

The Outer Courts

A WAKING DREAM

by

M. Agnes Fox

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“GOD’S TRANSMITTERS”

It is laid on my heart to make a very special effort to share this booklet with as many as possible. As a start, it goes to the wide circle I have attempted, often with very partial success, to greet annually since my Brother’s ‘passing’ - many of his friends and mine. I am the more glad to have, this year, such a worthwhile enclosure, since the weight of three-score years and ten, to be shouldered early in ‘55, compels some reduction in activities, and I fear this annual ‘effort’ must be one! I only wish I could afford to send you all three of Miss Hurnard’s recent books. I do hope you will treat yourselves to them - and *lend* them!

The Hearing Heart and *The Kingdom of Love* (3/- each), with *God’s Transmitters* (1/-) form a wonderful Trilogy, full of quiet, deep teaching and inspiration, the whole presented so simply and humbly, illustrated throughout - and surely at no small cost - by the leading and dealings of Divine grace in her own personal experience. Recently, I had at last the great pleasure and privilege of meeting her, on her return from the two years of ‘world mission’ of which she tells in this booklet. As one reads (in *The Hearing Heart*) of the first eighteen years of her life, shut in by abnormal fears and aversions, and tragically handicapped by a terrible stammer: then of the ‘half-hour’ in which she at long last ‘found’ God; then, unfolding in all three, the story of the years of growing vision, of deepening surrender, of ever higher challenge and widening adventures of service - accepted often so tremblingly - one just thanks God for such fellowship with her in Christ, and one is stirred to long, and pray, to be led more deeply oneself into the experience of His transforming Friendship - the essential condition of being available, on a quite new level, as one of His “transmitters”?

“What is needed is not just a preacher, but a prophet who can disturb the godly” Dr. Alexander Whyte.

Is not this essential disturbing really a main preoccupation of the writers of the Epistles? If the ‘Young Churches’ of the First Century already needed it, how infinitely more deeply-rooted and desperate is the need of many of us to-day, in our all-too-placid membership of beloved ‘old’ Churches? There is, too, all the added urgency of these most momentous days in which God is speaking through the predicted world-wide ‘signs’ for which men were commanded to ‘watch’, as heralding the approaching end of this age and the Return of our Lord Jesus Christ - all of which signs are now in course of fulfillment. We must welcome every Prophet-Messenger He is commissioning, and pray that they may indeed be used to ‘stab our spirits broad awake’ about many things - and not least about the fact we are so loath to face up to, that un-Christ-like ‘insiders’, suffering from arrested spiritual development, are a major stumbling-block to many ‘outsiders’ whom our Lord

would have added to His Church 'while we have time'?

Is not more 'awakening' often needed also regarding the intimate connection, never lost sight of in the N.T., between the day-to-day circumstances and claims of the Christian's life down here, and the tremendous sphere of service awaiting the completed Church? It is so fatally easy to forget that all happenings, in each life really responsive to God's will, are planned, or allowed, by Him with a view to growth in Christ-likeness and usefulness here and now, but all making, in final objective, for better preparedness on There? May I here include a relevant page from my small book, *The Story of the Great Hope* (Chap. v)?

"A stupendous work awaits the King on His return, for He comes as the one Hope of a world from which all other hopes will have fled. His objective will go far beyond the establishment of outward peace and order, for He comes to accomplish the next great stage in the consummation of the Plan. Nothing short of the co-operation of His completed Church of all Saints will meet His need, and so, in the power of His own risen and indestructible Life, she will be 'called to the Colours' of the Prince of Peace as the 'King's Own', to take up her special mission for the duration of the 'ages to come', those shining last steps of the stairway back to God (Ephes. ii. 7). "There is a saying of the Christ preserved for us by Clement of Alexandria from the now lost *Traditions of Mathias*: 'Look with wonder at that which is before you.'"

"The Christian, equally with the 'children of this world', is writing his own sentence down here. The harvest he will reap in that day will be the logical result of the seed he chose to sow in this life. Only one Hand can unlock the gate of Heaven and let him in, his passport – 'a sinner saved by grace': but what he *is* in himself so far, the character that has been developing during the earth-life, on that alone the starting-point of the new Life will depend, that will decide the amount of his worth-while-ness, or otherwise, to his King in the next age. Not *what* we did for Him down here so much as *why* we did it? How much will remain when all that is marred by the smear of self perishes in the fire? What if in that Day we hold, or we think we hold, a gift worth laying at His feet, only to find we are clutching a little charred stubble?

"On the other hand, what a Day of wonder, of entering at last fully into His joy, for each servant to whom He says, 'Well done!' No trace of gold will be lost sight of among the dross, no sign of faithfulness in quietly-accepted discipline, in patient, inconspicuous service, in sacrifice for others for His sake. How natural, too, that those who have had practical experience of the problem of really enthroning Him in their own lives, or in others, while on earth, should have a share in the setting up of His world-wide Kingdom? How essentially right also that those who in deepest measure have been 'partakers of Christ's sufferings' in this age, accepting the death of all that *self* held dear that others might find His life, and often sowing in tears and seeing little result at the time - how 'right' His plan for such! "You are sharing what Christ suffered; so rejoice in it, that you may also rejoice and exult when His glory is revealed" (1 Peter iv. 13).

Finally, may my brother still speak to us about the secret, and the cost, of the 'transmitting' life?

"It is never a case of our striving, on our own initiative and by our own strength only, to supersede the self-activity in our lives and bring in the Christ-activity instead. In the Holy Spirit we have God Himself as it were slipping over to our side, before we even know Him as God; opening our eyes to see Himself, inclining our hearts to feel after Him, and our wills to obey Him; "working in us both to will and to do on behalf of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). But this very fact is a reason, not for passive acquiescence, but for active co-operation. "Working out in detail your own salvation, *for it is God that worketh in you.*" And so it is *our contribution* that needs especially to be stressed. . . .

". . . the life of communion with Christ, the shared life of the 'Two in One,' is based on effort - effort to *keep* the oneness of the two - which, as even the greatest saints have told us, remains part of the spiritual life right up to the grave. And this effort, in the lives of all of us, has to take two forms, corresponding to 'Prayer' and 'Fasting' in their widest senses: 'Prayer' covering anything that attaches the soul to God, 'Fasting' anything that detaches it from the world: 'Prayer' that by which we call in and apply the control of the 'Christ in us,' 'Fasting' that by which we make the human partner-self less difficult to be controlled. "He must increase; but (at the same time,) I must decrease" - because otherwise there is no room for His free growth within me. . . ."

The Valley of Decision.

* * * * *

This so-called 'letter' consists of many bits and pieces, carrying thoughts I wanted to share with you! Please remember that a warm welcome awaits you, if you pass this way? For us all, the gaps in the circle of friendship down here are increasing, but over there they watch their gaps being filled up! So we have, each one of us, an ever-greater 'cloud of witnesses,' longing and praying that we may be more on our toes, 'buying up the opportunities' which are still ours?

ELSIE BURROUGHS.

* * * * *

DISTURBANCE

Wandering by a wind-swept sea, Jesus came and troubled me.

"If a child of Mine thou art, is there peace within thy heart?

If My Spirit dwell within halt thou victory over sin?

Is it joy to do My will, or is *self* thy master still?

Wandering by a wind-swept sea, Jesus came and troubled me.

HIS COMING IS CERTAIN AS THE DAWN.

“But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth?”

* * * * *

“When the evening of your life comes, you will be judged on love”

St. John of the Cross.

“Love means taking up other lives into our own; and our life grows larger in proportion to the number of other lives embraced in it, and the completion of our identification with them”

James Skinner.

“There are many causes for the lack of results in evangelistic work, but the primary cause always is failure in expectant love. Often we do not care sufficiently about people as people. . . . It is so easy to engage oneself in what are known as evangelistic activities, to have even a true theology of evangelism, and yet be and remain the kind of person into whose hands the Great Shepherd cannot entrust His sheep.. .

Dr. D. T. Niles (at Evanston)

PRAYERS FOR ‘TRANSMITTINC’ SERVICE

O God, Who hast made Thyself known to Thy saints in all generations in breaking down the bonds of self-interest, the narrowing limitations which habit and convention and self-will build up on every side, let this, I pray Thee, be my experience also. Set me free to enter into the largeness and freedom of the love which passeth knowledge; help me, sharing Thine infinite love, to seek those whom Thou seekest, to joy where Thou joyest, to love where Thou lovest. Let the life I live be no longer mine but Thine. The instinct and nature of my heart leads me ever ‘to have wherein to glory of my own’: teach me to glory only in what glorifies Thee. The things that are dear to me I would give up for the glory that is dearer. If I have Thee I have all, and without Thee all is nothing. Liberate me from every bondage of the soul. Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

* * * * *

Jesu, Son of the Virgin pure,

Be Thou my pilgrim staff thro’out the lands, thro’out the lands,

Thy love in all my thoughts, Thy likeness in my face.

May I heart-warm to others, and may they heart-warm to me,

For love of the Love of Thee, for love of the Love of Thee!

Old Irish Rune

“It is my prayer that your love may be more and more rich in knowledge and all manner of insight, enabling you to have a sense of what is vital, so that you may be transparent and no harm to anyone in view of the day of Christ, your life all covered with that harvest of righteousness which Jesus Christ produces to the glory and the praise of God”

St.Paul.

* * * * *

The preceding text is taken from a loose insert put in the book by Miss Burroughs who lived at 10c Rawlinson Road, Oxford.

As I live near Oxford I may try to find this house when I go there.

DEDICATION

To the friends who inspired and the many who have helped.

