said tenderly:

"Chaon, how did you suppose your mother and I could live without their dear boy?"

I burst into tears at his words, and putting my arms around his neck I cried:

"Papa, I knowed you must have said something that just sounded like 'cruel and wicked.' I'm so glad Katie found me."

I looked into my father's eyes, and we were friends again.

My mother never knew of this painful event.

IV.

THE CIRCUS.

WHEN Cosmonette and I were ten years of age, my mother took us down town to be photographed. An uncle in India had written asking for a likeness of the twins. I was interested in the photograph enterprise, also in my mother's talks upon India, which she often gave us with an energy and warmth that captivated all who listened. She was born in Calcutta. But on this particular day I was fairly beside myself over another line of art exhibited on the surface of a high board fence. Was it not suggestive of Africa as well as of India? And could even Cosmonette's beauty exceed that of the fairy-like young girl who swung through the air with the ease and grace of a bird of passage. And what was the strength of my father's arm compared with that of the man who held apart the jaws of an immense struggling lion? And could my mother sing like that gorgeous woman who stood surrounded by a brass band? Oh ye gods! Here was something worth living for.

My mother urged me on, saying that Papa would be waiting for us. But I feasted upon these pictures until I could have reproduced them with my eyes shut. Of course Papa and I would go to the circus, and it was probable that Mamma and Cosmonette would also

go. I talked of nothing else all the way home. Sometimes my mother would hint that the pictures were much nicer than the circus itself, that sometimes the circus turned out to be a very bad affair, and that nice people did not often go. But how could my mother know since she herself had never seen a circus performance?

At dinner I informed my father of the treat in store for him and me. But Katie, who had just brought my mother a cup of tea, put a check upon my enthusiasm by saying rather warrily :

"Law to goodness, Laddie, an' yo' surely aint han-kerin' for the show! Tut, child, tut; it's the most onspirital thing yo' could ever set your 'fections on. How could you fill your little soul with light an' beauty, Laddie, with light an' beauty, if yo' first filled it with snakes an' elephants an' swearin' men, an' halt-dressed women? You've got enough to fight against already. The circus leads to a rough road, an' your feet's bare yet, Laddie."

"Katie is right, Chaon," said my mother. "It is not the place for you."

"And can't I go?" I enquired vehemently, as my knife and fork dropped from my fingers.

"You might get chased by a wild crocodile," shouted Cosmonette, with more than her usual amount of energy.

"But can't I go?" I urged, turning to my father.

"Just as your mother says," he replied.

"Mamma, I can go, can't I?"

"I would rather you would not go, Chaon," replied my mother with some hesitancy.

My arms now dropped to my sides as suddenly as my knife and fork had, a moment before, dropped to my plate.

"There is nothing to live for now," I groaned, and never in all the checkered years has life seemed to me more of a blank than it seemed at that moment.

Not long after dinner my father called me into the library and told me that my mother had given her consent for me to go to the circus if he would take me. Finding that my grief instead of lessening was increasing as the hour drew near, my father said :

"I will take you, my boy ; but you will promise never to ask to go again ?"

I promised, and we went. I held my father's hand with a tight grip as we entered the tent door, for the music was loud and spirited. I was so confused with the noise and the crowd that I did not see the horses galloping around the ring until we had taken our seats, which were on the top row but one. And then what a sight I beheld ! The time and tone of the music were increasing, and so was the speed of the horses. Like a flash of lightning each one darted before us, while clowns shouted "On, Prince ! On, Lady ! On, Lightfoot ! On, Pet ! On, Speedaway, on !" And girls, light and graceful as fairies, and dressed in gauze and ribbons, but touched on tiptoe the backs of the horses, waved their white arms in the air, bowed and smiled, then bent themselves to the speed of the final lap, and with a wild rush and a bang ! bang ! bang ! of horns and drums, horses, girls and clowns disappeared through an opening in the

tent. Then I drew a breath, a long one ; I must have been livid with excitement ; my heart nearly thumped itself out of my breast.

"That is rather swift motion," said my father.

"Yes," I gasped, without taking my eyes from the point at which the horses had disappeared.

My intense interest in the performance kept up until its close. I began to realize that I was just now taking my first taste of life.

My father praised the animals but said nothing about the courage and skill of the performers, and somehow I felt that, in an inexplicable way, I had something to do with his reserve upon this subject. Our relations just then were not the most comfortable. But our walk home was full of freedom and cheer, as we rehearsed the wonderful things we had seen and heard.

"Father," I said, "don't you think they must be very great men and women to swing like that in the air?"

"Great in courage, yes."

"But is there anything greater than courage?"

"Oh yes, my boy ; goodness is greater than courage."

"But can anyone be good and not have courage?"

"Yes. That is, one can be good and not have courage to perform in a circus."

"But Katie says if I was real good I would never be afraid of anything. I believe those girls on the horses must be very good."

"But you have misunderstood Katie."

"Oh no, Papa ! She says if Daniel hadn't been a good man he would have been afraid of the lions, and

that if he had been afraid they would have eaten him up. Now there must be something good about these circus folks or they could not live all the time with these animals. Musn't there be something good in them?"

"Not necessarily. As a rule, man who live for nothing but to increase their physical strength are very bad men."

"But wouldn't you rather be real strong than good? Then if you were real strong you could just make yourself be good, couldn't you, father?"

"No one can make us good but God."

"Who makes us strong, then?"

"God does."

"Then it can't be wicked to be strong. And does God make us have courage too?"

"Yes."

"Then didn't He give courage to the girls on the horses?"

"Yes, Chaon. But I don't think he meant them to use it in that way."

"They looked beautiful, and Katie says I must fill my soul with light and beauty so that I'll be spiritual."

"Spiritual, Chaon, spiritual."

"Spiritual. But, Papa, didn't they look beautiful?"

"Yes."

"Beauty and courage and strength! I believe if I had all them I'd be good."

Here my father took my hand in his, by which act he gave notice that he wished our communication to be a silent one. Thus we reached our home.

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But the circus had made a deep impression on my mind. I wished the people would change its name, not call it circus, but call it something that did not imply any wickedness. My father had failed to convince me of the total depravity of the performers. And then the "swift motion," as my father called it. Oh, it was glorious! My heart gave a wild throb at every remembrance of it. From that day my pulse beat with increasing vigor. For a moment the great curtain hanging before life had been drawn aside, and I had seen it in its activity, had seen it at fever heat, and all my soul had leaped to meet it.

V.

IN THE METROPOLIS.

THIS psychological tumult was still at its height when my parents arranged to take Cosmonette and me to the metropolis. We lived in a small but enterprising city where we had many advantages in the line of art and literature, at the same time enjoying the rural beauty of our home. My mother's garden was as necessary to her happiness as were her books of poems, or as were my father's flute and 'cello to his happiness. But for some years my parents had gone annually to one of the larger cities. They always came back vehemently enthusiastic. My mother was radiant for weeks after these visits. It was therefore with the keenest delight that we received the news of the proposed trip. Even the circus, for a few moments, was forgotten. I was to see the great city.

We reached the metropolis at nightfall. When we stepped from the car my mother took Cosmonette's hand and my father took mine. The pushing of the crowd smothered me, and the shouting of the cabmen bewildered me. I glanced nervously at Cosmonette: she was pale but calm. (There was something heavenly in my sister's habitual repose; but it had begun to be exasperating to me. I had felt it so ever since the circus.)

We took an open carriage, and drove down a beautiful avenue, crossing three or four short busy streets. I had just remarked that this city was a good deal like our own when, turning the corner, I found myself in a blaze of light and a whirl of activity that fairly took away my breath.

"How about this?" asked my father. I made no reply, but glanced excitedly from one side of the street to the other, wondering how long such an extreme condition of things could continue. Then the light became more dazzling, the crowd greater, and the movement more accelerated. It was glitter, glitter, rush, rush, hum, buzz, with now a crash and a roar from somewhere, while our horses pranced proudly to the heart-throb of the great city.

The following day we visited many wonderful places, and I remember sitting down in the Art Gallery and holding my hands over my eyes to rest them. In room after room, hall after hall, wherever the eye turned it met pictures, pictures, pictures, all the work of a master-hand. In the subdued light of that November afternoon such surroundings had in them an enchantment irresistible. My parents walked together and talked of "perspective," "centre of vision," and "vanishing point," and I have no doubt but they communed with the men who had given to them whatever of their souls could thus be detained on earth. The pictures certainly had something "spiritual" in them. Cosmonette and I walked on tiptoe. I felt very strange; it all seemed so solemn. And then sometimes my eye would fall upon a picture that was only a bit

of coloring with a curved line here and there ; but as I would watch it it would assume definite proportions, and its meaning would be plain to even me. It was all more wonderful and more beautiful than the circus. But I could not help wishing that the pictures had a voice and motion. I soon began to be depressed, and left the Gallery both regretfully and gladly.

We reached the zenith of our happiness at night. During the day my mother had said to us :

"Children, I want you to know that beauty is the most accommodating thing in the world. It can give to itself the smallest possible dimensions, so that it can fit into little souls like yours, or it can extend itself to fill larger souls like your father's and mine. Now to-night we are going to take you to the Music Hall to hear Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. It is his lightest symphony, but will be played by an orchestra of one hundred and eighteen pieces."

One hundred and eighteen pieces! And there were only fifteen at the circus and that music was almost too much for me.

"You have never heard music like that which you will hear to-night," continued my mother, "and we want you to listen carefully. Pastoral is something that describes rural life, that is, life in the country."

The solemnity of the Art Gallery was nothing compared with that of the Music Hall as we followed the usher to our seats. It was a sort of court solemnity, for my father had a princely bearing, and my mother looked like a queen in a pale blue silk gown that enhanced the beauty of the soft brown coil upon her

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shapely head. Cosmonette wore a white dress and had bows of pink ribbons upon her shoulders. I glanced at the four of us as we sat there waiting for the performance to begin, and I do not know that I have ever lived a more perfectly rounded-out moment. The musicians came in and took their places. Then the conductor appeared and every one applauded. Oh, how my heart did thump against my little velvet waistcoat!

Nothing is lost in the world of matter or of mind. The stone crushed to powder, the leaf turned to decay, the beam burned to ashes, are as much a part of the material world as before they changed their form. And at thirty-five a man may live again the life lived at ten or at twelve. "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." Many children against whom we brush as against "only children," aspire, with intense longing, to a life of which the average man or woman has no conception. Then when come the supreme moments of childhood—moments which God sends to keep the little overcharged hearts from breaking—life is more than full and lends its surplus to the coming years. So I, a man with half my life behind me, live again the life lived in the Music Hall of the metropolis. As history repeats itself without the aid of the historian, so that life repeats itself even while memory sleeps. Thus is the child father to the man; and he bids the man speak of the things which his untutored tongue once vainly strove to utter.

Step by step the music led us along paths of transcendent beauty. The effusion of sunlight, golden and warm, the balm of the breeze, the gentle moving of

grasses, the bending of trees, the babbling of brooks, the lowing of cattle, the singing of birds, all came to us on waves of harmony that brought also the fragrance of flowers and the scent of newly mown hay. Then the harmonies went through a transition, bringing us a moonlight scene, sombre and still. But the brightness soon returned, and a bird broke into rapturous singing. This was not all. The instruments retained their individuality. We had the bird, but we had also the violin and flute. We had the violin and flute, but we had also the notes which they gave us. The tone was theirs, the note was the master's. So the office of descriptive music is three-fold. Certainly I could not analyze it then, but I felt a three-fold influence, for I turned my ear to hear the singing of the bird, then moved a little nearer my father that I might see the flute, then glanced over my shoulder nervously, half expecting to encounter the shade of Beethoven.

I remembered that Katie often talked about my soul, but I seemed then to be all soul, made of a million fibres through and around which the music played wildly and ecstatically, striking now and then a full harmonious chord, the vibration of which set to trembling every string. Had I been asleep all the years and was just now awakened? Or was Chaon dead, Chaon the "cruel," the "wicked," and was a new Chaon to be born from the music to grow and be great? Katie once said that we could be made all new.

"Yes, Laddie darlin'," she urged, "we can be made over intirely, an' can walk the earth spirts, Laddie,

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spirits, only burdened with flesh an' bones. But they aint nothin', my boy, they aint nothin', for the spirt is mightier'n all flesh, an' it lives in the beautiful places o' the universe, or it travels about an' comes back home in no time. Lightnin' is quick, but it aint nothin' to the spirt. An' there's things to help us be spirtal—all the beautiful things in God's earth, the flowers an' grass an' trees an' birds an' rivers an' sun an' moon an' stars an' sky an' sea. An' then lovin', Laddie, lovin' an' laughin' an' speakin' gentle, an' sayin' sweet verses, an' singin' an' listenin' to beautiful music."

It was not until the music had ended, and my father had helped me to my feet that I realized that bones and flesh were accompaniments of Chaon Orr, old or new. When we were driving to our hotel my mother asked me how I had enjoyed the music. I replied that I believed I had something to live for now besides the circus. Cosmonette laughed at this, and then entertained us with her merry chatter until our drive ended. She was in an ecstasy of delight, and her animation and evident appreciation of the music were to me the keynote of a new life song.

VI.

PROBLEMS.

HAVE already recorded the fact that the habitual repose of my twin exasperated me at times. There may have been several reasons for this. In the first place I was conscious that Cosmonette did not sympathize with me in my ambition to, some day, be a circus performer, although, both as regards skill and superior mental and spiritual attainment, I was to be such a performer as the world had never yet seen. I also had an idea that my parents discussed with Cosmonette my darling project, and that for some reason her placidity was a wilful contrast to the vehemency of my nature. But Katie, dear soul! helped me out a little when she said: "Laddie, it's wrong in yo' to feel so towards Cosie. She couldn't help bein' your twin, an' if before yo' was both borned she got too much o' the quiet an' you got too much o' the onrest that Providence sent to be equally distributed between yo' both, she aint to blame—neither is your mother, as some folks would argue. It's one o' them misunderstandable things in life that no one knows anythin' about. But law to goodness! it's all the same, Laddie, for you're both one any way. There's somethin' awful spirital in bein' twins."

The germ of the new life which I had received in the Music Hall of the metropolis destroyed the uncomfort-

able feeling which I had had towards Cosmonette. I loved her before; loved her tenderly, loved her unselfishly, but there had been a gulf between us which was now bridged. If all was true that Katie had said, that mysterious spiritual condition to which I aspired really belonged to my nature, only it was exhibited in the part of me known as Cosmonette. This was purely accidental. Cosmonette could in no way be blamed for it, and my mother was equally free from all responsibility. I arrived at these conclusions after no small amount of reasoning, having on several occasions gone to Katie to be reassured that Cosmonette and I were really one.

My twin and I were now inseparable. We studied together, walked together, played games together, played the piano together and even tried to sing together. But when we sang there was a harsh note in the music, and that note was mine.

About a year later our parents initiated us into the study of the English poets. One evening each week was given to this delightful occupation, and thus was born and nourished that love of poetry which has been the solace and inspiration of my life. Often before beginning our reading we would sit in the twilight and my father and mother would tell us sad tales of the lives of those to whom we owed so much.

"And now," my mother once added, "we will have a light and begin our reading. Of course we must draw up an easy chair for Shelley, as he is to make one of our party to-night. Shelley was accustomed to ease and luxury when on this earth and we must use him

well. We cannot take his hand and look into his dear face, but as your father reads to us his songs we can shut our eyes and imagine the poet right here beside us, himself telling us these wonderful things."

Here my mother quietly and gracefully wheeled near the table a chair with cushions of velvet. From the burning coals in the grate behind her the light streamed warm and red, and a shadow fell within the chair. My mother's low words of warmth and emotion, the mystic twilight, and the mysterious shadow tightened my heart-strings to an almost unbearable tension. Then as a babe first leaps in the womb there leaped in my soul a new life conceived, long before, by the music of Beethoven. I heard little of Shelley that evening. A song went singing through the night that to me was sweeter than any that ever came from heart and brain of the world's great ones.

The following afternoon while Katie was hanging a pair of curtains at my window I ventured to ask:

"Katie, what do you mean when you talk about guardian angels?"

"Spirts, Chaon, spirts."

"But what kind of spirts?"

"Law to goodness, Laddie! You're purty nigh a young man now, an' don't yo' know what guardian angels is? Well, all around us is air, made o' oxergen or somethin', an' in that air there's spirts. Now these spirts is just like you an' me, only without bones an' flesh. Did yo' never feel somethin' drawin' yo' away from some place that was terrible dangerous, an' yet yo' couldn't see no one? Did yo' never feel somebody

beside yo' when yo' went an' awful lonesome walk, or in the middle o' the night when a big storm was passin' by? Or did yo' never think yo' could hear a voice whisperin' courage an' strength to yo', Laddie? Law to goodness! If I set alone in the twilight like you do sometimes, the hull air'd be full o' guardian angels. An' if I knowed as much about the great folks that's lived as you do, I'd never be lonesome, which I aint very seldom anyway. Guardian angels, Laddie, is a great blessin'."

"But don't you just imagine all this, Katie?"

"Law to goodness, no, Laddie darlin'. Many an' many a time I've sat by the sea with my guardian angel close beside me, an' I could hear his words an' feel his presence. Low an' tender, like the quiet comin' in o' the tide, was the voice. I can't tell you what it said, Laddie, it was fur my ear alone, but when I'd go away all my burden would be gone. An' forever an' forever, Laddie, until the sea gives up its dead, will my guardian angels be by me. An' then when the great God opens the beautiful gates o' the celestial city to let me in, I'll find my guardian angel there, for then I too 'ill be spirtalized, Laddie, spirtalized."

"Katie, your husband and your little girl are dead; perhaps they are your guardian angels. But how can I have any?"

"Everybody that's tryin' to be spirtal has guardian angels. These angels is sort o' servants o' the kind God who wants us to be happy an' useful, an' He tells 'em to stay right by us an' speak to us when we most need it. Folks puts altogether too much 'pendence on the

things we see and tech. It's the spirt, Laddie, that makes life what it is. When you find anybody hankerin' for the onvisible take him to your heart, an' yet remember that the Prince o' darkness is a spirt. Take care, Laddie."

Katie left me, and I sat alone in my room. Was it, then, that my guardian angel had visited me the evening before in the twilight? Katie was illiterate, but she was not ignorant. My mother called her a wise woman, and I was inclined to believe what she had just told me. If this were not so, how could I account for my strange experience of the previous evening?

* * * * *

Two years and a half from the date of that memorable circus, a new minister came to the congregation to which our family belonged. By this time I had given up all thought of being a circus performer, but I had not given up the belief that physical strength and courage engender nobility, and goodness, even spirituality. I became deeply interested in athletic sports, and the blood coursed proudly as well as vigorously through my veins. Feeling more certain of my ground regarding the office of physical strength and courage, I now discussed the subject with my parents and sister, all of whom denounced my theory as earnestly as did Katie. Cosmonette displayed but little originality in her arguments, but now and then she attacked my theory with a scripture quotation which, for the

moment, sent it whirling away out of my sight. Although this belief was, in a way, a comfort to me, I experienced much perplexity at this time, having great respect for the opinion of my parents and Mrs. Graham. Besides this, of late Cosmonette had exhibited a striking individuality, which rather shook my faith in the belief of our oneness. Then, too, the guardian angel question was a deep one. I had now an unflinching belief in guardian angels, and valued Katie's opinion upon any subject; but I could not harmonize her teaching of guardian angels with her teaching that "we are no more'n a fly or sunbeam of ourselves, weak as a drop o' water, an' goin' out instant like a snuffed out candle."

We all went to church to hear the new minister—rather, the others went for that purpose; I went to hear the music, thus feeding afresh the new life born when Shelley came into the easy chair in our library.

The minister took his text from the Epistle to the Romans:

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

I followed the minister with deepest interest until he said:

"There is not an impulse of your unregenerate heart—which by nature is carnal—but would do violence to this new life; nor have you an intellectual faculty nor any physical strength which, unsanctified, does not war with the life which is not of the flesh but of the spirit."

This was a bold, merciless, unprovoked and unpar-

donable attack upon the very heart of my existence. I left the church unhappy and rebellious, and Katie said, on the way home :

"Laddie, my heart aches for yo'. Your feet's bare yet."

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VII.

ALFRED CORLEY.

CORLEY and I owed our friendship to one of the many blunders of my first year at college. A sophomore had given two or three freshmen a little more rough play than we felt ourselves entitled to, and I was appointed to interview the gentleman and to report upon his attitude towards us, and upon the outlook for the future. We would then decide upon the proper course to pursue in the matter.

It was late in an afternoon of the fall term when I prepared myself for this important interview. After giving considerable care to my toilet, I assumed a dignified and formidable bearing, and started for number nineteen, upper hall. I rapped violently, and immediately heard a languid but musical, "Come in!" The voice did not sound like Bentley's, but perhaps he had been asleep. Wishing to interview the criminal in the hall and not in his own room, I rapped again.

"Come in, you hard crust of courtesy! What more do you want?"

"I want you!" I exclaimed, throwing open the door, and standing motionless and dark. But great was my surprise to find myself face to face with the most popular freshman in the college, known among the boys as "Alfred the Great."

"By Jove, Corley!" I cried, "This is not Bentley's room?"

"Twenty-nine, Orr. This is nineteen."

I apologized as handsomely as my surprise and humiliation would allow. Corley soon put me at my ease, and urged me to come in. The room was richly furnished and here and there were artistic touches which showed the occupant to be a man of culture. Corley offered me a chair, then resumed his seat upon the sofa and picked up the book he had reluctantly, no doubt, thrown down. A small bouquet of hot-house flowers gave their fragrance generously, as long rays of light from the sinking sun fell upon them. A few valuable pictures adorned the walls.

Although I was interested in the appointments of the room, my deepest interest centred in its occupant. I saw before me a young man with a handsome countenance, a magnificent physique, but not above the average in either height or weight; a noble bearing and a voice as sweet as music far out on a moonlit bay. Katie's words, "Take him to your heart," came back to me, and I answered mentally, "I will."

"I think you are foolish, Orr," said Corley, "to trouble yourself about this affair with Bentley. I don't mind the other fellows going into it, but I was sorry to hear your name mentioned in connection with the business."

"Why should you be sorry?" I enquired.

"Well, there are businesses that suit your cloth better than knocking a man out in the first round. Perhaps I know you better than you know yourself.

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I once had a pet swan, a beautiful bird, as white as snow. It followed a flock of meaner birds into a muddy pond. I washed it, and it was white again. But after that I loved it less for having once seen it soiled."

"A little manly exercise now and then can do no one harm."

"Manly exercise is all right, but pummelling a fellow until he cries for mercy is all wrong. You are a man of literary taste, Orr, and do you think you would remember such sport with pleasure when sitting alone with your Goethe or Shakespeare or Scott? Come with me for a canter to-morrow morning and I will give you some manly exercise in which even Schiller would not have blushed to join."

Corley had aimed well. He hit his mark with first fire. At the mention of the poets my tongue was loosened, and in less than half an hour Alfred Corley knew more of Chaon Orr than Chaon Orr knew of himself.

After a moment's silence, Corley said, indifferently :

"When you rapped I was having a quiet hour with my friend Shelley."

At these words my heart gave a great leap that brought a deeper crimson to my cheeks. Corley must have marked my emotion, for he gazed into my face eagerly as he said :

"You read Shelley, then?"

I replied that if there was any inspiration in my life I owed it to this poet, at which words Corley rose and offered me his hand. I shook it warmly. Thus was born our friendship.

At the close of the year I invited Corley to spend part of the long vacation with me. We reached my home at midnight. Cosmonette had arrived the day before, and there was no limit to our joy at this meeting. I was prepared to see some improvement in my sister's general appearance, but I did not dream that the beauty of her face could ever be enhanced. She had gone to college, the year before, a sweet, sensitive girl of sixteen; she had now returned to her home an elegant, queenly young woman of seventeen, more beautiful than I had ever seen her, excepting the night ten years before when my tears fell with the moonlight upon her pillow. When she heard my voice in the hall where we had been met by Father and Mother, she came from the library like a burst of sunlight. I held her in my arms and could have wept for love of her.

"Cosmonette, my twin, my twin!" I cried, as I placed her at arm's length, regardless of her evident emotion. How like my mother she was growing! She wore a dress of pink muslin that lent its tint to her cheek. Her hair was darker than my mother's and her eyes, instead of being deep blue, were brown.

"How long are you going to hold me here?" she cried, with a mixture of smiles and tears.

"Until I am quite sure that I have my twin," I answered, then led her to the sofa. We sat side by side, and my mother fairly beamed her joy. I have never forgotten my mother's appearance in the Music Hall of the metropolis, but her charms of that evening were as moonlight to sunlight compared with those of

the night when Cosmonette and I returned from our first year at College. Father and Alfred talked together and as I glanced from mother and Cosmonette to them, my heart was rather uncomfortably full of tender and fervent emotions.

Then Katie came, loving, "spiritual" Katie.

"Laddie! Laddie!" she cried, "how my heart's wearied for yo' both. An' do yo' find the road rough or smooth, darlin'?"

"Smooth, Katie, smooth," I answered, "with flowers on both sides."

A friendship between Cosmonette and the organist of the church which we attended had existed for some time. This gentleman was eight years older than my sister but seemed to miss nothing in her companionship. As my parents did not disapprove of the friendship, Mr. Clairmont was a daily visitor at my father's house at the time of which I am writing.

Corley was my senior by three years, and by considerably more than that in length of experience.

At the outset, Corley and Mr. Clairmont met cordially enough, but before their first day of intercourse had ended there was an evident antagonism between them.

"I say, Chaon, this won't do," exclaimed my friend at night as he threw his slippers across his room and lodged them in the slipper case with a skill unequalled by the most adroit circus performer.

"This won't do. Clairmont and I must be friends."