The wiser men are, the less they talk about “cannot” . . . If people had never seen little seeds grow into great plants and trees, of quite different shape from themselves, and these trees again produce fresh seeds, to grow into fresh trees, they would have said, “The thing cannot be; it is contrary to nature.” And they would have been quite as right in saying so, as in saying that most other things cannot be . . .

Does not each of us, in coming into this world, go through a transformation just as wonderful . . . And do not reason and analogy, as well as Scripture, tell us that that transformation is not the last? and that, though what we shall be we know not, yet we are here but as the crawling caterpillar, and shall be hereafter as the perfect fly? The old Greeks, heathens as they were, saw as much as that two thousand years ago . . . and meanwhile . . . don’t . . . fancy that anything is too wonderful to be true. “We are fearfully and wonderfully made,” said old David; and so we are . . .

Am I in earnest? Oh dear no! Don’t you know that this is a . . . tale . . . and that you are not to believe one word of it, even if it is true?

— CHARLES KINGSLEY

‘The Water Babies’

THE OUTER COURTS

CHAPTER I.

“Thou art not Death!” I cried;-
For Life’s supremest fantasy
Had never thus envisaged death to me, -
Thou art not Death, the End!”

In accents winning,
Came the answer, - “Friend,
There is no Death!
I am the Beginning,
- Not the End!”

- JOHN OXENHAM.

“Who called me?” I cried. “Who called me?”

There was no reply. Slowly I sat up, and looking round, found that I was in a strange place and quite alone. I lay back in bewilderment, trying to think. Where was I? How did I get here? What could it all mean?

At first I could recollect nothing, but gradually and dimly memory to some extent returned. Memory, first of pain - pain which seemed to fill my whole world, and of which I was the centre - pain which kept my thoughts chained to itself, and left no power of retrospect or prospect. Then the pain faded, and I thought I fell - into endless space - into nothingness - fell for ever and ever . . . And then I was held, and lifted, and carried safely into rest - I had no longer any trouble, nor fear, nor any conscious need. Then a Hand was laid upon me and I fell asleep.

* * * *

This I recalled, but nothing more. All that went before was hidden: cut off as by an impenetrable curtain. But the sense of summons grew upon me, and soon it became so urgent that, though still unwillingly, I rose and left the house.

I found myself in a village, or cluster of detached cottages, standing some distance apart. The gardens were ablaze with colour; men and women were seated at their doors, or busy among their flowers; the gay sound of children’s voices reached me, and the whole scene was bathed in the cheerful peace of a golden afternoon.

Still as if in obedience to a call, I went on, meeting several people who, to my surprise, greeted me with a smile and a “Welcome, Brother.”

When I reached the end of the village I found on my left what I took to be a large Park, though it was unfenced, and as a thick mist lay over it I could not see very far. On my right ran a river, clear and very swift. Stooping down, I dipped up a few handfuls, and bathed my face. There seemed to be healing in its waters, and I went on much refreshed. Very soon I found that the river suddenly disappeared. It ran right against the foot of a rock, forming a deep, still pool from which there seemed to be no exit. I wondered what became of it, but the rock under which it ran hid what was beyond. When I had passed this barrier the mystery was solved. I found myself on the brink of a great cliff, roughly semi-circular and absolutely vertical. No doubt the river ran into a fault near the edge of the precipice, and reappeared far below. I looked down, but the depths were filled with cloud, and I could see nothing else, nor was there any sound of falling water. The path skirted the very edge of the chasm, without fence of any kind, and I drew back rather hastily.

After following the precipice for some distance, the way wound uphill towards some barren-looking uplands scarred with openings evidently leading to a mine. Still feeling only half-awake and disinclined to go farther, I left the track, and threw myself on the grass under a large tree. Before long I saw a man coming towards me. When he reached me, he sat down beside me, and he greeted me with a friendly smile, saying, "Welcome, Brother."

"Good day," I replied.

"You have not been Here long, have you?"

"No, I only came yesterday; at least I think it was yesterday."

He turned an understanding look upon me. "Ah! you are still rather bewildered, I see, but it will go off."

"I hope it will. I feel very stupid, and this fog is so confusing - fog or smoke or whatever it is."

"That will pass," he said kindly; "it is generally like that when you first come Up, but it clears by degrees - unless anything goes wrong," he added.

I studied my companion. He was a fine-looking man with grizzled hair and a genial manner. A faint idea that I had seen him before crossed my dull brain, but I did not make any inquiry, for my attention was attracted by a lad who came swinging down towards us with a light step, whistling as he came.

"Who is this?" I asked.

"His name is Stephen, he is son of the Earl of ---," he replied; "he has been helping his father at the mine."

"His father, an Earl, at the mine!" I echoed stupidly.

"Yes, there are several working there just now,"

While I was vaguely puzzling over this, the boy reached us and dropped lightly on

the grass at our feet saying, "Good evening, Philip," and greeting me as the man had done with a friendly "Welcome, Brother."

"How goes it?" said my companion.

"Splendid" replied the lad, leaning back against the man's knees: evidently these two were good friends. They talked together, but I did not pay much heed to them, till another person joined us. This was an old man of rather heavy build, with snowy hair and a kindly expression. After a general greeting to us all and a "Welcome" for me, he seated himself on a little mound close by, and then spoke to Stephen.

"Well, young man, how are you?"

"First rate, sir, thank you. How is the invention?"

"Getting on, lad, getting on." He produced some mysterious-looking objects, and they began fitting them together and discussing them eagerly. Presently Stephen turned to me.

"The Chief has hit the nail right on the head this time," he said.

"Pretty fair," said the old man. "But what is the use of it up here? If I could only send it down where it is wanted."

"I don't know," objected Stephen. "It is satisfying to have conquered the difficulty. Besides, perhaps we shall be able to send it down some day. Who knows?"

"Perhaps we shall," he answered, and they fell into technical talk which I did not try to follow. In fact I think I slept, undisturbed by the murmur of voices, till I was roused by a beautiful sound, a soft, melodious clamour like distant bells. My companions got up.

"It is nearly time, Philip," said the lad.

"Time for what?" I asked.

"For Evensong," answered Stephen.

We moved a little farther into the Park and stood together in a wide, grassy space among the trees. A great many other people were gathered there, and those who were near us greeted me kindly as Philip had done. Presently I asked, "What are we waiting for? What is going to happen?"

But no one answered: and then straight before us, and very far off and faint at first, a growing light shone through the mist. It increased in slow majestic vibrations, terrible in their intensity, I thought I heard them as well as saw them. As I watched and wondered, an indescribable suffering came upon me, which increased as the light grew, till it was almost intolerable. Gradually the rays steadied and took shape, until I saw before me a Cross of brilliant light. The base rose out of mist and darkness, but above it all was clear and bright, and the radiance seemed to reach as far as the East is from the West, and as high as the Heaven is from the Earth. As I watched, my pain grew less distressing, and I fell upon my knees in overwhelming

awe.

For some time we all knelt in silence, and then two young girls began to sing. Instantly their song was taken up and voice after voice joined in the exultant air:-

“O Joyful Light of the holy glory
Of the Father Immortal, Heavenly, Holy
Blessed Jesus Christ:
Beholding the evening light
We glorify the Father and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit of God.
Worthy art Thou in all seasons
To be hymned with sacred voices,
Son of God.
Giver of hope.
Wherefore the world glorifieth Thee.”

(Greek hymn of the 3rd century)

* * * *

Then there fell a silence - silence deep and indescribable - silence that could be felt . .

And then, out of the radiance came a heavenly answer. Unseen voices of thrilling power and sweetness, sang the well-remembered words:

“My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit bath rejoiced in God My Saviour.”
And when the Gloria began there was a great outburst of song, for everyone in our company sang it too, and far away behind us I thought I heard other choirs joining with us, filling the whole wide space with mighty waves of praise.

* * * *

At last the light died out, the music ceased, and the great congregation began to disperse. I thought it was more foggy than ever as I turned to go down the road.

I soon found myself keeping pace with another traveller. He was a tall, finely-made man, well past middle age. His erect bearing, dark piercing eyes, and look of distinction contrasted strangely with his miner's dress and the heavy tools he carried. His expression puzzled me; it seemed a conflict between desperate irritation and dogged endurance. He shifted his tools to the other shoulder, and in doing so dropped one of them. As he did so, he muttered words that I seemed to have heard before. Unconsciously I had stopped when he did, and this seemed to annoy him. He turned to me with a look that tried to annihilate me, but he checked himself almost instantly, gave a swift look backwards and upwards, and stood dumb. A dull flush crept over his face, and he strode off down the hill.

Perplexed rather than angered, I made my way to the place from which I had come that afternoon. Like almost all the village houses, it was a small detached cottage, surrounded by a garden. I went in, and, with a sinking heart, I found what I half

expected - the man I had just met. As he left me on the hill, I had a conviction that we were to live together, and it was not a pleasant prospect.

He sat on a low stool, his hands between his knees, his head bowed, his whole attitude one of utter dejection. The moment he saw me he sprang up, pulling himself together with wonderful rapidity. Every trace of depression and of annoyance had vanished, and he greeted me with what I can only describe as most gracious courtesy.

He told me he supposed we were to be companions, and hoped that I should soon feel refreshed and quite myself. He said and did all that could be expected of him, yet in some strange way he seemed to put me leagues away from him, and miles below his feet. It was a novel experience, and curiously irritating. I tried to respond with equal politeness, but the talk flagged, and soon I begged to be excused, and, going to my room, I was asleep in a few minutes.

CHAPTER II.

Oh! that I knew where I might find Him: That I might even come before His Presence. Oh ! that I knew ! - Job xxiii. 2.