"Yes, or kill our summer's pleasure," I replied.

"We must be friends. Leave it to me."

And I left it to him.

The apparent restraint between Corley and the musician gradually wore away, and at the close of the first month we were launched for smooth and swift sailing. Every day was one of most genuine pleasure. From the social intercourse that was so delightful to us all, enhanced by a common love of music and poetry, we turned to the more exhilarating pleasures of riding and rowing. When my father could leave his office he and my mother joined us.

I remember one evening in particular when Mr. Clairmont was at his best. He played the music of Schubert and Beethoven as I have never heard it played since, and when he sang "Dein ist mein Herz" (Ungeduld) Corley whispered to me, "The fellow is inspired." I can hear Clairmont's voice even to-day. The long years have stolen much, but a thousand years could not rob me of the memory of that night. Cosmonette sat by the piano, and the rich blood came and went in her cheek with the rise and fall of that wonderful voice. All the cords that bound us to things earthly were snapped. We followed our leader through a pathless realm of light, beauty, love and truth, and there our spirits met and communed. Clairmont sang again and again. I have never heard a voice like his, so tender, so pathetic, so full of love and purity and peace. When he had finished I felt towards him a sort of reverence, and I think I loved Corley less just then. But when my friend spoke he was again the one man necessary to my noblest and largest life.

"Mr. Clairmont," he said, "you not only loosed us from the earth, but you loosed us from ourselves."

"You mean that Schubert did this," replied the musician.

"Schubert gave you the means of flight," answered Corley, "but it was your soul that we followed."

Mrs. Graham had been asked to come in and hear the music, and I expected a response from her at this point. But she was silent. She had looked away from Corley while he was speaking.

That night my friend invited me into his room. Offering me a chair he said:

"Clairmont is a genius; and, by Jove, what a voice! But it is a sorrowful thing, Chaon, when nature endows one of her children so richly but forgets the one gift which, combined with those she has bestowed, could make of him a god. Clairmont is blind, and to me it is a painful thought that he must go groping, groping through all the years."

I replied that my parents and Cosmonette had known him a long time and had never yet discovered the misfortune to which my friend referred.

"That may be, Orr; you know we never can see the failings of those whom we love. And yet 'failings' is not the word to use in this connection. Clairmont's blindness, or bondage, as I would rather term it, affects himself only. But it is a bondage from which he has neither the strength nor the courage to free himself. You and I could burst such fetters, but I fear that he is powerless to do this. Spirituality, Chaon, is simply another word for freedom, and Mr. Clairmont has yet

a few steps to take before he finds himself in that unbounded realm."

"But people may have different conceptions of freedom," I urged.

"Yes, as a blind man and one who can see may have different conceptions of light," was the answer. "The truth is, Chaon, that for more than eighteen hundred years the world has been in bondage. Now and then there has lived a mighty one who has not only burst the fetters that would bind his own soul, but has given his life to the emancipation of his fellows. Such men have died unrecognized, but to you and to me it is given to live in that light which the years cannot obliterate—a light once shed upon this dark world by their illuminated souls. I do not say that Clairmont cannot follow such men in the strength and beauty of their thought, cannot revel in the richness of their imagery. But I do say that he has not the strength to grasp their noblest truths, nor the courage to apply those truths in his own life. Strength and courage, Chaon, are what we want. They are the parents of that light which is the estate of high-born spirits. Without them, entire spirituality is impossible."

I went to my room that night with a heavy heart. Corley's words burned unto my brain and sleep forsook me.

Cosmonette had said in one of her letters to me :

"To be conscious of moral strength, to be conscious of intellectual growth, to feel the wings of the soul gradually unfolding for her unfettered flight beyond

the reach of prisons and of bonds—this is to be great.”
Was Corley right, then?

All that Katie and Cosmonette had taught me, as well as all that my own heart said, was in harmony with much of Corley’s teaching. And yet I felt that the difference between the two theories was such as to make my choice of my friend’s position dangerous to my happiness at least. Then Mr. Clairmont had said to Corley only the week before :

“ A light that is liable to go out at any moment and leave one in darkness is a poor guide. One might better grope along carefully and become accustomed to the darkness. But this is not necessary. Eighteen hundred years ago the Light of the world was sent to us, and it shines to-day as brightly as ever. The powers of darkness cannot extinguish it, nor can the philosophical flashes of the worldly-wise hide its lustre.”

After pondering over the situation for an hour, I decided that I could maintain a middle ground. There was much in Corley’s belief that I felt to be erroneous, but could I not enjoy, and profit by, his companionship without accepting his theory? His culture delighted me, and his strength and brilliancy held me spell-bound. Friends need not be of the same opinion on every point, and Corley could think as he liked—a privilege which I would also claim for myself.

And then I needed Corley’s love. Two years before when Mr. Clairmont began to show an interest in Cosmonette, I had many a lone and bitter struggle. She was not only my sister, but my twin, part of my

life, and I looked upon the musician as an unpardonable intruder. But by the grace and gentleness of his manner, and by the nobility of his life, he soon won my regard, and I considered him my own as well as Cosmonette's friend. But we had drifted apart somewhat during the past year, and he and Cosmonette had drifted somewhat closer together. I observed this sorrowfully; and yet who was better calculated to make my sister happy than this prince of men whose ways were gentle and whose words were wise. Thank God for the high-born spirits among us! Here and there we find them, souls as white as snow, drawing to themselves purity-loving ones, as the sunbeam draws the flower. I needed Corley's love, and although there was, in my mind, some doubt as to the genuineness of Alfred's so-called freedom, by virtue of his pronounced personality he stayed by my side, and I put my hand in his.

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VIII.

ENTANGLEMENT.

DURING the winter following my return to college I received a letter from Mr. Clairmont in which he said :

"There are two lives before you, Chaon, both spiritual. But 'spiritual' has a two-fold meaning. Do not forget that your friend uses it in the sense of the intellectual, of the ideal, while the truly spiritual life is that of the soul in which abides the Holy Spirit. This spiritual life in no way limits nor is antagonistic to the ideal ; but the mistake is fatal when the purely intellectual is given the place of the purely spiritual."

Not many days passed before I received from Cosmonette a letter along the same line, but expressing her anxiety concerning my spiritual welfare. She said :

"Your last letter has made me very unhappy. Surely, Chaon, we two who have come thus far on life's journey side by side, hand in hand, heart to heart, can have no secrets from each other. Then do not write so mysteriously. Tell me plainly what you believe. Your soul is immortal, and you want a sure foundation upon which to rest your hope. And then I cannot bear the thought of being separated from you by such a gulf. Just as the gates of life are opening wide to us you leave me, to walk hand in hand with

a man who does not love your soul, but would have you ignore its needs for the gratification of an intellectual passion. Come back to me, Chaon, my twin, and let us be one in the simple faith which has made Katie and Mr. Clairmont so dear to us. And please do not write anything of this to Father and Mother. You know they have never talked much about spiritual things—I mean 'spiritual' as Mr. Clairmont and I understand it—but they have always had a reverence for the Holy Book, and a letter such as you wrote to me would give them pain. Poor Katie! How grey she got while we were away! Mother says she talks about us all the time, and that whenever she dusts that old-fashioned bureau in her room she turns over an old pair of shoes that you once wore and weeps as she says: 'My poor darlin' Laddie! I wonder if his feet's bare yet.'

Coming at a time when my thoughts were making an excursion to my home, this letter unmanned me to some extent. I turned the key in my door and went back to the table with the determination to be myself again. What did I care for the "philosophical flashes"—as Clairmont had termed them—of all the great men of the ages? My heart was hungry, so hungry that it would take the love of five people to fill it, and those five were my mother, my father, Cosmonette, Katie and Jasper. I had been a fool, worse than a fool, but now I would arouse myself from the drugged sleep into which I was falling. What if I could not believe the straight-laced doctrines as did Cosmonette! I could at least respect the faith of my fathers,

and break down the barriers which I had begun to build between myself and those whom I loved as my own life. Then as the twilight shades closed about me my fancy carried me to the home of my love and my longing where I lived again the last evening spent in our parlor. Oh, how I then had hated every influence that could stay the soul in its holy aspirations! How secure I had felt! How safe from the world! How safe from myself!

It was a cruel rap that roused me from my reverie, but I opened the door to my friend, Alfred Corley.

"Helloa, old fellow!" he exclaimed, "In the dark, eh? Dreaming of home and mother?"

"Just that," I answered, "no more and no less. But if you will stand where you are for a moment I will soon have a light."

After fumbling around for Cosmonette's letter, I crowded it into an already full pocket and lit a lamp.

Corley looked magnificent. He had been for a long walk, and had come back against a stiff west wind, and his color, which was always good, was heightened.

"It is a glorious evening," he exclaimed. "Venus is dancing to a presto of fire."

He turned down the light, and, putting his arm through mine, led me to the window. I was not altogether happy, having left the home folks suddenly and unceremoniously. But the star was bright.

"Some day," said Alfred, "I am going to write a paper on analogies. It is a grand subject, and there is little in the world of matter or of mind that it will not include.

"To what is the star analogous?" I asked.

"To a great many things," replied Corley, "But I am thinking just now about truth, giving out a multiplicity of rays of light, as does the star. Truth, Chaon, is the passport to life. Your friends at home, for instance, like to talk of the immortality of the soul, and they build their hope of their soul's eternal life upon their acceptance of certain truths. I like to talk of the immortality of the soul, and I build my hope of my soul's eternal life upon my acceptance of certain truths. And these truths are all off-springs of the parent truth, which, as I have already said, is the passport to life. Of late you have been troubled because you cannot go with your sister in spiritual things. But I tell you, my dear Orr, there is not the least cause for any anxiety. You and Cosmonette are separated by names only. Truth is supreme; truth is salvation. If you abide in its light your soul lives and will live forever, no matter what name you may give to the particular ray that streams to your particular soul. Can you think of Shelley's soul as dead to-day because he could not give to his belief the name which a Luther, a Knox, a Wesley gave to theirs? Chaon, a universe of spirits shook with tender but passionate emotion when Shelley breathed to them and to the world his life—a life which lives again in us to-day. Truth? It is free as air, wide as the whole world, and, like the light of the star, reaches from heaven to earth. To say, I believe this or that, is not to live. But to say *I believe*, is to live. You, for instance, are, like myself, of a metaphysical, or rather psychological,

turn of mind. Did you choose the mould into which the Almighty cast your soul? Then why wear out your life with anxious thoughts? You are spiritual, Orr, as spiritual as was Shelley himself. Truth is beautiful to you. You stay with it as a wee one stays with its mother. Can your soul die while there! Never! Now write to Cosmonette that you see and accept the truth, that you love it, that you live in it."

He waited for a reply and I said :

"You make things plain, Corley, and I believe your words. But just at this moment your creed has not the power to soothe and satisfy which it had when you first presented it to me."

"That is owing purely to your physical condition," he answered. "When you have had a good night's sleep, the force and beauty of my creed—so you choose to call it—will again assert themselves. Believe me, Chaon, your soul can no more bind itself to dogmas than the sea can bind itself to a shore. You must be free; then be strong, courageous, be spiritual! Could I be happy in the endless years to come if I failed to find you? Have we not stood soul to soul? Have we not together communed with all the great spirits who have strayed to earth before us? And could I enjoy fellowship with them in the golden hereafter if the soul of my friend had lost its way? No, Chaon, no!

'I have unlocked the golden melodies
Of your deep soul, as with a master-key,
And loosened them, and bathed myself therein.'

Venus still danced to a presto of fire, and my heart leaped with a new and a glad hope. How all things

seemed to blend into one grand, harmonious whole! The circus flashed back its brilliancy to me through the long years, a brilliancy heightened by the reflected light of a supreme moment. I had learned the lesson it would teach me—strength and courage. Beethoven and Shelley were one, and the new minister was truthful. With one sweep of a master-hand, the barriers between me and those whom I loved had been broken down. Gratefully and lovingly I shook the hand which Corley offered me, then, rising from my chair, I walked the floor of my room, a free man.

One year from the winter in which the star flashed to us its message, I went with my friend to spend the Christmas vacation at his home. The year had been one of unbounded delight. My relations to those at home were dearer than ever. I carefully avoided a reference to any point upon which we might differ, and wrote enthusiastically of the truth which we accepted in common. I now missed nothing in Cosmonette and believed that she missed nothing in me. I felt that the heights to which I had attained, spiritually, must indeed be gratifying to my father and mother as well as to myself. Mr. Clairmont wrote occasionally. He was always gentle and wise, but never seemed quite satisfied with my position; and to me there was something holy about the man which enjoined upon me silence regarding the more extreme principles which were the foundation of my belief.

When Corley and I reached his home in the metropolis, I found myself in a room rich and artistic in its appointments. Alfred's mother—a widow—was superb-

ly dressed, and moved about in her palatial residence with the air of a duchess.

"We'll give the first two days to Mother," Alfred had said to me on the train, as he cut the leaves of a magazine. "Then we will arrange our own programme."