Nearly all next day I slept. Whether anyone came to me, and if so, who it was, I am not very clear, but I have a hazy recollection of soft movements in the room and of a cool draught held to my lips.

Late in the afternoon I was roused by the same sweet sounds that I had heard the evening before. I rose hastily and hurried to the Park.

I was only just in time. Many people were already there, and faint beams, like great searchlights, were beginning to sweep across the sky. Slowly they gathered and grew, with stately vibrations which, as before, caused me almost overwhelming pain. Then again the Light shook together and grew brighter, till it gathered into a shining Cross, and this time I saw that the base of the Cross rested on a great Arch - a glorious rainbow spanning a space of dark grey cloud. Again, as the Cross grew brighter the pain abated.

On the hushed stillness sweet voices rose in song:-

“Jesu, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see
And in Thy presence rest.”

(St. Bernard, 12th Century)

The tender words gripped me almost unbearably, and verse after verse intensified the feeling till I could hardly control myself. I knelt quietly till the last notes had ceased and the Light had died away. Then an overpowering longing rose up in me. I

must go. I must get to that Light. There were no walls, no bars, the way was open. I would go.

I sprang to my feet: I walked fast. The grass was firm and short, the air was soft, the slight incline upwards was no hindrance. On and on I went. The trees grew thinner and then ceased altogether. I found myself at the beginning of a grassy slope; at least I thought so, but the fog lay thick before me, and I could only see a few yards ahead. How long I walked I do not know, but gradually a creeping chill seemed to sap my energy. Strive as I would against it, a cold fear grew until it over-mastered me. Was it this baffling fog? I stopped, turned round, then fell on my face in horror, for I was as near the edge of the trees as when I had thought to leave them hours ago! In spite of all my efforts I had not progressed one yard. As I lay there, words seemed to be spoken in my ear; very gently spoken, yet they scourged and burned. "There shall in no wise enter into it aught that defileth."

After a time I was roused by feeling a hand laid on my shoulder. It was the man whose house I shared.

"Had you not better come home?" he said.

I rose without a word. We walked in silence across the Park and down to the village. When we reached the little house I left him, with a dull word of thanks.

There was an open door at the end of my room, leading into a small inner recess, and a gentle influence seemed to draw me towards it. I went in and knelt before the open window, not praying, scarcely thinking, but the little place seemed full of healing.

When at last I lay down, I fell at once into a peaceful sleep.

CHAPTER III.

*I want to sleep: and now I am refreshed,
A strange refreshment, for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself
And ne'er had been before.*

(The Dream of Gerontius.)

When I awoke next morning all was silent in the house. I looked round my room, which I had scarcely been able to do before. It was unlike any I had ever seen, for one side was quite open to the air, the roof being upheld by pillars covered with masses of climbing roses. Outside I heard the pleasant sound of running water. The inner room which I had discovered the night before was very small, not much wider than the door which led into it. Its further end consisted of an oriel window in three lights, all wide open. It was quite empty, and very still.

I went out. A few steps led down to the sparkling river, and in front of me was a little

pool. "Just the place for a bathe," thought I.

I plunged in, finding it as delightful as it had appeared, and I emerged with a sense of well-being beyond anything I had ever felt before.

I found no one about the house, so I went back and, from a bench against the front wall, I surveyed the garden. A few bright flowers were blooming, but most of the ground was bare. I had not sat there long before a strange certainty came upon me. That garden had to be put in order, and I had to do it.

It lay in full view of the road, and I was no gardener. I had not touched a spade or hoe since my boyhood, and I did not relish the task. But I felt that it had to be done, so I got up, found some tools in a little shed, and set to work. Very soon the joy of doing took hold of me, and I plied my hoe with increasing pleasure. I even found myself cheerfully humming scraps of half-remembered songs of my childhood, till a passing footstep made me stop hurriedly and a little ashamed.

I don't know how long I worked, but at last I felt inclined for a rest, and went into the house. I was neither tired nor hungry, but some delicious-looking fruit upon the table attracted me. As I ate and drank a strong feeling of gratitude and contentment came to me, and instinctively I gave thanks.

Just as I was going back to work I noticed a covered basket standing near me. Instantly I knew what I ought to have done with it. I hurried off to the mine. Where to find my companion or by what name to ask for him, I neither knew nor stayed to think, but I was well aware that this basket ought to have been taken to him long ago.

However, I did not need to ask for him, for he was waiting. He strode up to me. What he said I will not repeat. Never in my life had I been so addressed, and never since my childhood had anyone been to me in such a relationship that they could have dared to speak to me like that. My blood boiled, a blackness shot with red lightning seemed to be before my eyes. We stood silent, looking at one another. Suddenly the tension ceased; in fact the whole thing was over in a moment. As before, his face flushed and he gave a quick upward look; then he turned and left me. As he went I realised that the basket lay on the ground. Again that inward compulsion gripped me. I hurried after him, and thrust it into his hand. I went back, furious with him, yet angry with myself; annoyed most of all with a condition of things which made such an outburst possible. It was altogether outside life as I had known it. Why had I to live with this man?

I returned to my work as to a refuge, but it was long before I felt reasonably calm again. Towards evening a soft musical sound filled the air, and I could see several of my neighbours wending their way towards the Park; but I felt no wish to go. My companion had not returned when I went to rest.

All next day I worked hard, and I enjoyed my work more than ever. At noon I took the basket to the mine, and left it close to the place where I had yesterday met my

companion; but I did not see him and I was glad of it. What I felt to be a righteous anger still possessed me whenever I thought of him, but I would not neglect him on that account.

When the Vesper Music sounded that evening I paused in my work. Should I go? No. I had no inclination to do so.

Very soon after this my companion returned. I worked longer than usual, and when at last I went in, he was not to be seen, though I thought I heard him moving about.

I looked into my inner room. It was full of fog, and seemed dreary and cold. I shivered as I closed the door.

CHAPTER IV.

Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call Earth.

(MILTON.)

Before noon the next day, I realised that my job was finished. I had cleaned and dug over the whole garden, and had planted the vacant spaces with seeds and roots which I had found in the garden shed. What I was planting I did not always know, but I perfectly understood what I was to do with it all. In fact, strange as this life was, one thing was growing clear: what I ought to do at any given moment was never uncertain. I was sure now I might spend the afternoon in exploring my surroundings, and perhaps in making friends. I had enjoyed the solitude of the last two days, but now I wished for companionship.

First, however, I must take the basket to the mine. I set off thinking of my companion. The present state of things between us could hardly continue, and though it was quite obvious that I was the injured person, yet I was ill at ease. The whole affair was absurd. I hoped I should once more miss him. But this was not to be. It was foggy on the hill, and I was close upon him before I saw him waiting for me.

“Nasty raw day,” I said, trying to speak naturally. I gave him the basket and turned to go, but he stopped me with a gesture of entreaty, almost of command. So we stood fronting each other in silence. He seemed to be struggling with himself. Suddenly he spoke.

“I wish to express my regret,” he began, and then stopped, as if the words choked him. I broke in hurriedly. I was so sorry for him that I forgot my anger.

“It’s all right,” I said. “Don’t say anything more.”

“No, it is not alright,” he answered, “I was wrong, and I must say so. Will you grant me your forgiveness?”

“With all my heart,” I replied, holding out my hand.

“Thank you,” he said, and then in a lighter tone, “I have not done much apologizing in my life. I am not very good at it, I am afraid.” Our eyes met and we both smiled.

“See you tonight,” I said, as I left him. The fog that had surrounded us had cleared off, and I went down the hill, whistling.

When I reached the place where I had spent my first evening, I entered the Park and sat down. It was a beautiful scene - the rugged upland on the right, the red-roofed village down on the left, and before me the rolling wooded Park. The mist still lay thick in the distance, but near at hand it was much clearer. I could see many lovely glades that I had not noticed before, and among the trees I caught sight of moving figures.

Presently the sound of children’s voices and peals of delighted laughter attracted me. I found a group of little people engaged in rolling over and over down a grassy slope. Among them were two small negro boys, and a girl whom I took for a Japanese. Two or three belonged to some Latin race, and others were obviously Anglo-Saxons. Before long one of them ran up to me.

“I think you are a new chum,” she said.

“What makes you think that?”

“You look like it,” she replied briefly.

I had hardly time to feel crushed when she added kindly: “I like new chums,” and suggested that we should sit on the grass and “have a little chatter together.”

She told me her name was Lucy. It suited her, for she was a radiant little person; her curls seemed a tangle of sunbeams, and her eyes were wells of azure light.

“Have you been here long?” I asked.

“Pretty long: I don’t know quite exactly. I went to ‘Fresh Springs’ when I first came. Then I went to my Silver Grannie (I call her that because of her hair), and now I take care of poor Johnnie.”

“You take care of anyone?” I said teasingly, but she told me with great dignity that she really did, and that “poor Johnnie” couldn’t get on without her. She talked away in a most friendly fashion, and when the other children ran up and asked if she were not coming back to them she shook her head, and told them she must look after me for a little while.

“What a good thing they can all speak English,” I remarked carelessly.

“English,” she queried, and then in a puzzled tone, “English? Do they? Are we talking it? I don’t think we are.”

I started, for I suddenly knew that she was right, and it was a staggering discovery. To have lost my own mother-tongue without knowing it! To be using another without having realized that I was doing so! It seemed impossible, yet it was certainly the case. I suppose my trouble showed in my face, for instantly a small

hand was slipped into mine.

“It’s all right, you need not worry, Brother.” The word sounded oddly from those baby lips.

“How does a little thing like you know that it is all right?” I said, gloomily.

“Indeed, I do know,” she cried, “I have been here heaps longer than you. Besides Guardianna told me.”

“Who is Guardianna?”

“Guardie brought me here, and takes care of me; but I take care of Johnnie,” she replied.

“What is the name of this place?”

“Our village is called Paradise Place,” she replied.

“How did you get here? Can you tell me that?”

“Yes,” she said, “I came in my sleep: all of us do, I think.”

Then a pitying look came into her eyes. “Ah! you have forgotten! Never mind, it will all come back again. Why, I remember everything now, and when I first came Up I don’t believe I remembered my ABC, and” (this in a most regretful tone) “I had only just learnt it too! But I can read now, anything you like to give me; if it isn’t too hard,” she amended cautiously. “And I remember my Mother and Baby. I’ve seen Mother Oh, let us go to the brink over there by the precipice; take me quite near the edge and let me look down. Please do.”

I obeyed, and we went out from the trees. I lifted her up and she leant over the cliff. The depths appeared to be filled with clouds, but they seemed less dense than before, and between us and them I now noticed a thin veil of mist, lighted by a soft rainbow. This puzzled me till I remembered the vanished river. No doubt it re-appeared through some opening in the face of the cliff, and, in fine spray, was blown far and wide over the vast space. It must, I thought, sink down at last, and reach whatever lay below.

Lucy had been gazing down in eager silence. Evidently she saw more than I did, and suddenly she almost sprang out of my arms.

“I see her, I see her, and Baby too!” she cried. “But it’s only her back. Mother, look! look! Oh, Mother!”

I cannot describe the pleading in her voice; but in a moment she said very gently, and as if in reply to a remark - though I had made none - “Yes, I know. Poor Mother, she will look bye and bye. Goodbye, Mother,” and she waved her little hand.

I stepped back, relieved to have got her safe from a position which I should have felt to be perilous, but that I had a strange sense of being helped to hold her.

“Good-bye,” she said, “good-bye, I must go with Guardie now. Thank you very

much.”

She held her flower-face up to mine, and then ran lightly off amongst the trees. She kept turning as she went, and looking up as if she were chattering to one who walked beside her, but I saw no one there. Once again she turned round and cried, “Good-bye, Brother.”

“Good-bye, little Sister,” I called in reply.

CHAPTER V.

*All which I took from thee I did but take
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My Arms:
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home;
Rise, clasp My hand, and come.*

(FRANCIS THOMPSON.)

I walked down to the Village and out at the other end, where I had not yet been, and very soon found myself in charming country. On my left was a wide valley, almost a plain. Its farther side was bounded by a range of hills, beautiful in outline and softly blue in colour, but this side was a broken upland, with cape after cape jutting out into the valley, fold after fold rising into the distance; silvery and mysterious in the soft light. It was a glorious walk, and I enjoyed every moment of it.

At last I turned towards home. I was not tired, but I felt a leading which I obeyed. In fact, I almost thought I heard a voice at my side saying: “Let us turn back now. Let us take this lower path.”

It was, if possible, even more beautiful than the higher way by which I had come, winding as it did along the side of the hills, and revealing fresh charms as it rounded each succeeding spur. Before I had gone far I thought I heard the sound of singing, and soon I caught the words: “Blessed are the men who fear Him. These ever walk in the ways of peace.” Then I came upon the singers. They were grouped in a semi-circular hollow in the hillside. No more perfect spot for an open-air concert could be imagined. The grass slope rose steeply behind them, and in front was a view which might have made a dumb man sing. Soon I had recognised one of the singers. Her people had been great friends of mine, and, strange to say, my memory of them was quite distinct. Her early death had left a great blank, not only in her family, but in a much wider circle, for she was a brilliant and charming woman.

She saw me, and waved her hand, her smile just as of old. At the first pause in the singing she spoke to the conductor, and he came across to where I stood.

“You like this? You sing yourself? Would you care to join us?”

“I shall be delighted if you will allow me to do so,” I answered.

My old friend received me warmly and so did all the party, greeting me with the friendly “Welcome, Brother,” which seems to be the usual salutation Here.

This singing was a great pleasure to me. I had always had a passion for music, and never had I heard anything more perfect in its way than this was. Not all the songs we sang were what we should have called sacred down There, though most of them were. I spoke of this to one of my neighbours.

“That surprised me, too, at first,” he said. It is so strange to find everything so much the same up Here. We thought we should have to leave behind us most of the things we cared for, and now here they are, only much better.”

Presently someone said, “May we send down some comfort now?”

“Yes, yes,” cried many voices, and after a little talk, which I did not follow, every one knelt down. There was an absolute silence, and I began to wonder what it meant, when a strange thing happened. I found that I could see the prayers that were being offered. They gathered together and floated up until they were like a soft cloud, the colour of wood smoke against a brown hillside. Then someone near me rose softly, and a glorious voice rang out on the still air. And the sound was visible to me. Each perfect note looked like a rosy pearl, as light as air. As they rose they were caught and carried on the soft blue cloud of intercession, and a little wind came over the hill behind us, and wafted them along the valley, towards the edge of the precipice which could just be seen in the distance. And there they seemed to pause, and then to sink gently out of sight. And these were the words that were carried there:

“He counteth all your sorrows in the time of need. He comforts the bereaved. He comforts the bereaved with His regard.” Again and again the words of solace were repeated, and then at the end the exultant command pealed out: “Sing ye praise. Give ye thanks. Proclaim aloud His goodness.”

Then there was a long silence, while the cloud still floated out upon the soft breeze, and I knew beyond a doubt that some sorely-stricken hearts on earth were comforted of God.

* * * *

When the party separated, I joined my friend and we walked back together. I hoped she would not enquire about her people. I had quite lately seen them, and their desolation had been distressing. Would it not grieve her if I spoke of their deep sorrow, and yet how should I conceal it? But she did not ask; on the contrary she herself spoke of my recent visit to them.

“Then you know what is happening to them?” I asked.

“We know a good deal,” she said. “Not everything, of course, but all that is necessary, and sometimes we can even see them when we look over the cliff.”

I told her of little Lucy's glimpse of her mother, and her pleading "Oh Mother! Look!"

"Yes," she said, "we long to see them look Up. If they are quite engrossed with earthly things they feel so far away. But when they look Up our eyes seem to meet, and we don't feel as if they were There, or we are Here, but as if there were no Here nor There."

"But if you see them in trouble it must make you very unhappy, since you cannot speak to them or help them."

"How do you know that we cannot speak to them or help them? I think we often can - though it does not follow that they know that it is we who are helping."

"Still, I should think you must be often grieved," I persisted.

"Perhaps, sometimes, but not for long," she said. "I think we feel as mothers do about their tiny children's sorrows. We understand the whyness of things up Here, and that makes all the difference." She paused, and presently went on a little sadly. "The thing that hurts us most is finding that they are too sad about us. It is such a pity! If they only knew, they would rejoice so much for us that they would forget to grieve. They would feel as we do about them, only more so, for they are still down There, and we are Here, and satisfied."

I remembered her life so suddenly cut off, her useful work, her keen interests, her vivid enjoyments.

"Are *you* perfectly satisfied?" I ventured.

She turned her radiant face towards me. It was reply enough, but she answered very softly, "How could one be otherwise?"

"I don't think *I* am satisfied," I exclaimed, almost in spite of myself. Such confidences as these would have been unthought-of of down There, but Here they seemed quite natural.

"Are you not in rather a hurry?" she said. "Perhaps you have not yet ---" she paused.

"Have not yet what?" I asked.

"You will find that out soon, I think," she answered gently, and silence fell between us for a little while. Presently she stopped. "Do look back," she said, "this is our last chance to enjoy those lovely hills."

We stood for some time "to see the trances of the holy hills . . . and watch the vales; dew-pallid with their evening ecstasy."

"I must walk over there someday soon," she said.

"Walk there? It looks much too far! You would be tired out."

"Tired, oh no!" she replied, smiling. "One is never tired up Here."

I remembered what I had felt at first, and said so.

“Ah! but you had only just come, and besides, even then, it was the *you* that was tired, not your ---” she paused.

“Not my body,” I suggested. She laughed an infectious, ringing laugh.

“Just what I nearly said,” she cried. “It seems so impossible to realize that one hasn’t exactly got one.”

“Hasn’t got a body!” I echoed in amazement.

“Why no, of course not, at least not in anything like the old sense of the word. Yes, I know what you want to say! We can see and hear and speak, and we recognized each other. We still have an outward expression of ourselves - a form, shall we call it, unless you can suggest a better expression?”

But I could suggest nothing at all. I felt as I had done when I discovered that I was not speaking English. It was most uncanny. While I hesitated she went on:

“I am sure you will agree that whatever we call it, it is a great improvement on what we used to have. It never tires or suffers; it never tries to be our master. It never keeps us apart or makes us misunderstand one another. It just truly expresses our real selves.”

“You don’t mean that we have already got our Resurrection bodies!”

“Oh, no! that is not possible, is it? Besides, don’t you think that when that time comes we shall have glorious new powers of which we know nothing yet? I feel certain we shall. We have nothing new Here, only all that hindered us is gone, all the down-pull, all the friction. Don’t you think so?”

“Don’t ask me,” I cried. “I don’t know what I think, nor what I have left! This morning I found that I had lost my mother-tongue without missing it! Now you tell me that my body has gone, and yet that I can do more without it than with it. I want to know what next I shall lose - my own identity, I suppose!” She looked at me very kindly.

“No, Brother, *you* will always be left, and you will only discover your losses by finding out how much you have gained by them. Nothing gone but drawbacks. That is what makes it such a rest to be Here - *Such* a rest! Not doing nothing, but being able to do everything we really want to do quite easily,” and she gave a sigh of contentment.