The pulse of the great city was beating above normal when we rang the bell at the house of Adelaide Thornton, and I was ushered into the presence of the young woman whose sweet voice and charming manner had, during the three days she had spent in Mrs. Corley's, house opened to me another world, sung of by poets and birds.

Miss Thornton was one of Corley's friends. She was not particularly beautiful, but she was earnest, and her influence was without limit. By an invisible cord she held her captives, and the bonds were sweet. She was too deep to be trifling, too sincere to be deep, too disciplined to be sincere. There was a pathos in her joy, and a triumph in her pain. She was by four years my senior, but the bloom was on her cheek, and the love-light in her eye.

Miss Thornton's brother invited Corley up stairs to see his collection of minerals, and I was left alone with Adelaide. She sang to me a melody of great beauty, that reached a passionate climax but to return to the tenderness with which it began. Then I remembered Katie's words when she first heard Jasper Clairmont sing:

"That's heavenly singin', Lovie; spiritual through and through. No one can sing like that an' be o' the earth, earthy."

As the last notes of the music died away, I rose to meet Adelaide, and leading her to a seat beside my own I exclaimed :

"You sing divinely, Miss Thornton."

"No! No!" she cried, "don't say that. Say that Schumann thought divinely, or, if you must be personal, say that my singing awoke a response in your heart; then if the response be divine, I shall have to accede that the music is also divine. But when you say I sing divinely, you attribute to a mere physical effort that which belongs to the inner life alone."

"You draw a nice distinction," I answered, "I can but say that there is something divine in this moment and that I owe it to you."

"Not to me alone," she replied, earnestly, "You know that students of natural philosophy tell us that there can be no such thing as music until the vibrations reach the drum of the ear. And I can tell you that there can be no divine influence until the feeling that is afloat finds its home in a responsive heart. I might sing to a million men, without giving one divine note, yes, and sing to them Schumann. And why is this? Mr. Corley tells me that you are a twin, then you must know something of the blending, by the law of nature, of soul with soul. But there is a spiritual law."

She paused, and I replied—all my soul aglow with the fire from her altar :

"Yes, a law the power of which I recognize at this moment. The knowledge is not new to me, but I

assure you that its application has come into my life like the rising of an unclouded sun."

"We are never surprised at the sun," she answered, "even when it rises brightest and warmest, nor dare you express surprise that our souls speak to each other. How long ago only the Great Heart of the Universe knows, your soul and mine communed together. Friends we were in the ages long gone, and friends we shall be in the interminable ages to come. These bodies are but necessary accompaniments of the spirits that sojourn here, which bodies we shall no more need when we have passed into the Great Heart, there to exchange our personality for a part of that Being by whose will we now exist."

"But how shall we know each other under such conditions?" I asked.

"Some people," replied Adelaide, "to whom the body is all might ask, How can two spirits know each other?—a question which your heart could answer. And I assure you that the life to which we will one day attain will be as far above the spiritual, as we now understand it, as the spiritual is above the material."

"The thought of losing my individuality," I replied, "is shockingly painful, and the thought of you losing yours is impossible. And although I readily see the beauty of the exposition which you have given me, I find a greater inspiration in the thought of the God who made heaven and earth, by whose will we shall one day reach a life of transcendent joy in the unrestricted employment of intellectual faculties, than I

find in the thought of a Great Heart waiting to absorb immortal souls. Truth is salvation, and activity is heaven."

Adelaide laughed a low, musical laugh, and answered :

"Now you are selling yourself to a name. Can you not see that there is really no difference between us? A difference of names is nothing to enlightened minds. Truth is universal ; it cannot be bound by documents dated, signed and sealed. If you live in the truth you must, some day, reach the life to which you in one way, and I in another, have referred. Believe me, there is no difference between us."

"There shall be no difference," I cried, as I took in my own the hand that rested upon the arm of my chair. Her lips may have spoken error, but her eyes spoke truth and the tremulous warmth of her little hand touched to life the love that had been waiting for its birth.

Corley and Thornton came down stairs, gave us a hasty glance, then went out upon the street.

I spent the evening in a transport of joy, and left the house with but one purpose in my life—to love and be loved by Adelaide.

As the light of the rising sun is but the promise of its noontide radiance, so the love that came into my life when I first met Adelaide was but a promise of the love that was to make for me a world of beauty and of bliss. If there had been a lack of perfect harmony between us upon technical points of belief, the love which knew but to attain or to die now resolved the

unharmonious progressions into concordant ones, and we stood soul to soul. I wrote to my mother and Cosmonette of my new found joy. To Cosmonette I said:

“ You will love Adelaide. At first I did not think her beautiful, but there are now only two women in the world whose beauty can compare with hers. But her irresistible charm lies in her spiritual powers and her intellectual graces. And to think that she was sent to earth to give to a blundering fellow like me a love that kings might covet! My days are circles of gold set with hours of diamonds. The future is a blaze of light, and the floor of the present is paved with the reflected radiance. And yet the old loves remain the same—No! not the same, they are increased a million fold now that I love Adelaide and that she loves me. And if there be in my arm any strength, in my heart any courage, in my mind any light and in my spirit any ideal beauty, these shall combine their forces to make me worthy of the love of her whom my soul adores.”

And so the months passed. Save for the earnestness and activity of my life I was as one in a dream. The world and everything in it was gilded with glory. My heart sang its life-throbs, and I breathed the breath of roses. My last year at college was spent at a pressure, the remembrance of which now startles me. I worked day and night, making strides that overlapped all records, then rushed down to the metropolis to quench my spiritual thirst at the fountain-head of ideal life. There the spirit-world was about

me. A pressure from Adelaide's hand or a kiss from her lips was an inspiration to my noblest and most brilliant thoughts. I wrote with a passion and a power that surprised even Corley. Fortune smiled upon me. Fame shook hands with me, and Corley said, "You are on the right track, my boy."

To me Adelaide's letters were poems in prose. I read them as I read the songs of Shelley and Goethe, and the measures sang through my brain like incantations. They stayed with me always, like the touch of her hand and the light of her eye. She wrote:

"To love fondly and fervently is to live forever. Is not love the chief attribute of the Great Heart of the Universe? If we love entirely we are already a part of that Heart, and the things of this world have no longer any power over us. Then commodities are unreal—names only—and the true lover is beyond the power of a name. Let those who live for earth and by earth be in bondage to its laws. The spiritual life is a free life, and especially when love puts upon it her seal is it forever as dead to earth and earthly laws."

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IX.

THE AWAKENING.

THE close of my fourth year at college found me still the happiest and most earnest of men. With a strength and a purpose far above others of my years, I was ready for life, and jubilantly turned from my Alma Mater to meet it. There had been no abatement of my joy, no lessening of the glamour which Adelaide and a consciousness of my spiritual attainment had thrown about me. I lived at a fever heat and loved with a strength and a courage worthy of a disciple of the faith which I had embraced.

The long vacation was spent partly with Adelaide and partly at home. With strength in my arm, with warmth in my blood and with love in my heart, I leaped from the carriage and rushed into my father's house. They crowded around me,—mother, father, Cosmonette, Katie and Clairmont, embraced me, praised my looks, and led me into the library where a profusion of roses made the air heavy with fragrance. Then they congratulated me on my success, asked after Miss Thornton, and Cosmonette kissed me again and wound her soft arms about my neck. She was now a little taller than my mother, and looked stronger than when I had seen her the year before. She was earnest and happy, but the habitual repose of her face was as marked as when this characteristic had interfered

with my happiness. Father and mother were a little grey, but looked well; Katie was white, and exhibited her joy at my return by weeping. Jasper's smile had in it something of heaven, and lent its lustre to all with whom he came in contact. Those weeks at home were memorable ones, and yet my happiness had in it a restlessness for which I could not account. Ccsmomette and Katie often talked together, and once or twice I met my twin coming from her room and upon her face were traces of tears.

The parting hour came too soon. Hitherto I had been leaving home for college, but now I was leaving it for the world. Loving and earnest counsel was given me by father and mother; and Katie said,—

"All your life, Laddie darlin', so far, has been like the piece Mr. Clairmont plays before he sings. Now you're beginnin' the toon in earnest. You've done great things at your college, an' yet I can't help feelin' that yo' ain't prepared for the awful warfare before yo'. There's only one preparation, Laddie, an' yo' aint made it yet. It all looks bright and glitterin', for the sun's high up in the heavens, but the road is awful rough, an' the sharp stones 'ill cut the feet o' my darlin'. Day an' night, Laddie, day an' night I think o' yo', and I pray that yo' may have your feet shod wi' the preparation o' the gospel o' peace."

"It is all right, Katie," I answered, as I kissed the dear wrinkled face. "God is good. And then you know that a truly spiritual life lies along an elevated plain, where rough roads are unknown."

"Ah! yes, Laddie," she replied. "A truly spiritual

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life is hid with Christ in God, an' is safe an' happy. But these new fangled doctrines that shuts out the gospel o' peace, an' teaches men that they're gods themselves an' aint got no need o' the Holy Spirt to come into their hearts, I say these doctrines has broken many a heart an' ruined many a soul. But God be with yo', Laddie dear, an' if prayin' can help yo' any Katie won't ever forget yo'."

With a dread of impending evil, I bade farewell to my loved ones, holding Mother's and Cosmonette's hand until the last moment. My father went with me into the car. He was not a man of evident emotion, but a tear stole down his cheek as he shook my hand and said :

" God bless you, my boy."

I could not reply. But I was seized with an impulse to fling away ambition, Corley, Adelaide and all, and rush baek to my heart's home. Oh, fond love! Oh, true love! Why did you not then hold me secure from the glamour and from the guilt?

A few days of unremitting literary labor brought me to my old self, and I again wrote home cheerfully and hopefully. Then Christmastide found me with Adelaide and Corley, once more in an ecstasy of joy.

Christmas day was spent quietly in Adelaide's home. Corley and I were the only guests. The curtains were closed and the hours lingered where lights were subdued, where music was soft and tender, where flowers and wines were fragrant, where voices were low, where eyes were wistful and where the air breathed of a sensuous spirituality that held spell-bound its

worshippers. Adelaide was radiant, but the radiance was timid and tremulous, and seemed to swim before my enchanted gaze. To me the day was without beginning and without ending, so supreme was the present moment.

"Adelaide, my queen," I whispered, "if in that other life the Great Heart offers anything dearer than this, how shall my soul bear its joy?"

In the evening Corley, Thornton, Adelaide and I, being left alone, drew up our chairs for a game of whist.

"I always play with Harry in this game," said Adelaide, taking the seat opposite her brother.

Wine was brought to us. Flowers were arranged upon a small table on either side of the one upon which we played. The lights were turned on at full, the door was closed and the play was begun.

The first rubber was scored to Corley and his partner; the second to Adelaide and Harry.

By this time the "wicked wee drap" had become a pronounced factor in the evening's performance, and the game was bidding fair to become a hilarious one.

"A queen! A queen!" cried Corley. "Ah! diamonds are trumps; good enough."

"We are playing whist, if you please," said Adelaide with cheerful dignity.

"If the lead is hearts, the play shall be mine," said Corley, draining his glass and running his fingers through his hair. "I'll wager—"

"Come! Come!" I cried "play this hand. I too

claim the hearts," and I brought my glass down upon the table with much more force than dignity.

"Stay! Stay! Who played the queen?" said Corley with difficult articulation. "I played the queen," Harry replied.

But I covered his play with a king, and exclaimed, "She's mine!"

Adelaide threw a smaller card.

"Sorry to spoil your game, Pard; but she must be mine," and Corley threw an ace and took the trick.

The hot blood rushed to my cheeks and springing from my chair I cried:

"You infernal dog! That play was ours."

"Ours, sweet, ours! but not mine," and a long hoarse laugh made the night hideous.

"The queen is mine, and I can prove it," continued Corley, as with a significant glance at Adelaide, he drew from his pocket a package of letters neatly bound together with a narrow blue ribbon.

"Gentleman, you shall have no more wine to-night," exclaimed Adelaide, as she rose and took from the table the decanter and glasses. She took also the letters.

We finished the game. Corley played brilliantly by dint of severe concentration. Adelaide played well. Harry played stupidly. I cannot remember that I played at all. Then the boys went out upon the street and Adelaide sang to me and talked to me until the play was forgotten, and my heart beat wildly at the touch of her hand. Surely now I could speak of the future.

I too

"Do you not pity those people," said Adelaide, "who know nothing of the keen delights experienced by us to whom only the unreal is a reality? This day has been a foretaste of the life of bliss which is the portion of the truly spiritual who live beyond the reach of materiality. How perfectly our souls have mingled to-day!"

"Dearest love," I cried, "I must speak now. Give me the promise of the consummation of my joy. If indeed our souls are one, let the sacred word be spoken which shall unite us forever."

She answered, "The word was spoken ages ago when our disembodied spirits first met and mingled. Can Priesthood add one element of sanctity, dear heart, to love like ours?"

"Adelaide! Adelaide!" I cried.

She rose from her chair and standing before me exclaimed with earnestness and emotion:

"Chaon Orr, the truly spiritual scorn to be bound by laws made for base materiality."