We had nearly reached the village when two young girls stopped to speak to my friend, giving me a gentle “Welcome, Brother” as they did so. They were both very lovely, with a delicate ethereal loveliness which had in it something quite unusual.

“What beautiful girls!” I said when they had left us.

“Yes, are they not?” she answered. “They came here as babies, and have grown up in Paradise. They always remind me of a rose that has bloomed with the morning; untouched, unsoiled, just perfect.”

“Then you do not think they have lost by coming Here so soon?”

“Lost! No, I am sure they have not. It is all more than made up to them. They are different somehow, but not less complete. I know those two whom we met quite well, for we work together. We help at Joy Gate, one of the homes where tiny children go at first. It is a fascinating place. Babies were delicious down There, but up Here they are simply beyond words. Can you imagine a baby who is never anything but absolutely happy? I should like to take you to Joy Gate one day. But I don’t suppose babies are much in your line,” she added, with a laugh.

But it happened that, like so many old batchelors, I had a great weakness for children, so I said I should very much like to go some day. We were in the village now, and at one of the first houses she stopped.

“This is my abode,” she said. But I was still thinking over her words.

“You tell me those girls have grown up in Paradise,” I said. “But what will happen now? Will they grow old? And shall we grow old up Here?”

“No, no,” she answered, “we shall each grow to our prime; our very best and completest. Some will have to grow younger, I think: in fact you can see them doing so. I fancy you will,” she added, laughing, and then with a cordial farewell she left me.

CHAPTER VI.

*We leave the words and works we call our own
And lift void hands alone
For love to fill. Our nakedness of soul
Brings to that gate no toll,
Giftless we come to Him Who all things gives,
And live because He lives.*

-WHITTIER .

I went straight to the Park, thinking of all I had learned that day.

I hoped I might meet Philip. He seemed familiar, as if he had belonged to my old life, and also there were questions I very much wished to ask him. As I thought of him I saw him coming towards me, and then quite suddenly I recognised him.

“You!” I exclaimed.

“You have remembered me, then?” he said, with a smile. “Yes, I have. I am sorry I did not do so at first.”

“Don’t apologize,” he answered; “I knew you would remember when the right time came.”

“I am so glad,” I said. “It is the greatest comfort to find you Here.”

He looked very pleased, and said with an emphasis that surprised me, "You are not half so glad to see me as I am to see you."

I had known him well, for I had been one of his parishioners for many years, and always on good terms with him. We often met on social occasions - though our pastoral intercourse had been chiefly concerned with subscriptions and such matters - and when in town I had occasionally attended his Church. We sat on the grass and talked for a long while. It was a relief to pour out my experiences and bewilderments, but I found him unwilling to give me much explanation.

"We don't explain things up Here; we discover them, and that is much better," he said.

"But there is one thing at least that I must ask you," I said urgently, "for it troubles me. How is it that I do not meet my father and my mother? I believe that they were Here when first I came, and at night they come to me in dreams, at least I think they do, but I have not found them yet."

"Has that been troubling you?" he said. "It need not. They are farther on of course. Think of the years they have been here, and you are but a beginner. You have only got to catch them up."

"Only!" I said. "It seems a big 'only'."

"You need not feel discouraged," he continued. "If we are willing and obedient it is surprising how we get on. Besides, your work may bring you together before you are ready to join them entirely. And when you dream they come to you, remember that all falsehood dies up here - even our dreams are always true."

* * * *

"Now, will you tell me about my comrade?" I asked after a time. "Who is he? How did I come to live with him? Was it just accident?"

"Three questions all at once!" he laughed. "I will answer them backwards!"

"It was not accident. THEY arrange who shall live together at first, and They put those together who will do each other most good. Afterwards, when any change is made, we make it ourselves. You see there are no fixed rules Here; we do what we feel we ought. We realise it, and then we choose it; not just at first perhaps, but more and more as the days go on, and we really begin to get a passion for holiness."

I remembered some of my experiences, and nodded. "Then the same people do not always stay together?" I inquired.

"No, you never stay when you have done all you can for each other. Of course, what sort of comrade you need depends on your former life. In some cases just what we should call the unsuitability gives to each the required discipline. In other cases the very opposite sort of arrangement is needed."

I thought of my comrade. I was beginning to feel very warmly towards him, curiously

so in the circumstances, for we were certainly an odd couple. It was long since anyone had possessed any authority over me, or indeed since I had had anyone to consider except myself, and as for him - he seemed born to command. Perhaps that was just why we had been put together!

“Who is my comrade?” I asked abruptly. Philip looked at me oddly: then he told me his name.

I gazed at him in absolute stupefaction. It was a name at which a whole nation trembled. He! No wonder we had fallen out! How could we have done otherwise? How could we ever hope to get on peaceably? Of all the crudely impossible situations, this was the most impossible.

“It would be pure farce,” I cried, in sudden revolt, “if it were not so horribly serious.”

“Think so?” said Philip dryly. Then he laid a calming hand upon me. “Patience, Brother,” he said, very kindly. “Remember, you are only at the edge of things yet. It will all become much clearer to you soon.”

Somehow his words reminded me of Stephen, and I asked about him. “Yes, he has gone On,” Philip said.

“What does that mean? Gone into Heaven?”

“No, not yet: that is to be bye and bye, isn’t it? I think we shall be called and all go together. And I believe we shall be fetched,” he said in a low, reverent tone. “I mean just gone farther on. To learn more: do more: enjoy more. Did you think the Outer Courts of Heaven consisted of one little acre?”

“I am afraid I never thought much about it,” I replied. It seemed strange, now that I looked back. I had travelled a good deal, and should certainly have never gone to a new country with as little thought and study as I had given to this strange land. I said something of this to Philip.

“Yes, it is strange,” he said, “and such a pity we don’t make more use of our chances down There. So many people come Up with nearly everything to undo. I don’t mean that we can ever undo our deeds. Alas! that is impossible, even Here. But we could have disciplined our characters. We could have come Up more self-controlled, more unselfish . . . Well, thank God for Paradise! Thank God we don’t throw away our opportunities Here as we did There.”

I thought over all this, but I was puzzled and troubled. Echoes of past teaching came into my mind; things little thought of for years, and certainly never spoken of before.

“But surely,” I said, rather awkwardly, “surely that is all arranged for. It is a bit out of my depth, and I hardly know how to put it, but when I was a little chap I was taught to say : ‘Not the labours of my hands can fulfill Thy law’s demands,’ and ‘Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy Cross I cling,’ and that sort of thing.

I have not thought much about it lately, I am afraid, but I supposed it was the

Righteousness of Christ that we needed, not our own. Didn't all that mean anything after all?"

"It meant just everything," he said. "Just everything. Do you think we should be Here at all if it were not for that? But . . ."

He paused so long that I interposed. "But what?"

"You said you were afraid you hadn't thought much about these things lately," he said, with seeming irrelevance, and then paused again.

A vague sense of self-condemnation came over me; of ingratitude, almost of treason.

Suddenly Philip broke out with energy: "Don't you see it? Man, don't you see it? That is just the very point of it all. If we are really His, we must live it out. We can't help it. We must grow into what He died to make us."

"I am sorry," I began, but he stopped me.

"No, no! You were quite right. Don't imagine we forget that side up Here. Why it is only Here we begin to see it fully. 'Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.' But, my dear fellow, the more you see that, the more you see what the result is bound to be." And then, more to himself than to me, he murmured, "Pressing on, striving to lay hold of the prize for which Christ has laid hold of me." In a triumphant ringing tone he added, "There shall enter into it naught that defileth."

I started. Those were the words that had scourged me as I lay at the edge of the trees three nights ago, but, as Philip said them, they seemed a song of praise. As well as I could, I told him what had happened, but he did not need telling.

"It is always like that when anyone starts off as you did. You didn't know what you were doing, or where you were trying to go. But tell me; supposing you could go tonight, right into Heaven itself, right up to the Light as you tried to do then. Supposing it were possible, would you like to go tonight, just as you are?"

As he spoke, a picture from the still half-forgotten past came before me. I thought of an adventure of my childhood. I had slipped into a stagnant duck pond, and scrambled out, a noisome object. My one idea was to get to my Mother. I rushed home, and up to the open drawing-room window. I saw my Mother's drawing-room, its white walls, its dainty furnishings. I saw my Mother, a graceful figure in her summer dress. I stopped short. Frightened and shaken though I was, I felt that I could not defile that room with my horrible person, soaked with mud and slime . . .

"Mother," I sobbed.

"My poor old man, what has happened?" she cried, and in a moment was beside me on the grass.

I did not answer Philip's question, and he seemed to expect no reply, and for a while we were silent. "What a pity we never spoke of these things down There," I

exclaimed presently, "I don't remember that we ever did." The pain in his face stopped me. "I beg your pardon," I finished lamely.

"You are quite right," he said, "and it was my fault. I had the right and the opportunity to speak, and I used to find it so difficult."

I did not know what to say. I was very sorry that I had distressed him, yet what he said was true. While I hesitated he went on, and the pain faded from his face.

"That is why I am still here on the edge of things; that is why I said I was more pleased to see you than you to see me. I can't bear to go On till I have done some of the work I might have done down There, and one after another comes, and the chance is given me. That is what makes it such a rest to be Here," he added.

CHAPTER VII.

*Speak low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet,
From out the Hallelujahs, sweet and low,
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss Thee so
Who art not missed by any that entreat,
Speak to me as to Mary at Thy feet!*

—E. B. BROWNING.

It was nearly time for Evensong, and as we strolled towards our usual place, Philip suggested that he should call for me next morning and take me for a tramp on the hills. I was more than willing, and so we arranged it. Multitudes of people were coming in from all sides, and the great open space was filled with waiting figures.