A pang shot through my heart as if it had been pierced by a dagger. Seizing her hand I cried:

"Adelaide, you will be my wife?"

She sat beside me and said in mellow, tremulous tones that chanted my soul to the very brink of hell:

"'Wife,' darling, is a name. Love is a reality. The future is before us, full, free, glorious—a future of light, of liberty, of love."

"But you are testing my love," I said. "Can you not see that this suspense is unbearable? Tell me, Adelaide, when will you be my wife?"

"Never!" she answered.

I pushed her from me and rose to my feet. But when she again spoke, low and fervently, and reached her arms towards me, all my heart cried out for her. My breath came hard and hot, and my brain reeled. Oh! it is a bitter thing to dash down with one's own hand a cup that is sweet even though the dregs be poison, and I must have been unequal to the conflict had not an Unseen Hand guided my own and saved me. A flash-light from heaven revealed to me the clay feet of my idol. God knows the awakening almost maddened me. How long I stood there, powerless to speak, to move, I know not. But my guardian angels came at length and whispered helpful words. Then I remembered my mother and Cosmonette and Katie, pure and calm with the light of heaven about them. Could I ever find them again, or would I lose my way in the dense darkness which now enveloped me?

I hurried out upon the street. It was deserted, but the midnight air brought strains of music that mocked my misery. I was too utterly wretched to care anything about the points of the compass, but wandered on aimlessly until the sound of sleigh bells in the distance warned me to turn down a by-street as a sort of refuge.

The street was narrow, and the buildings upon either side were small. A dim light came from a curtained window farther down the street, and fell upon two figures that stood in its line. I was too near to retreat unnoticed, and in another moment Corley

and Thornton had taken hold of my arms and were dragging rather than leading me with them.

"You're the boy for us," cried Corley, then joined Thornton in singing :

"Drink, comrades, forever ; know joy while we may,
The red wine of night kills the grief of the day."

The bitterness of my grief had numbed my sensibilities, and I had no inclination to tear myself from the young men across whose path an adverse fate had thrown me. Ten minutes passed ; then it was too late. Conscience awoke, and struggled hard for the mastery, but my over-strung nervous system was an easy victim, and daybreak found me in a beastly state of intoxication.

Over the horrors of that night I must draw a veil. The darkness of the long halls, the waning light in the rooms, the clouds of blue smoke penetrating to every part of the building, the hideous pictures on the walls, the strained eagerness of the players, their fiendish fervor, their audible breathings, the deep curses of the unlucky, the glitter of gold pieces that flashed here and there like eyes in hell, are all fresh in my memory, and will be until I die.

When I awoke the next day, I was in my bed at Corley's home. How I got there I never enquired ; but my first resolution was to get away as quickly as possible. I made preparations for my departure as hastily as a swollen head and trembling hands would allow. In the midst of these preparations, Corley rapped at my door. Receiving no response he entered.

"Helloa! Helloa!" he shouted, "you look rather interesting. How do you feel?"

"I much prefer not being questioned," I rejoined rather sharply.

"Aha! Love and wine are not wholesome, it seems. Quarrelled with my lady fair, eh?"

His handsome face wore an expression which I had never seen upon it before, and which angered me. It was with difficulty that I replied:

"I am done with both, and please do me the kindness never to mention either."

"Not done with love!" he cried, "By Jove, Orr! A man who is too cowardly to live up to his privileges had better cut his throat and go to the devil at once."

"I have no intention of cutting my throat," I replied, "and if God will help me out of this accursed city, I have no intention of going to the devil."

"Indeed?" answered Corley. "My guest, I discover, is a grateful one. I will leave him until he has calmed himself."

I completed preparations for my departure, wrote my thanks, adieux, etc., to Mrs. Corley and a line to Alfred, rang for a servant, entrusted to him the letters and left my friend's house forever.

X.

CHAOS.

WEARILY the months wore away, leaden footed and grim. Again and again I remembered Katie's words, "When our guardian angels sees an' hears the things that pains 'em it must be terrible to them, so spirtalized. Then they leave us an' life becomes an awful blank."

When I awoke in Corley's house the day after Christmas I awoke to the "awful blank" of which Katie had spoken, for a hard won victory had been followed by shameful defeat.

In vain I sought for comfort in the remembrance of those whom I loved at home, in the thought of the exercise of intellectual faculties, in the knowledge that a strong arm and a clear head can make life worth living under almost any circumstances. My arm was weak, my brain was confused, and my heart was turned to stone. I was as a tree stripped of the luxuriant foliage that had sighed to it music that soothed and charmed like incantations. Alone and bare I stood in the bleak field of life, and the sharp winds of disappointment and remorse beat upon me mercilessly.

It was some months before I wrote home of my disappointment in those whose love I had placed as a beacon light in my life. And even then I referred to the experience in the most practical way possible, at the

same time requesting my friends not to question me upon the subject. From that time I received more letters from home than before, but the bloom and the beauty had been brushed off of life; I felt myself doomed to a loveless one. I could be equal to a laborious life, could bear an obscure life, could meet a suffering life, but to live a loveless life was worse than death. I did not altogether doubt the sincerity of those who wrote to me so affectionately, but I reasoned that the force of habit had, probably, a good deal to do with the writing of those loving messages, and I should take them for just what they were worth, and no more. Jasper, of course, wrote from a sense of duty, feeling himself elected to look after my spiritual welfare. I did not always reply to his letters. In fact, when a year had passed my life was more loveless than when I wandered aimlessly down the narrow street of the metropolis. My father chided me for my indifference to my mother who felt that the world had robbed her of her only son. Cosmonette insisted that a thousand Jaspers could not take my place in her affections, and that when she did not hear from me regularly it seemed as though half of herself was dead. But then Cosmonette was a woman, and it was natural for women to talk in that strain. They had talked like that since the world was made, and unless men came to their senses and closed their ears to them, they would talk like that until the world came to an end,—that is, if the world ever did come to an end, which event could scarcely be looked for at the slow pace at which it was now going. And yet Cosmonette's face was ever be-

fore me. In the twilight hour when I pushed back my papers and let fall my pen, she came to me in her calm beauty and with tender and cheering words. Sometimes her face was sad, as she spoke of the change in my life. Was she not still my twin? she would plead, and could I hope to hide from her the struggles through which I was passing? When I suffered in my soul, did she not too suffer, just as we used to experience each other's physical pain? When would I come home and be myself again? There was love everywhere, the world was full of it, then why did I live in bitterness?

Thus all of my leisure moments were filled with the presence of Cosmonette. And my heart yearned for the old-time love and trust, but could not break through the gloom that enveloped it. For nearly three years I did not see the face of any whom I loved.

I had missed the path to a spiritual life, and was at war with the conditions of the material one in which I found myself. The faith which I had embraced was, I had believed, founded upon the separation of the spiritual from the material, so I had learned to ignore commonplaces, to despise commodities, and to live a life that was as dangerous as it was elevated, as false as it was sweet. Now that my feet were once more upon terra firma, and I could reason, I saw the true inwardness of the situation. Not only so, but the veil had been torn from before that enchanting system of belief, and I saw that what was beautifully spiritual could be basely material. And so my faith was gone; and if the flight of love had left a blank in my life, the flight of faith now left a greater blank. I never walked

beneath a changing or unchanging sky, I never heard the singing of a bird, nor the music of winds or of waves, I never penned a thought, never responded to one from the heart and brain of another, I never longed for home, I never thought upon God's great ones who had lived and suffered, who had striven and attained, without a consciousness that my soul was immortal. But the beautiful spirit world upon which my mind had once loved to dwell, and which had shot its rays to the lowest levels of my life, gilding them with glory, went farther and farther from me, until it seemed like a mirage fading away in the distance. At times I arrived at the conclusion that a truly spiritual life was possible to those who, like Cosmonette, were out of the line of material influences, or who, like Shelley, soared so high that they were above the reach of them. But how could I, having once been entangled by such influences, and being now chained to earth by memories that stung and by a knowledge that tainted,—how could I ever reach that spiritual height? This seemed impossible; and I heard the tread of hope as she walked out of my life. So long had I lived in the ideal that, to my mind, any other life was death to happiness. I believed that love resulted from the meeting of congenial spirits, and that true love could live only where there were light and beauty, only in the hearts of the spiritual. Thus my sudden fall to earth—by means of a knowledge which, God knows, came unsought—branded me, so that forever true love would pass me by.

But there were left to me intellectual faculties? Could they not break the fetters which my soul

abhorred? Then I bent all my energies to the exercise of these, and again lived at fever heat. For a moment there was a gleam as of dawning glory, but it soon faded and life was again a blank. There was no inspiration. The spirits which from my childhood had crowded around me, urging me on to earnest endeavor, to purity, to power, had all left me. Then the darkness became denser. There was no spiritual life. We were but flesh and blood. Faith was cowardice, hope was mockery, love was passion. We were in the world and there was nothing to do but to make the best of it. As to the future it would be a release from the present; and that was about all any one could or need know of it.

It may have been the influence of the book I was reading, or of the beautiful June weather; or, perhaps, some loving spirit, aware of the void in my life, had returned to me. Or was it that a gentler and holier influence was at work in my heart? Certainly the third summer following that dark Christmas found me less unhappy than I had been since that never-to-be-forgotten day. With a return of spring came a longing to see those by the memory of whose love I lived, even though a unconquerable bitterness towards conditions in general prevented me from expressing to them the love that a shattered faith and blasted hope could not destroy. So when with the first day of June there came a long and loving letter from Cosmonette entreating me to come home to her wedding, the old love struggled hard to assert itself, and a ray of light pierced the darkness. I stood powerless between two influences. That of the

past probed my heart and poured in unbelief and bitterness. That of the present endeavored to heal it.

I left the house, hoping to flee from the conflict. Leaving the path that lay to the north of a hill, I came to the rugged shore of the sea. The great cliffs had hidden this view from me, and it was with intense emotion that I beheld the scene. The sea looked black in its fury, and the tempestuous waves broke upon the shore with a crash and a moan which I shall never forget. The wind was high and bore before it a large, dark cloud that hung loosely in the sky as if it would fall upon the billows. In the midst of this mad exercise of the elements, a little bird flew around me in evident distress. I watched it until it found shelter in an opening in a large rock above my head. And there, in the pauses of the storm, I heard it singing.

Oh, bird with the heavenly message! With the wild winds around me, the angry sea beside me, the black rocks and blacker sky above me, I buried my face in my hands, and my hard heart melted. Again they crowded around me, the dear ones with loves as true as heaven and as pure as its joys; and I heard Cosmonette singing:

“ I know a Rock in this weary land,
Whose shadow is cool and sweet ;
A Refuge safe from the wind and tide,
And storm-tossed souls in its cleft abide
Forever in safe retreat.

“ A fearful tempest of pain and sin
Is sweeping across the land ;
And lest I die by its awful shock,
Oh! hide me, Lord, in the Cleft of the Rock,
And cover me with Thy hand.”

XI.

SHOD.

WHEN the driver closed the door of the cab, sprang to his seat and started his horse on a brisk trot, somewhat of my old energy and hope returned to me. And when at the station the big burly official wearing a uniform and a frown, shouted "All aboard!" my heart leaped with a joy to which it had long been a stranger.

As the day wore on, the home pictures passed before my minds' eye in rapid succession, and my eagerness to reach my father's house became so intense that it was painful. Every mile placed between me and the scene of my bondage snapt one of the cords by which I had been held. The books and magazines which I had taken upon my journey to act as charmers to the gloom which had so long possessed me, lay unnoticed upon the seat in front of me.

The second half of the journey seemed interminable. I tried to read, I tried to write, I tried to talk with my neighbor, I tried to walk the floor of the Pullman car, but I failed in everything. Then I grew childish, and opening my valise I examined the presents I had for the home folks. This was a bold act, and struck such a blow to gloom and bitterness that they lay unconscious during the rest of my journey.

At this point a stranger sitting behind me—I could

not determine whether he was lonely or only curious—
said:

"Going home, Sir?"

I answered, "Going home."

He said no more, but crossed to the other side of the car, and supported his chin with his hand as he looked out of the window.

Could one pass from the gloom of midnight into the radiance of the sunniest morning, he might have some conception of the transition through which my spirit passed when I reached my father's house.

We sat together in my mother's artistic parlor, and love sang its old sweet song in every spoken word and in every heart throb. Then my soul was free once more, and I thanked God for the jubilant spirit which no calamity could utterly crush. I see my mother now as she looked that night, transcendent in beauty and in joy. She wore a gown of crimson velvet, with a front of cream lace to soften the shade as it blended with the deep blue of her eye. I noticed little change in her hair. The sprinkling of grey could not detract from the beauty of her soft brown coil. Cosmonette wore a canary colored dress, and her brown eyes lighted up her face with an animation that was new and beautiful. My father was exultant, and his dear eyes beamed upon me the love that his lips could not utter. Jasper was half serious, even when he smiled, and the gentle influence that had always characterized them, breathed from his words and actions. Katie's face was bathed in tears, but she insisted that she had "not knowed so happy a moment since Laddie left us, law to goodness, no!"

The marriage of Cosmonette and Jasper took place in our home, and "the new minister" who had remained with the congregation to which our family belonged, officiated. The wedding was like all other weddings at which love is supreme. The house decorations were artistic, the rooms were filled with the fragrance of flowers, the music was all concordant, every face wore a smile, and the sun shone upon the bride and upon everyone within a wide radius of her. There were no tears, not even in the eyes of my mother. I did not look into her heart. Cosmonette was radiant, and flitted from Jasper to mother, from mother to father, from father to me, and back again to Jasper with the ease and grace of a gazelle at play.

I had expected to experience considerable sorrow at this event, but the good cheer of the occasion forbade any thought of a selfish grief. But when I heard the mumbling of the carriage coming to take Cosmonette from us, and we all crowded around her with open arms and loving words, a cold, dull pain came into my heart. I kissed her again and again, my Cosmonette, my twin, and whispered in her ear the love of which she needed no assurance. In that moment no one knew better than we that "there is somethin' awful spirital in bein' twins."

In the midst of a shower of rice, good wishes and sunshine, the carriage rolled away, and she was gone, our darling, our beauty, of whom my mother had said, "She never caused me to shed a tear."

Then followed days of loneliness and depression. Cosmonette was to remain away for at least six months,

and whenever the wind would rise my mother would become weak and nervous, and once she lay awake all night thinking of her child and Jasper upon the sea. The next morning Katie prepared an especially dainty dish for her and said as she served it :

" Law to goodness, Lovie, who'd hev thought you'd be so foolish? Don't He hold the winds an' the waves in the holler of His hand? An' do you s'pose he's goin to take care o' sparras that's no earthly good but to fight birds prettier 'n 'emselves, and not take care o' that angel that's moved among us all these years like a beam o' heavenly light? Law to goodness! If it was Chaon, now, yo' might be oneasy; but them two precious souls is as safe on the sea as if they was walkin' arm in arm up an' down the golden streets o' the celestial city. There aint no harm comin' to them."

" I have no fears for their safety," replied my mother, " but it is the loneliness. I miss Cosmonette so."

" But, Lovie, yo' didn't take on like this when she was away four years at college, a hull year at a time. An' now she'll be back in six months to live just around the corner from yo.' Law to goodness! What is there to fret about?"

" But, Katie, you don't understand. She belonged to me then; but now she's married. My girl is gone." Here my mother burst into tears.

" Now don't fret," pleaded Katie, " your girl aint gone. Law to goodness, how you do cling to myterial things! How many times I've told yo', Lovie, that flesh an' bones aint nothin'. The spirt's everything, the spirt, Lovie, an' between spirts there aint no such

thing as sep'ration. No, Lovie! There aint a breeze that comes in through one o' them windows but brings to me the young man's singin' an' some of his wise an' gentle words that was sweeter 'n his music. An' there aint a sunbeam comin' in through them flowers yonder but brings to me Cosie's smile. In every star that shines I see the sparklin' of her beautiful brown eye. When the wind moves the grasses an' flowers, I fancy it's the rustlin' of her pink gown with the ribbons flyin' here and there. Law to goodness, Lovie, the hull house is full of her. When I go into her room I see her touchin' the canvas with those delerate brushes, or hangin' up a bit o' beauty here an' there. An' there lays one o' her Bibles open, an' the verse marked which she read to me before the minister come to marry her—'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one.' No, Lovie, there aint no such thing as sep'ration. When my time comes to sit with folded hands, an' the sunbeams fade to my eyes, an' the music sounds low, I'll still hear the patter o' Cosie's little feet, an' feel her climb into my lap, an' put her soft arms about my neck. God bless the little darlin'! How far away did yo' say they'd gone? An', law to goodness, they aint been away two weeks yet. Maybe they'd shorten their trip if they knowed how terrible lonesome we all was. Not that I mind it much myself, but Laddie an' his father looks pitiful. An' you're goin' to be sick if yo' don't brace up. There, you aint eat a mouthful! Come, Lovie, eat a bite, dearie."

Each day left my mother weaker than the previous

one. Father spent most of his time at home, and we sang to Mother, played to her, read to her, brought to her her favorite flowers, and forgot our own loneliness in our eagerness to cheer her heart. But we soon learned that our loving ministries and the best medical skill were futile. The fever reached its height, and for nearly a week her life hung in the balance. Father watched her day and night, taking a little sleep occasionally whenever I would literally drag him from her bedside. I can never forget the night when the crisis was reached. Physicians had given us little hope of her recovery, and we all three sat with her through the long hours of that dreadful night. I could not look at my father. If breaking hearts ever speak, his spoke through his eyes that night. I seemed to myself a monster to have a sorrow of my own when his was so great. Mother lay with her beautiful face turned towards us, but her eyes were closed, and there was no response when we pressed her hand.—Mother! whose personal charms and sudden flashes of poetic fire had been the brightness of our years, to whom I owed Cosmonette's life and my own, and who at forty-five placed her hand in my father's with the same winsome grace with which she placed it there at twenty.

Interminable seemed the hours of that night. A breeze came through the open south window bringing us the fragrance of flowers that only mocked our sorrow.

The first matin chirp of a bird was heard as Katie went to the bedside, smoothed my mother's hair, kissed her tenderly and turned to leave the room,

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"Is she better?" I asked, for about the hundredth time.

"No change yet, Laddie," she whispered. "Leastwise not for the better."

When fifteen minutes had passed, Katie's absence had become unbearable to me, and I went in search of her. She was not in the kitchen, not in the dining room, not in the library nor drawing room. Then I went to her own room. She was not there. Weakened by anxious sorrow and long watching, I half believed that Katie's spiritual attainments, if not her skill in nursing, might be the means of my mother's recovery, and I felt that I must find her. I went to the third floor of the house. Upon this floor there was a long, narrow hall, at the end of which was a room used as a sort of treasure-house. The window commanded a most beautiful view, and my mother used to say that this scene inspired her best and cheeriest thought. I had long believed that Katie's guardian angels made special appointments with her to meet them in this room. This belief may have influenced me to look there for her. The hall was dark, but a soft grey light came from under the door of the room, the window of which looked to the east. I crept along the hall quietly, and hearing Katie's voice paused beside the door. It was not curiosity but reverence that held me there while she said:

"Is it too much to ask o' such a mighty God an' such a lovin' Saviour, just the life o' one human bein'? Oh Lord! aint heaven bright enough without Lovie?"

If it can be Thy wil', lovin' Saviour, leave her to us, for now that Cosie's gone she's all we have o' sunshine an' beauty. An' yet if she's nearin' the spirt land now, don't send her back, fur to be with Christ is far better. But how could we live without her? Oh God, save Lovie! Save Lovie! An' bless poor Laddie. Thou know'st, Lord, as I clasp my hands before Thee now I can feel between 'em Laddie's little feet, bare and bleedin'. When wilt Thou make him to lie down in green pastures an' lead him beside still waters? Fill his lovin' heart with love o' Thee, O Chiefest among ten thousand, O One altogether lovely! Take away his loneliness, and fill his heart with the Comforter. Forgive Lovie an' Laddie's father for bein' ashamed to talk o' spirital things, for bein' ashamed to speak o' the hope that's stayed by 'em certain an' true ever since baby Leonora went away to baby Nina. Forgive 'em, dear Lord, an' make 'em have more courage in the future. Oh! save Lovie! Save Lovie! Leave to us our light, our beauty, our joy."

Here Katie's voice shook with emotion, and I was seized with an impulse to rush into the room and acknowledge myself a miserable, ungrateful wretch. All my life came before me from the day when Katie carried me across the road of sharp stones until the moment in which I heard her pray, and all the way along I could see her pleading with God for my spirital light and safety. She continued to pray for Mother's recovery, and for the peace of my soul; but I slipped away as quietly as I had come. After stopping in the library a few moments to compose myself, I

went to Mother's room. My father met me at the door with tears streaming down his face. One physician stood at the bedside, another stood at a table preparing a mixture. The curtain was drawn back to let in the light. I seized my father's hand, not daring to question him. But his tears were tears of joy. He led me to the bed, placed my hand in Mother's and asked, as he bent over her :

"Do you know who this is, Maggie?"

"Chaon," she answered, with a smile that touched to life the dead hope in my heart.

I lost no time in communicating to Katie the glad news of the change in my mother's condition. I could not wait for ceremony, but rushed in upon the precious woman rather irreverently I fear. When she arose from her knees she was very pale. Her eyes were red with weeping, and the gray hair around her forehead, dishevelled from being buried in the cushions of a chair, looked withered and broken. She turned towards me and putting her dear arm about *my* neck, said :

"Laddie darlin', God has answered *one half o'* my prayer. How long must I wait for an answer to *the* other half?"

I watched her leave the room and close behind her the door. Then kneeling where she had knelt, I pleaded for the light, the liberty, the love which I now believed could only come from one source. As I prayed the burdens rolled away, one by one. The hour was holy, the place was holy. I cannot tell how long I remained upon my knees, but when I arose the room was flooded with sunlight; and so was my soul.

XII.

LENA HART.

WHEN the crisis was passed, my mother gained rapidly, and was soon in her old place, the queen of my father's home as well as of his heart. The circle was not complete without Cosmonette and Clairmont, and yet Katie used sometimes to say as we all sat together and talked of the mysteries and consolations of a truly spiritual life, that she believed when Simeon said, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace * * * for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation," he must have felt a good deal as she felt then. Only she was not in any particular hurry to depart.

I remained at home until Cosmonette and Jasper had had enough of touring and came back to us as full of inspiration as are carrier bees of nectar from a clover field. Then I turned again to the world.

It was not until several weeks had passed, and the confusion of getting into harness had been lived down, that I had time and thought to give to contrasting my new with my old faith. Then I found that the spiritual life to which I had awakened was not only soul-satisfying, but was an inspiration in my work. The lone, bare tree in the once desolate field of life had been re-clothed in rich and luxuriant, but perennial foliage. The mystic charm of life had returned to me, and with

it, instead of fever heat, repose ; instead of faith in myself, a faith in God ; instead of flashes of intellectual brilliancy, the never-fading radiance of the Light of the world, permeating my mental as well as my spiritual life, and gilding with ever-increasing brightness the material world. The spiritual conceptions, the hallowed influences of my earlier years came back into my life with a beauty and a power that placed it above the reach of doubt and gloom, and anchored my soul to an immovable hope of eternal blessedness. Once again the whole world of nature started to life. Every tree, every blade of grass, every cloud in the sky, every wave of the sea was vocal with love and thanksgiving. Every face was a picture and every voice was a song.

Two years from the time of Cosmonette's marriage found me settled for a few months of work at the Mullvany homestead. I chose this spot because of its seclusion, because of the beauty of its surroundings, and—well, "because."

Early in the evening of an August day I dropped my pen and went into the garden. The scene was one of indescribable beauty. From the flowers at my feet I cast my eyes to the fields of grain at either side, to the purple hills in the distance, to the valleys dotted over with groups of trees, to the unclouded sky above me, and to the crimson and gold that lingered languidly around the spot from which the sun had gone to rest. Then slowly the crimson faded to a dull purple, and over all the land fell the mystical charm of a midsummer twilight. Not a sound was heard, excepting the occasional rustling of the leaves of the trees that divi-

ded the productive fields from the opposite wood. The air was laden with that delicious fragrance which nature gives after a midsummer shower, and the coming night gave promise of great beauty.

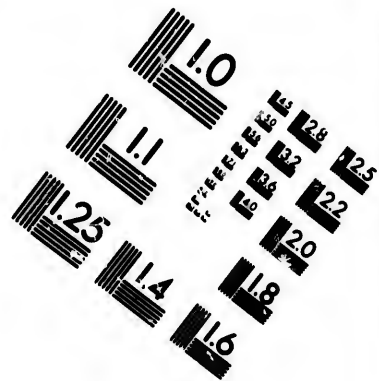
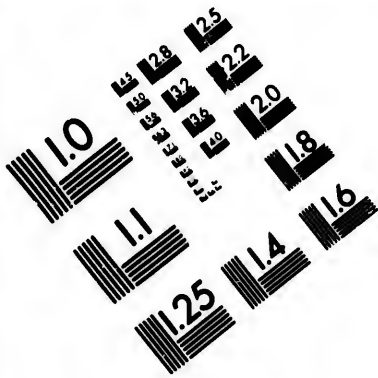
As I was nearing the river, my ear caught the sound of a voice, fresh and beautiful as the morning, rolling away beyond the trees in silver rings and dying in the home of the sleeping sun. Then turning towards the bend of the river I saw the little boat and its fair occupant drifting noiselessly towards me. The fair one was leaning forward with her hands clasped around one knee, straining her ear to hear the echoes of her voice. Seeing me, she gave a glad cry of welcome, and with a few easy strokes brought her boat to the brink of the river. She wore no hat, and her golden curls were grouped together at the back of her head, and tied with a knot of blue ribbon. As she lifted her head and pointed towards the heavens, her loose sleeve fell to her shoulder and exposed to the warm south wind and to my eye an arm so soft and white, and so exquisitely moulded that Zeno himself would have bowed to its beauty.