"Is there Evensong every day, and is it always the same?" I asked.

"Yes, every day," he said, "but I do not think it is ever exactly the same. How could it be? It is always the highest Worship and Communion of which each soul is capable, so it grows with our growth."

"But then, it must be different to everyone who is there."

"So it is," said Philip. This troubled me. Was all that I thought I had seen and heard, merely the fruit of my own imagination?

"Then it is not real?" I said. "It is not anything outside ourselves? It is only what we fancy it is?"

"No, no," cried Philip. "Real? Why, it is the most real of all realities! But how much we see in it depends on ourselves. Think a moment," he went on. "You remember your first day here? How you complained of the fog that confused you? To me that day was crystalline. Now think of your two Evensongs. Have they been exactly alike?"

No, now I thought of it, they had not. "Then I may expect more still?" I asked.

“More?” he said. “My dear fellow, you are only just beginning! ‘Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him’

It was a few minutes before we spoke again, but I had another question to ask.

“Does everyone come here for Evensong?”

“Oh, no, we can go where we like,” he said, “but usually people go where they went at first, and almost always numbers gather together. It is very rarely that anyone prefers to be alone for Evensong.”

I understood this. There was great joy in this corporate worship. Everyone who came seemed to add to it, and however many were there, no one ever came between another and the Light. Besides this, there was a strange realization of the presence of others whom we could not see.

To-night my comrade came and knelt beside me for the first time, and I was very glad, although the next moment he was forgotten. The curse of wandering thoughts does not trouble us Here.

The Light grew very slowly to-night. There seemed to be a long, long pause:

“While bare and breathless
North and South and East lay ready
For a glorious thing that dauntless, deathless
Sprang across them and stood steady.”

It was the rainbow that came first, and then there was another pause; an almost unbearable suspense and pain.

“O, Whose Foot shall I see emerge,
Whose, from the straining topmost dark,
On to the keystone of that arc?”

Slowly, as before, a great white Cross appeared. Just a shining Cross. I held out my hands in passionate appeal, in a longing that I did not know how to express, and then I hid my face.

* * * *

My comrade and I talked long that night, and when I left him it was with a great pity born of understanding. We spoke of the mines and his work there. I found that he had gone to it as I had gone to my gardening, with the consciousness that it was just what he needed. “It is salvation,” he said, with strong feeling. He told me a little of his past life.

“I was handicapped,” he said, “hardly ever anyone to tell me when I was wrong! Nothing but flattery every day! If it had not been for my dear old Nurse, when I was quite a child, I don’t suppose I should be here at all. Well, now I have a chance. It will take me ages, I think, but one good thing is we never lose hope up Here. I

suppose that is what makes it such a rest.”

CHAPTER VIII.

*He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown,
But what fair well or grove he sings in now
That is to him unknown.
And yet, as Angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes
And into glory peep.*

-HENRY VAUGHAN.

Next morning I had only just finished a few small jobs in the garden when Philip arrived, and with him little Lucy.

“Do you mind if this child comes?” he said. “And I want to take two men who have lately come Up. It is just what they need.”

As we went to fetch them, I asked Lucy if this was how she took care of poor Johnnie? But she told me he was at work and did not want her till evening. “So in the day I help Philip look after new chums, don't I, Philip?”

“You do, indeed, little woman,” he said warmly.

She ran on as we neared the cottage, and when we arrived she was in the arms of an elderly woman with a sweet, peaceful face. “This is my Silver Grannie,” she explained. “Are they ready, Granny?”

“Go and see, Sunbeam.” She ran in, calling: “Dick, Dick, Arnold, where are you?”

“How are they?” inquired Philip.

“Arnold is better. He ought to be, after nearly a week's sleep, and he sleeps quietly now. THEY did not have to go to him at all last night.”

“And Dick?”

“As bright as a button, bless him! Here they come.” One of the strangers was a lad of about eighteen, with a vivid face and ready smile. The other was some years older, fair and grey-eyed. He looked care-worn and sad.

Lucy precipitated herself into the old lady's arms in a fervent farewell, and then we started.

“I am taking you,” she announced, “first to the Light Wells, and then the Happy Valley, and then the Moor.”

We went up the road towards the mines, but at the foot of the hill she turned to the

left, and led us into the Park. Before long we came to a little valley, shut in by trees. It looked full of light, and when we entered we seemed to be plunging into a bright spray, sweet-scented, soothing, and renewing. The spray was in lively motion; little rainbows darted to and fro, and patches of dazzling light. Lucy ran here and there trying to catch them, and she, and we also, were in a few moments covered with a shimmering cloak of iridescent drops . . .

“Who is that with her?” said Dick, but I did not see anyone. He asked Lucy herself soon after. “It was my Guardianna,” she told him, and he looked puzzled.

When we came out at the other end of the hollow, we found ourselves among magnificent fruit-trees, growing beside a stream. Peaches, pears, figs, and others which I did not recognize, hung in profusion. Vines flung their graceful branches from tree to tree, heavy with purple grapes.

“Now pick our lunch,” commanded Lucy, and while we picked the fruit Arnold gathered some large strong leaves, and with the stalks of the vine bound them into a serviceable basket.

“Now, a drink,” said Lucy, when we had picked enough. We went down to the silver stream. Dick’s face was in the river in a moment, and then he and Lucy must needs paddle in the bright shallows.

When at last we set off, I felt like a new man, and even Arnold’s face had lost its look of strain, and he whistled as he walked . . . As for Lucy, she hardly seemed to touch the ground. She and Dick ran races, the lad full of fun and laughter as herself.

Our path led upwards. Soon we had left the trees, and found ourselves on short springy turf between grey boulders. Higher and higher we climbed, till we reached a saucer-like depression commanding a glorious view, where we decided to stay awhile. Lucy had deserted Dick, and sat close by Arnold’s side. “How is your little boy?” she asked suddenly.

“I have not got a little boy,” he answered, rather wistfully.

“Yes, you have. Of course you have. Why, I have seen him. He is quite a new baby.”

“What do you mean? You have seen it?” he cried. She did not notice how she had disturbed him, and replied in playful rebuke. “You must not say ‘it.’ It is a He.”

He grasped her arm roughly. “Tell me what you mean, child. You have seen my baby, my son! Is he *Here?*”

But Lucy was frightened; she shrank back, and her lips quivered. Philip laid his hand on her shoulder. “Tell Arnold what you saw, little girl.”

“They were down There,” she faltered. “It was a lady, and a baby was in her arms. The baby was quite a new one, and,” she hesitated, and then went on, “I think they were looking out for you.” He sprang to his feet. He seemed unable to utter a word.

“What is it, Philip? What have I done?” cried Lucy

“Nothing wrong, little girl, only you have given him a shock,” and getting up, Philip slipped his arm into Arnold’s and drew him away, and they walked off together in earnest talk.

As I lay silent, thinking over what had occurred, Dick raised himself to one elbow and began to speak to Lucy.

“Who was with you in the Light Wells, Lucy? Do tell me.” “I told you; it was my Guardie.”

“But who is Guardie ? It sounds as if you had been run in.”

“You musn’t make fun about my Guardie,” said the little maid, with dignity, and then, leaning against him, she spoke in whispers, and I only caught part of what she told him.

“Are you sure, Lucy?” I heard him say presently, and the child replied eagerly, “Yes, Dick, look, look! Can’t you see? There talking to my own Guardie.”

I watched Dick’s face. I saw the curiosity give place to wonder, and the wonder grew into awe. I felt as if I were surprising a secret not meant for me, and I turned away. What was it that these young eyes saw? Something to which mine were not yet open.

Presently Arnold and Philip came back. Arnold looked, I thought, as if he had received a Kingdom and had just been crowned. He sat down beside Lucy, saying, “Thank you, Evangeline.”

“My name isn’t Evangeline,” she said, much puzzled. “I think it ought to be,” he answered, smiling at her.

* * * *

When Philip suggested that we should go on to the top of the hill, neither of the men wished to go, and Lucy said she must stay and take care of them, so he and I went on alone. “They will all three go to sleep, I hope,” he said. “It will be the best thing for them.”

“Do you know who Dick and Arnold are?” I asked.

“Yes,” he answered. “Dick is almost fresh from a public school. One of the best specimens of his type, pure-hearted and manly. It is not yet twelve hours since he went laughing to his death; shot clean through the forehead. He was up Here before he knew it.”

“And the other?” I asked, after a long pause.

“Poor fellow, he has had a terrible experience. Nearly two years of ceaseless responsibility and hardship. Twice over he had been the only Officer left, and has had to retire the remnants of his Company as best he could to avoid destruction. This time” – Philip spoke slowly and reluctantly – “they were retreating, and very hard pressed, and got cut off. He might have escaped, but he went back to help one of his men who was badly wounded, and then, he was hit. He lay untended for two

days before one of our stretcher parties brought him in. They did all they could for him, but it was too late, and he died at the Clearing Station. One of our Padres was with him when he died.”

“Our men, our Padre? Then he is not English?” I asked, astonished. “No, not English,” said Philip.

* * * *

We spoke no more until we reached the top of the hill. It commanded a wide stretch of country. In front of us lay the Park. I could now see that it consisted of a wide grassy height, surrounded by a belt of trees. The top of the hill was veiled in mist. I caught the silver gleam of a river flowing out from the mist, and many villages or settlements lay like a fringe on the edge of the trees.

“There is Paradise Place,” said Philip. “That next hamlet is Golden Orchard: and there is Fairhaven: and lower down is The Cloisters. It is rather a climb to get to Evensong from there, but it is a lovely spot, and a rather amusing one, for most of the inhabitants are society leaders and College Dons. They look after each other!