"Look!" she cried, "it was to have been with the light of the first star; and now there are one, two, three, four stars."

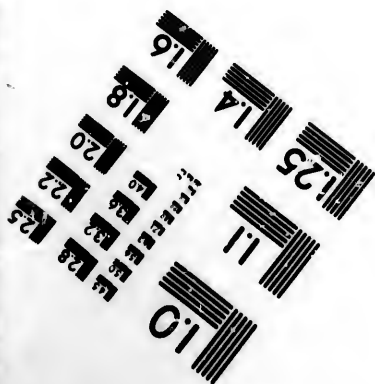
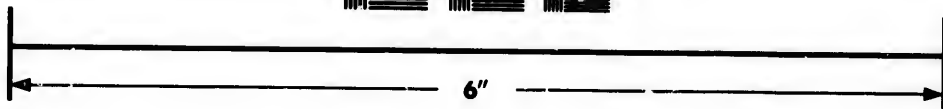
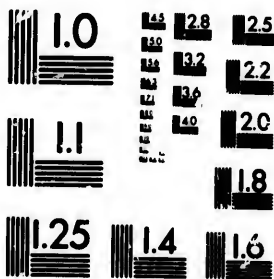
I offered my apologies as clumsily as I tumbled into the boat, and she gave me her pardon as gracefully as she gave me her hand, which latter act brought the boat to its equilibrium and saved us both from a most unpoetic experience.

Solemnly rose the moon over the fields of ripening





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barley and threw her long beams upon the water, as that night in August, we rowed down the stream; and the love which for more than a year had been waging a fierce war with a prejudice born of a bitter experience, re-enforced now by the beauty of the scene, and by the harmony which breathed from every word which Lena spoke, made a last and a successful attack upon its enemy. Over a dead prejudice leaped love, free at last and free forever.

During the two years which had passed since that morning when the sunlight came into my soul, many of my hours of keenest spiritual delight had been followed by hours of conflict. The union of spirits, the blending of soul with soul, was to me a condition so all-satisfying, having in it so much of heaven, that I looked upon love's realm as an enchanted ground upon which my soul—prone to idol worship—would know no safety. Conscious of the fact that love had lured me into a belief which, if persisted in, would have proven fatal to my soul as it once proved fatal to my happiness, I deemed it necessary to shut it out of my life. I reasoned that as my home loves were more to me than to most men, a wise Providence, doubtless, intended them to fill my life. Besides this, He had sent into my heart the love of Christ which was to all other loves as the sun to the star. But the heart grows by loving, and a half-filled heart is as displeasing in the sight of God as a half-lived life.

In one of her letters, Cosmonette had said to me:

“Do not be afraid to live your life. Would God have given you a large soul if He had intended you to

live narrowly? And does He who is Love expect from His children a nature in direct opposition to the one which He gives them? Then do not be a slave to a prejudice. The Divine Master is not a hard Master. The gifts which He freely gives He wants us to freely accept. If you deny an existence to the love that is struggling for its birth, you may, in so doing, thwart God's purpose in your life, as well as bring to your heart a wound which time can never heal."

Coming in one of my most tender moments, this seemed decidedly wholesome advice, and, unlike most advice, easy to take. By degrees the prejudice was weakened, until the little boat became a Waterloo, and the victory was won.

But during those two years the spiritual conflict had been two-fold. Looking back over my life, three landmarks pointed unmistakably, in my mind, to the consummation and the revelation at which my stunned soul had staggered. They were the Pastoral Symphony in the Music Hall of the metropolis, the visit to me of Shelley's spirit in our library, and my introduction to Alfred Corley. While I recognized that I inherited my love of poetry from my mother, and my love of music from my father, I believed that the three experiences to which I have referred, with perhaps that of the circus added, were responsible for the extreme position which I had taken in a so-called spiritual life. And so far above the old life did I find the new, that I would close my heart to the sweetest influences rather than yield myself to any that, in an unguarded moment, might tend to renew my bondage.

My volumes of Shelley and Goethe were put away out of my sight. I rarely listened to a symphony but contented myself with the oratorio, and when at home asked for the music of Mendelssohn and Mozart instead of that of Beethoven and Schubert. And yet from morning until night the old sweet strains went singing through my soul, even from their prison lighting up life to a keen delight. The light and the love for which I had prayed in the treasure-house at home, had been given me in fullest measure; but the liberty for which I had also pleaded had been granted, I now believed, in the form of a release from the debt which the Saviour had paid for me by his death on the cross, but which brought with it certain spiritual restrictions as a supplement, on my part, to the work of the Redeemer. I did not speak of this belief to those at home, feeling that the restrictions to which I have referred, while they were necessary to my highest well-being, could have no place in the lives of those who had lived at a more normal temperature. And so in many of my happiest moments there was somewhat of sadness which, however, I accepted with resignation and heroism, and these I looked upon as superior spiritual attainments.

It was in some such frame of mind as this that I stepped, clumsily enough, into Lena's boat. But when we had rowed for an hour, and the final battle of love with prejudice had been fought and won, the resignation and the heroism became less beautiful to me. And I felt myself to be the slave of a circumstance as well as of a condition.

The circumstance was this: Lena had not asked time to consider, nor time to look into her own heart, nor time for anything. She was not surprised that I loved her, was quite sure that she loved me and would marry me. Imagine my situation! Lena was as beautiful as Cosmonette, but was gifted with a merriment and an earnestness, with a sparkling vivacity which Cosmonette exhibited only in supreme moments. She was as full of poetry as is a lily of purity, but it was a poetry that sang and danced and leaped for joy. And yet at times she was extremely practical, and I often felt that her somewhat severe remarks helped to confirm me in my belief regarding the restrictions which I deemed necessary in my thought and feeling. (She was four months older than I). She had a smile that could lighten up the darkest dungeon, and a laugh that the very stars in heaven would fain echo. She was as fearless as she was fond, and coquetted with Nature in her wildest moments, gaily and triumphantly. This was the woman before me whom I loved with all my strength of being,—the woman who had promised to be my wife, and who had given that promise in the same breath in which she had hummed the refrain of an old love song, dipping the oars as quietly as she sang. And there I sat in that miserable little boat, not daring to move hand nor foot. I suggested that the night air was getting damp; she suggested that I put on my hat. I suggested that her father might think the hour late; had we not better go in? Oh, no! Papa knew she could handle any boat, and that she always carried a revolver when she went

through the wood. Besides this, no one ever came that way. And so there was nothing to do but to wait until my lady chose to row us to shore, and then —.

The beauty having been brushed off the resignation and heroism upon which I had once prided myself, I was seized with a determination to, sometime, consult the oracle before me on a subject of so great importance. But a supreme moment leaves nothing to the future. The time brought the opportunity. As our boat passed from the deep shadows cast by overhanging trees and came into the light of the moon, Lena rested her hands upon her oars, and replied to one of my questions in Shelley's words :

"I am as a spirit who has dwelt
Within his heart of hearts ; and I have felt
His feelings, and have thought his thoughts, and known
The inmost converse of his soul."

To hear Shelley quoted under such conditions was rather more than I would have bargained for in my most stoical moods. My heart leaped with an energy of delight that sent prison bars to the four corners of the earth. Just as, at that moment—had not Lena held up a dainty fore-finger in warning—I would have bounded to the bow of the boat and held her in my arms in spite of the prospect of a watery grave, so, in that moment, I would have given my soul her freedom had I known that the act would be fatal.

Having been brought to my senses by the dainty fore-finger, I composed myself, reaching the opposite extreme by means of my great effort to do so, and said :

"I thought you were too orthodox to read Shelley."

"I am not too orthodox to read Shelley's poetry," replied Lena. "Poetry, like music, is the voice of Jehovah, as art is the touch of His hand. When Shelley sang his songs it was the divine implanted in him making itself heard by those whom it was sent to bless. But when he penned the thoughts that have darkened his name, it was the human in him crying for light. Poor Shelley! we may not judge him. Certainly he seemed to ignore the one way to life; but words are, after all, only words, and behind Shelley's exposition of a groundless faith there may have been a consciousness of his soul's great need, and a simple trust in God's mercy through His Son. Of this I am certain: No spirit can live, as did Shelley's, in a realm of light and beauty, and not be nearer heaven for so living. But of this, also, I am certain: Eternal life is the gift of God through the world's Redeemer. But there is, after all, very little of Shelley's belief in Shelley's poetry. Concerning Shelley, the man, I trouble myself but little; but Shelley's poetry remains in my life a fixed delight.

"To me, poetry and the poet are one," I replied.

"And one to me," answered Lena. "But the poet and the man are two, and we should discriminate between what is and what is not great. The world's great ones are God's ministers to whom, present or absent, is given power to communicate to us wonderful and beautiful things—a mystic and inexplicable ministry.

"You give to poetry a very sacred office," I said.

"Yes," replied Lena, "for it comes from God. He

made everything beautiful, and 'witholds no good thing.' Now listen. You enjoy this water, for instance, and yet it could rob you of your life. But you feel safe because you are in a boat. Then why do you fear to meet an exposition of a false religion if your soul feels herself secure in her faith? You may enjoy poetry without accepting the teaching of the poet."

"But are you quite sure," I asked, "that intellectual delights can be indulged in without robbing the soul of its warmth of devotion to God?"

"Quite sure!" replied Lena. "It is because of your past experiences that you fear to fully enjoy intellectual delights. But when the soul is sanctified by grace the intellect is also sanctified, and its exercise is well-pleasing to Him Who gave it. If the heart be tuned to praise, you can read a poem or write a book, and I can row a boat, leap a hurdle or play a sonata, with as acceptable a worship as if we chanted a psalm; for He Whom we adore sees beyond the act and beyond the spoken word. When I first stepped into this dear little boat, I dedicated it to the worship of Him Who gave it, with as earnest a devotion as I dedicated my pew in church. And when Pet moves her hoofs restlessly, eager for a race with the west wind, to meet the sunrise, I spring into the saddle and giving her the rein, sing in my heart, 'His love shines over all.'"

"Oh, Lena!" I cried, "You make me ashamed of my littleness. I have only half lived."

"Do not be ashamed of anything," she replied, "And do not be afraid of poetry and music. Do not be afraid of your own strength, live the life God gives you,

and be thankful for it. I should think you would be afraid to enjoy this scene of matchless beauty." And she laughed a laugh so mischievous, so musical, and yet so full of something half divine that I scarcely knew whether I was upon earth or in heaven. Live my life? Yes, from that very moment; and I said:

"Lena Hart, if you do not row us to shore at once, I'll —."

But the fore-finger again forbade the least movement on my part. I had begun to think her cruel when, giving a good-night nod to our shadows in the water, she turned her boat to the shore.

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XIII.

CLOUDS GATHER AND BREAK.

THREE years before the summer of which I have written in the previous chapter, laborers on the Mullvany farm heard men chopping in the wood across the river. These men were heard calling to one another as if engaged in some important work. Early in August a house was completed and furnished, and a fortnight later its occupants were Thomas Gordan Hart, his sister, his daughter, a man servant and a maid servant.

Mr. Hart visited his summer home frequently, and while there spent his time in private conversation with his sister, in whom he found a sympathetic friend, or with Lena.

Lena knew nothing of the movements of her father.

"It is my particular business to be happy," she used to say as she stepped into her light boat or with pillow and book sought the shade of her favorite tree. "And I am of the opinion," she would sometimes add, "that if one is a success at being happy one's life can scarcely be called a failure."

Lena entered into her engagement with me without the least fear of opposition from her father.

"He has always received you kindly in town," she said, "and when he knows that I love you it will be all right."

But it was not all right. In vain I pleaded with Mr. Hart, for Lena's sake as well as my own, to consent to the marriage. I told him of the prospect of success in my work, of the comforts and luxuries that would fill Lena's life, of the appreciation and sympathy with which she would meet in my family, and closed my oration by reminding him that Lena was not only necessary to my happiness but that she was necessary to my existence.

Here Mr. Hart's impatience grew into anger. Throwing open the door of his room he cried :

"Necessary to your existence ! And what of mine ? No man shall rob me of her, my only joy, the one gleam of light left to me in this dark world. I have built a home for her and there she shall remain. Begone, sir, begone ! I ll have no more of this."

I pitied the man before me, but I loved his daughter and was determined to marry her.

"Once more, Mr. Hart," I said, "I ask for your daughter's hand. Can you call that a love for your child which would rob her of her dearest joy ? Your daughter, sir, is a woman and we love each other. And I swear to you by all that is sacred that her loving heart shall never know a sorrow that I can avert, nor her body a pang that I can relieve. But marry her I will ! With your consent, I hope, sir ; if not, without it."

I waited for a reply. Mr. Hart showed considerable agitation, but there was little token of surrender in the man. At length he said, with confusion :

"Give me until to-morrow ; I must talk with Lena,

To-morrow, Mr. Orr. You are right, Lena is no longer a child, no longer a child. To-morrow then."

There is an influence of mind over mind even at a distance. The following morning I felt irresistibly drawn to the river, and reaching it I saw Lena pushing her boat off from the opposite shore. I sprang into my own boat and hurried to her. In a few excited words she told her story.

When Mr. Hart left me the evening before he went at once to Lena and arranged to take her to the city the following morning. But Pinkie, the housemaid, overheard a conversation between Mr. Hart and his sister and lost no time in communicating the same to Lena.

Upon hearing of this I said to Lena:

"Go home at once. Pack a trunk with what you most prize and most need, and wait until I come. Your father has broken faith with me."

I entered Mr. Hart's house fully determined to say nothing which I would ever regret having said. But his first word angered me, and the remembrance of my words on that morning is a sorrow in my life. Rushing from the room I met Lena in the hall.

"I am all ready," she said, without the least sign of agitation, "all but saying good-bye to papa."

At that moment Mr. Hart stepped into the hall, and turned to Lena a face crimson with rage. She moved towards him, but he thrust her away.

"Begone! begone, ungrateful girl!" he shouted, and hurrying into the library closed the door.

"Now, dear," I said, "choose for yourself. Will you go with me, or will you stay with your father?"

"I must go where my heart goes," she answered. Having embraced her aunt, who was weeping bitterly, she put her hand in mine and left her father's house.

My boat rowed easily, and we soon found ourselves out in the bay. It was but a short distance to the dock at which we were to take the lake boat. The distance was soon covered, and we embarked with our baggage on the *Oriana*. The bay was smooth and the movement of the barge was as quiet and regular as the breathing of a sleeping babe. But the sun went down behind an angry looking cloud, and the captain said to the wheelsman :

"Keep well to larboard!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the answer.

And we steamed into the lake.

At ten o'clock the storm broke with a roar like distant thunder, followed by a strange noise like the fanning of innumerable wings in the air. Heading south by south-west, the *Oriana* was already leaning leeward, and as the storm had rapidly moved towards the north, it struck her broad-side, and with such fury that a light ship would certainly have gone down under it. A wild cry came from the cabin passengers, and a few profane words from the crew, while the captain shouted :

"Starboard!"

The ship paused and trembled as if dreading the ordeal of meeting the storm. Then came a stagger and a plunge, and we saw her forelights rise high in air as the brave ship breasted the waves.

Or he went, through the night, into the very heart of the storm.

The *Oriana* had made many a prosperous voyage in her day. A black sky and a rough sea had been a fine setting for her, as a dark background often enhances the beauty of works of art. But now an unworthy craft with her range lights out, urged on by the pitiless storm, bore down upon her with such speed and force that escape was impossible, and the *Oriana* received her fatal stab midships.

While the *Corælia*, on her return trip, was ploughing her way through the storm, her officers spied one of our lights. Coming nearer, several lights could be seen, and they swayed to and fro like lanterns carried by drunkards. Then over the black waters we sent the cry of a ship in distress.

The *Oriana* was a steam barge with accommodation for several passengers. She was carrying a load of lumber, so the crew apprehended little danger from her collision with the guilty craft. But the storm grew in its fury, and the water poured into the hold of the ship so rapidly that when the *Cordelia* arrived all hope of saving her was gone. She swayed and groaned in her death agony. Then came a crash and a wild scream from the passengers, as the water-logged boat parted. Cries for help, prayers and oaths mingled with the shouts of the officers.

Not long before the crash came, the ship had cast anchor. At this time Lena and I were in the bow of the boat, clinging to the bulwarks. An officer called for someone to take a message aft, and Lena said,

"Go, Chaon!" With difficulty I made my way to the stern of the ship, but before I left it the barge broke. I made a frantic rush for the deck load, but a sailor seized my arm and the deck load floated away. Then the bow was carried leeward, farther and farther from us into the blacker midnight.

"A life-boat! A life-boat!" I cried.

"Are you mad, sir?" shouted the second mate, holding to my face a red light. "Yo' might as well look for purity in a pig sty as for life-boats or anything else, exceptin' death, to-night. Give a hand there wi' them planks."

Hope dies hard in the heart of a lover, and when the *Cordelia* blew a shrill blast from her whistle, hope breathed again.

The *Cordelia* was a large propeller, and was light. This made the work of transferring to her the *Oriana's* passengers dangerous in the extreme, and at first seemingly impossible. She was brought beside the wreck, but towered above it in awful grandeur. The storm was at its height and it was only by the aid of artificial lights and the electric flashes that anything was accomplished. Planks were made ready, and whenever the immense waves brought the wreck and the propeller on something like a level, the passengers and officers crossed, upon the planks, to the *Cordelia*.

"There's hope yet, hope yet," said the captain of the propeller. "If we can reach the bow before it goes to pieces we can save all hands."

As she was bearing down upon the *Oriana*, the *Cordelia* had made ready her tow line, expecting to

tow us to shore. But when the barge broke some one blundered. The last sailor having been safely transferred, the *Cordelia* gave the signal for turning; but it was found that the tow line had become entangled in the wheel. Then our own danger was imminent, for the propeller, under pressure of steam, rolled from side to side close to the anchored wreck. The scene was indescribable. My brain reeled and my heart turned to stone. In every sound of the night I heard Lena's cries. Then faith staggered. My spiritual darkness was as dense as the natural darkness. I called upon God to save Lena, but no answer came, no message fraught with a Heavenly Father's love and pity. It was night in my soul, a night filled with horrible sights and sounds. God had turned his face from me in anger, as my natural father had done years and years before, when our garden at home was the scene of the black hour of my childhood.

As soon as the officers of the *Cordelia* were made aware of the situation, the steam was shut off and when the storm had abated somewhat the work of cutting the line was commenced. At daybreak we were ready for departure, but not a trace was seen of the *Oriana*.

The Captain unlocked for me his room, and there I lived my dark hour alone. She was gone, my love, my light, my life, and I prayed only that God would turn from me His look of anger, would say to my soul, "Be not dismayed; I am thy God." I prayed until sunrise, then something like peace came into my heart, and the faith which once had been a joy was now a

consolation. Then I remembered the words Katie had once spoken as we two sat together at home :

“ I’m old an’ grey now, Laddie darlin’, but before I had seen as many summers as you’ve seen the brightest of all lives went out, washed out, Laddie, by one swellin’ wave o’ the sea. But all the waves of all the seas in the hull world can’t drown true love, never, Laddie, never? The sea aint got no power over spirts. It can wreck a ship but it can’t wreck a soul. It can hold the body, but it can’t hold the spirt. No lands nor seas, not death itself, can sep’rate hearts that heaven’s joined. Lands an’ seas an’ the deep gulf between time and eternity is all bridged by true love, and over that bridge my spirt’s crossin’ an’ crossin’ an’ crossin’ ”.

XIV.

GREEN PASTURES AND STILL WATERS.

THE tow line having been cut, we were taken back to the port at which Lena and I had embarked, and there I found Lena's father.

"Where's my child? Where's my child?" he cried.

"Where?" I answered bitterly. "Beyond the reach of your cruel bondage, and your fiendish rage!"

"He seized my arm frantically, saying "For heaven's sake, man, have pity! If you knew all you would forgive me. Oh, I loved her so!" And he wept like a child.

Taking his hand I asked him to come to the room assigned to me in the hotel. But at this point the clerk brought me the daily paper and I read:

"LAST NIGHT'S DISASTER."

"NO LIVES LOST."

"THE ORIANA A TOTAL WRECK."

"GOOD OFFICES OF THE CORDELIA AND EVENING STAR."

Then followed an account of our rescue by the *Cordelia*, and of the almost miraculous rescue by the *Evening Star* of those on the bow of the *Oriana*.

The first train that left the port took Mr. Hart and me to the city at which the *Evening Star* had landed her precious cargo.

On the journey Lena's father said to me:

"Your ready and noble forgiveness of an unwarrantable outburst of passion on my part, which but for the intervention of a merciful Providence, would have cost you and Lena your lives, makes me bold to tell you something of my history. It is a short story.

"When I was a young man—younger than you—I loved one who promised to be my wife. But I was poor then and her father forced her to marry a rich man who killed her with stern looks and sterner words. She heard her baby cry, then, struggling with her weakness, said:

"Save my child from him! Save my baby!" and died.

"You often speak of Katie Graham. It was she—God bless her—who nursed Lena's mother. It was she who found a home for the babe where it was hidden for nearly a year. Then Grace and I took a house and took the child. From that day until this I have loved and lived for Lena. More than daughter is she to me, for she has her mother's eyes and hair, and when she laughs I look up thinking to see Gertrude. But she is yours now. Deal gently with her and never reveal to her my secret until I am laid beside her mother. The wretch who robbed me of my treasure died abroad years ago."

When we reached the city we found Lena in the General Hospital, having been ministered to by skilful and sympathetic attendants, and having received news of my safety. When we entered her room, she rose from the sofa on which she was resting, and greeted us with a merriment and cheer which were as much a

part of her as were the gold of her hair and the violet of her eye.

“ ‘All’s well that ends well,’ ” she laughed, while a sudden crimson glow in her cheeks fought a battle with the pallor which had resulted from a long night of physical and mental suffering. Then the tide of my joy reached high water mark—a tide which from that day to this has known no ebb. The morning dawned to me when I read of Lena’s rescue, but when I held her once more in my arms the sun rose with a golden glory that filled the present and sent its radiance on and on to the end of time. How unlike the feverish tension of my old love were the repose and fulfilment of the new! Lena was not a spirit strayed from some magical realm to enslave my own; not an intellectual magnet with no office but to hold; not the incarnation of the beauty and subtle power of hell, sent forth on a mission of death. She was part of my life, part of the new life to which I had awakened in answer to Katie’s prayers. Her spirit came, pure, from the God who gave it, and met my own by His Divine will. Her mind was a treasure-house of life-giving truths, the birth-place of wonderful thoughts. Her face was the home of beauty, fresh from its translucent fountain. Her body was “the temple of the Holy Ghost.”

Love sang its sweet song ecstatically—the theme of the symphony of our heart’s music which, awakened by a Master Hand, has grown in fulness and richness of harmonies, swelling now to an almost overpowering crescendo as I glance from this page to

the dear delight of my heart and home. And the final chords will be struck only to modulate from the music of earth to that of heaven.

Music, music everywhere! Nature had reached the final movement in her Symphony of the Seasons. Here and there the bubbling water broke through a frozen stream and ran some soft horn passage, while far away the changeless sea gave out a deep bass tremolo. The moon shone to us an obœ melody of great beauty, and the stars flashed the silver notes of the flute. The crusted snow sparkled the touch of the triangle, and the December night winds played the part of the violins. The whole world vibrated to harmonies of love, joy and thanksgiving, as Mr. Hart, his sister, Lena and I were welcomed to my father's house to spend our first Christmas together. Then the light of moon and of stars was eclipsed by the brighter light in the eyes of all, and the music of nature was unheard amid the fervently breathed eloquence of love from lips that smiled. The brilliantly lighted rooms were dressed in flowers and sprays of holly. Draperies of crimson and gold, stirred by a passer by, wafted the fragrance with which the air was laden. Every one was happy. As Mr. Hart, his sister and Father were examining Mother's choicest flowers, Mr. Hart said to my father:

"This is one of the happiest days of my life. Without robbing me of mine you have gained another daughter, while I have gained a son."

Jasper forgot to be serious, and gave way to a merriment that surprised every one, excepting Cos-

monette. He shook my hand repeatedly, and was so pronounced in his congratulations that I wickedly accused him of expecting to receive more of Cosmonette's love now that I was married. He replied that Cosmonette's heart was larger than I gave it credit of being. And when, at that moment, she turned towards him, her beautiful face full of a tender but earnest love, and placed her hand in his with a smile of approval, I believed him.

Katie wept and wept, but insisted that she had never been so near heaven in her life.

"Law to goodness!" she whispered to me, "there's some joys that is too big fur even the biggest souls. An' ain't it queer how things shapes themselves, or is shaped by a superior Bein'? Laddie darlin', that sun-beam o' yours is the very image of her mother who died with her head leanin' on Katie's achin' heart. Then, now an' again, say a lovin' word to her father, fur he don't believe much in spirits, an' he'll be terrible lonesome sometimes. But, Laddie darlin'! aint the pastures green, an' aint the still waters clearer 'n crystal, reflectin' the deep blue o' the beautiful heavens, Laddie!"

Lena had never looked so animated, so lovely, not even on her wedding day. I glanced from her to Cosmonette as one would glance from a rose to a lily.

Mother still sat upon her throne as queen of our home. It was to her energy, to her love of the artistic, no less than to her love for us all that we were indebted for the delight of our meeting. And when dawned the day of days, it was Mother who, with

autumn in her years but with spring-time in her heart, went to the piano and struck the glad chord that awakened in our hearts and in our home a tide of rapturous song :

“Glory to God in the Highest,

“Peace on earth,

“Good will towards men.”

THE END.