“That fine building is the College. Anyone can go there and learn what they wish. It is fascinating work teaching them, as, of course, they are all very keen, and grasp things so quickly - just as only the very best brains did down There.

The pretty white house under the hill is Castle Comfort. Women, who have hardly known anything but toil and anxiety, often go there at first. I found one old Saint from my parish there lately: one of those heroic cottage Mothers of whom we ought to be more proud. She had had a crippled husband and nine children; and had served God all the days of her life, and brought up her family in His faith and fear. I found her being looked after by an only daughter from a wealthy home, who had scarcely ever had a wish ungratified, and I don't know which was the happier of the two.

“Now look at the children's homes. There they are quite among the trees. That big place is called Joy Gate. The babies go there; you see it is close to the meadows where they can play all day. The one near it is for unwanted neglected babies. It is the Peace Pool. The tinies don't stay there long, for there is nothing to undo. They have only to grow, and growth is quick up Here.

“Now look at that beautiful white house close to the River. It is one of the most lovely spots Here. It is” - he hesitated a moment - “it is for older children, for those who have suffered harm through cruel treatment. THEY look after it entirely. It is called Fresh Springs.”

“Fresh Springs,” I cried. “But Lucy told me that she went there at first. Surely she “Yes, poor lamb,” he said sadly, “she went through a hell upon earth before she came Here. No, it was not her Mother's fault, it was the Father. He was thoroughly brutalized. He - and yet look at that child now! I never see her without thinking of ‘I

will restore to you the years that the locust bath eaten.' You see, up Here we begin by forgetting everything, and then we only recollect all that it is good for us to remember. She does not in the least recall her Father. He was sentenced, and died in a drunken brawl directly he came out of prison."

"Died," I said sharply. "Where is he? Not Here."

"Oh no!" said Philip slowly, "he is not Here. Do you think he ought to be? Do you think it would do him any good?"

I did not answer, but lay thinking over all I had heard. At last I asked, "Philip! what happens to them? Those who don't come Here?"

"I cannot tell you," he said, very gravely; "we do not know. But this I can tell you. that before we have been Here long we are quite content about them. It is not that we care less, but - well, we understand more of God: we know that all is well."

"Can we do nothing for them?"

"I don't think we can do anything more than we could down There. Not at present, at any rate. Perhaps bye and bye, when all of us go In together, we may be able to do more. But that is not yet, and we do not know. What we know for certain is that they are in God's Hands, and that He will do what is right. 'O Thou that Nearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.' What does that mean, do you suppose?"

"I really don't know," I answered.

"Neither do I" said Philip, "but God does. Let us leave it at that."

* * * *

Bye and bye my mind reverted to my week's work. "I don't think there is much for me to do in the garden," I said.

"No. you have made a good job of it - for an amateur," he added smiling. "You will find your new work waiting for you next week."

"Is to-morrow Sunday, then," I asked. "I did not know we had Sundays Here."

"You have not had one Here yet," he said. "You came up late on Sunday night, you know. I wonder how you will like it!"

"What do we do on Sunday?"

"Just what you like: anything you like."

"That sounds all right," I said.

"Yes," he said, with a smile, "yes, it is all right. Only, you see, you *must* do it."

"*Must* do what you *like*."

"Yes, must, and then when you have done it, you know where you are, do you see?" No, I didn't see, and I confessed as much.

"Well, you will to-morrow," he answered, and that was all I could get out of him.

I think after this we may have slept. Anyhow, the next thing I heard was Dick's voice. "Ain't you sick of one another yet?" he demanded. "Isn't it time to go? Those two down there have been fast asleep for years, and I'm fed up with my own company."

"You don't look it," said I, and indeed he seemed extremely cheerful as he flung himself on the grass at our feet and smiled up at us.

"No, he doesn't," said Philip, looking at him, and then after a little pause, he asked, "What discoveries have you been making, then?"

"How do you know I've been making discoveries?" asked Dick, in surprise. "But I have, quite a lot of them; though it seems a queer thing to make discoveries in your sleep."

"I have done that dozens of times," said I, "but when I waked I never could remember what they were."

"But I do remember," he answered gravely. "What problems have you solved?"

The lad hesitated a moment, and then spoke half shyly. "The chief one is about my Mater. Three years ago she was run into by a car. She's never been able to sit up since. It hurt her back. Poor little Mother." There was silence for a while.

"But what was your great discovery?" I asked at length.

"That it is all right" he exclaimed. "She used to tell me it was, but I couldn't see it. I thought she just said so because she would not complain. It used to make me mad to think about it. But it is alright, just as she said. And so are a whole lot of other things, too, I wish I could go and tell her so," and the bright face clouded.

"Perhaps you will be able to tell her before long," said Philip. He got up "I think you will," he added. "And now we must really go and wake those two, and start for home."

"We are rather late, are we not?" I asked.

"No, we shall not be late. There is no distance Here, you know, only space. And no time, only plenty of leisure," he added, laughing at Dick's puzzled face. Dick laughed too.

"I don't know what you mean," he said, "but I know this is a marvellous place, anyhow. Simply too marvellous!"

We started down the hill together, but before long we came to a track branching off to the left.

"I will go that way, I think," said Dick suddenly.

"You will lose yourself," I remarked, but Philip smiled and nodded, and the boy left us, swinging down the track with his easy stride. He soon outdistanced us, but as our path overlooked the way he had taken we could watch him still, in spite of a slight mist which seemed to be creeping up. Before long I saw him halt. He stood a

moment, then stretched out his hands and hurried on. Again he paused, his hand went up to the salute - then he fell on his knees. I watched him, wondering. Then I realized that Someone was walking towards him - a Man - tall, white-robed, veiled (it seemed to me) in a shining silvery cloud. He came to where Dick knelt. I could see His hands laid upon the bowed head, while the lad bent still lower as if to clasp the Feet of Him who welcomed him. Then the mist drifted across, and I saw no more.

What did it all mean? Why was Dick thus welcomed? Why had I had no such experience? Then, with a stab, the reason struck home - the bitter reason. Why should I? Had I come Up Here eager, waiting for this very thing? I felt choked. I could not speak. I walked on in silence, and in equal silence Philip followed me. We found the others fast asleep, little Lucy with her face hidden against Arnold's side, one small hand lying across his breast; a picture of perfect peace. We waked them, however, and before long we were on our way home.

"Nearly time," said Lucy, from her perch on Arnold's shoulder. "It will be your first Evensong."

"What is that?" said Arnold.

"Something lovely, you will see," she said.

As we came down the hill past the mines, we saw a number of people kneeling or standing at the edge of the cliff.

"What are they doing?" inquired Arnold. Little Lucy's tongue was always ready with information.

"They are watching the poor people who never heard about the Lord Jesus, and thinking of fresh things to do for them," she said. "But some are looking out for their own folks." She leant down and whispered in Arnold's ear, and he carried her across to the edge, but Philip and I went straight to the Park. As we waited, I noticed a man not far off surrounded by quite a little crowd.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"A new-comer," said Philip; "I have not seen him before."

"But if he is a stranger, how is it that so many seem to know him? He is getting quite an ovation."

"I think they are people whom he has helped to bring Here," said Philip slowly.

A keen pain shot through me. There had been no one thus to welcome me - not one! I said nothing, but I think Philip understood. He put his hand on my arm, and then we knelt down and waited.

The Light appeared at last, faint at first, and intermittent; then gradually growing brighter, till we saw once more the glowing Cross, lighting up the whole sky. But there seemed to be a shadow where I knelt, and I felt out of tune, and sad.

When we rose, I saw my comrade beside me, and he and I walked down with Philip. Little Lucy was dancing along beside Arnold and another man, a rather shambling figure, who, Philip told me, was her beloved Johnnie. A group of men caught my attention. They were gathered round one who seemed older than most of them, a tall commanding figure, with a searching glance, whom I recognized immediately.

“Yes,” said Philip, as I mentioned his name. “It is so nice to see him looking after his boys. He just devotes himself to them as they come Up.”

“He certainly did his best for them down There, too,” said my comrade, “both by precept and example. A fine man, if ever there was one!”

On our way we passed my old friend walking with several others, and she waved a cheery greeting. Soon after we overtook the old man whom I had met on the first evening. He had beside him someone whom I had not seen before, and the look of proud proprietorship and satisfaction on his face would have told me who it was, even if my comrade had not exclaimed, “I believe the Chief has found his wife at last!”

“Yes,” replied Philip, “they met yesterday.”

“I would like to have seen that,” said my comrade.

“I don’t think you would,” said Philip. “I was there, and I simply had to turn my back; in fact I ran away. He was devoted to her,” explained Philip, turning to me. “He used to look out for her every day. Dear old Chief, I am glad he is satisfied at last.”

“Why do they call him that?” I inquired.

“It was just a nickname down There,” he answered. “He was a great favourite, especially with young folks, and one of them revived the name up Here.”

Philip left us at our door. As he said “Good-night,” he gave me a searching look which startled me. I almost asked him what was the matter, but there seemed little ground for such a question, and I said nothing.

CHAPTER IX.

*Thou know'st our bitterness - our joys are Thine;
No stranger Thou to all our wanderings wild:
Nor could we bear to think how every line
Of us, Thy darkened likeness and defiled,
Stands in full sunshine of Thy piercing eye,
But that Thou call'st us brethren: sweet repose
It is in that word! the Lord who dwells on high
Knows all, yet loves us better than He knows.*

-KEBLE.

“We do just as we like on Sundays,” Philip had said.

There was not much doubt as to my likings! I would not get up too early; I would have a swim in my delightful pool and a leisurely breakfast afterwards. Then, of course, I must go to Church, and after that I wanted to see a little more of the village. Then, about 2 p.m., lunch at my Club, and a nice afternoon with papers and books, and perhaps a quiet rubber . . . I pulled myself up. What nonsense “Do as I liked?” - well, within limits, perhaps!

As soon as I was ready I strolled out. My comrade was not to be seen. I had forgotten to ask him where the Church was, but the air was full of sound, and that would guide me.

They were the most beautiful bells that I had ever heard; nothing metallic about them, just pure tone, made sensible to the ear as the coloured stars thrown by a rocket are made sensible to the eye. But where did they come from? Just round the corner? No, that was a cottage like my own; and through the open door I saw an old man kneeling in prayer. Round the next corner? No, there was nothing there but two small children in a garden; they were holding each other’s hands, and solemnly dancing round and round, singing “Jesus loves me,” very much out of tune.

I was beginning to feel annoyed when I saw in front of me two women with “Church Goer” writ large all over them. I tried to overtake them, but too late; they turned a corner and disappeared.

At last I spied Philip. “You shan’t escape me,” I said to myself, and started to run, but it was no use. Then his words came back to me: Anything you like: you have got to do what you like.” Did I like going to Church? Was it because I liked that I was going today? That I had gone most Sundays down There? Or had I been confusing liking with mere habit?

And suddenly, out in that road, there came to me a terrible experience. My whole life rose up before me. It was more than remembering; I saw and lived it all again. Scene followed scene, clear cut to the minutest detail. I was a child again, a boy, a youth. I remembered my Mother’s teaching, my Father’s prayers. Schooldays passed before me. I re-lived the time when, at a boys’ camp, I made the great decision, and openly ranged myself on the side of Christ.

I went again to the ‘Varsity, and thought of the crowding in of new interests and engrossing work. How hard it had been to keep the light from growing dim. Then came a great friendship, a strong influence, which did not help me upwards. I thought of the vain attempt to serve two masters. Then, once again, the crisis of my life was upon me: the dawning of a new love, a bright, hope; and then . . . I saw myself embittered, hardened shutting my heart against all comfort.

I lived my later years again; my comfortable quarters in town, my Club, my harmless amusements, a few weeks’ shooting in the Autumn, a little fishing in the Spring, journeys half over the world. A steady ordered existence it had seemed then. How

did it look now?

As in a withering flame, I saw my inner hidden life - my best moments and my worst. I heard my prayers again. Every prayer I had ever prayed said itself over very slowly and distinctly, in an unendurable recital. I saw their childishness, their selfishness, their thanklessness. Their poverty at best, and, at worst, their mockery of God.

A dreadful procession passed before me. I saw the faces of those whom I might have helped, and had not. I saw the things I might have done, and had left undone. One or two scenes especially burned themselves into my consciousness. I remembered a visit at Easter-time to a country house. I sat in the smoking room on Sunday night. I heard again a tale that was told there. . . I watched the face of the young son at the house. Alone of all who were present, he and I had knelt side by side at the Easter Feast that morning. I saw him turn a searching, troubled look upon me, and unconsciously he moved his chair a little nearer mine. I felt a strong impulse to express my disapproval, but I kept silent. It would have been such an odd, unconventional thing to do!

Then I saw that lad as he afterwards became and I knew now how much a stand from me that day would have meant to him.

One other scene stood out in sharp relief. I spent an evening with an old family friend - a man much my senior. He was decorously and secretly, but surely, drinking himself to death. That evening he spoke openly to me. He showed me his bondage, his hatred of his bonds, and his despair of help. The thought rose in my mind that there was One who could help and keep and strengthen.

Years before I think I could have spoken of Him, but now it seemed impossible. I dared not come to such close quarters with another soul. And now I saw that he had been that night very near to the Kingdom. I knew he had only needed a word of witness, "He keeps me, He can keep you. He will receive you." And I had been dumb.

Then I saw in brilliant light all that I might have been; all the grace and strength that might have been mine if I would have it so. I saw all that I had missed . . . I saw myself at last, just as I really was in the eyes of Him with Whom I had to do . . . And I knew that I was without excuse.

And worse, far worse than all, was the full realisation of the Love that had been with me all the time: the endless Love; the infinite forbearance; the tender mercy.

* * * *

I do not know how long I stood there. It might have been a thousand years. Nor how I got home. But I found myself in my own room, lost in a horror of great darkness.

* * * *

At last upon the darkness shone a ray of light. The door of my little inner recess was open. I rose, utter need overcoming fear, and shame, and every other feeling.

I went in and fell upon my knees. And as I did so, the door was softly closed behind me.

* * * *

I cannot write of all that happened there - the overwhelming sorrow - the Presence - the Hands upraised - the Word of Power - the Peace past understanding. I cannot tell of that, for "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy."

* * * *

The day was far spent when I left my Holy Place . . . I left it, but He Who made it Holy went with me.

* * * *

The air was full of music. The time for Evensong was drawing near.

As I passed Lucy's home she ran out to me, crying, "Have you seen Johnnie?" and very sadly she told me how she and Johnnie had started that morning for Church, but somehow, before they got there she had lost him. "I think he was sleepy or something," she said. She had gone on alone ("such a lovely Children's Service" she told me), and then home again. And all day she had expected him, and now it was time for Evensong, and still he had not come. Remembering my own fruitless search that morning, and the few things I had heard about poor Johnnie, I thought I could understand what had happened.

"Have you had Johnnie on a Sunday before?" I asked.

"N - no," she said, "and I was going to give him such a nice one."

"It is not your fault, I am sure of that. Come with me, little woman. Very likely, we shall find him in the Park. I expect he has waked up by now."

As we went Lucy told me Johnnie's story. He was a poor wastrel from the slums of a great city. "He never had a father and never had a home - he had often been in prison" ('Not too bad, either,' Johnnie thought. 'At least you were sure of food and shelter.') Then one bitter night the warmth of a little Mission Room tempted him to go inside. As Lucy put it. "A man with a book talked, and they sang, 'There is a Green Hill' (I know that!) and 'Christ receiveth sinful men' (I don't know that one!) and then a lady gave Johnnie a job. Johnnie kept his job, too, till influenza got hold of him. Then some of his old companions gave him "something to do him good but it didn't." And that very night a van knocked him down, and he was taken to a Hospital, and "the man with the book came and sang 'Christ receiveth . . .' or somebody did, and then Johnnie came up Here. Poor Johnnie."

"Poor Johnnie!" I echoed.

When we reached the brink I looked down. The depths were filled with light clouds moving and separating, and leaving clear spaces every now and then. The soft spray

from the hidden river, lighted by a lovely rainbow, sank gently down like dew.

“Will you hold me up?” said a very subdued little voice As I picked her up and went close to the edge, I felt that I was being helped to hold her, and as for Lucy, she turned from me with a little cry, and said, but not to me, “Oh, I thought you had forgotten me! . . .” And then a moment after, “Yes, quite happy now . . .”

As we looked down she suddenly cried, “She is there, she is there! Oh, poor Mother!” I saw a woman’s figure crouched upon the ground. She looked as if she had no strength left, but as we watched, she raised herself on to her knees. Her face was upturned, her hands held out.

“She is looking, she is looking at last,” breathed the child. Then she said, but again not to me, “But where is Baby?” I did not hear the reply, but a smile of indescribable happiness came over Lucy’s face. Her eyes shone like stars.

“Can I go and see him?” then after a pause, “I see, yes; it is all right.” She turned to look down again, but the clouds had shifted, and the kneeling figure was hidden from our sight . . .

She looked eagerly for Johnnie when we reached our waiting-place, but he was not to be seen. There were more people there than ever, and the distant spaces of the Park (which were clearer than I had ever seen them) seemed thronged.

We had scarcely arrived when Philip came up, bringing another man with him.

“Brother,” he said, “I have brought you a friend.” Then I looked at the stranger’s face . . .

“Graham,” he said, in a low, urgent voice.

“He was painfully agitated, and I was not less so. Before me stood the man whom I owed the break-up of my life; the man who had robbed me of the one whom I had hoped to make my wife, and had broken her heart when he had won it.

“Graham,” he said again, even more urgently. “Graham, can you forgive me?” . . .

Forgive? Forgive a wrong like that, a wrong not to me only - that was the least part of it, but to her I so dearly loved!

* * * *

But the atmosphere of my little Holy Place was still around me. Still I felt the Presence, heard the gracious Voice that bade me go in peace. How could I refuse or even hesitate?

* * * *

“I forgive you as I have been forgiven,” I said at last. He hid his face, and we stood silent. Presently he held out his hand to me. Down There I would not have touched it, and I think I should have been right, but it was quite easy to take it now.

For a few moments more we talked, and then he told me he must go. “I want to get

back to my own place for Evensong, someone needs me there,” he explained.

My expression must have asked the question I could not have put into words.

“Edith?” he said. “Yes, she is Here - she has gone On. We shall join her when we are ready. But we must wait till then. We must both wait . . .

CHAPTER X.

*Each face looked one way like a moon new lit,
Each face looked one way towards its Sun of Love,
Drank love, and bathed in love and mirrored it
And knew no end thereof.*

-CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

Philip had taken Lucy away to look for Johnnie, but when he saw that I was again alone he returned. She was very still and quiet, but no longer unhappy. I had a feeling that I should lose her tonight, and if sadness had been any longer possible to me, I should have grieved at parting from the sweet little maid. She came close to me, and took my hand.

“Brother, will you take care of Johnnie for me?” she asked, and then, before I could answer, she turned with a glad cry. Just behind us crouched a miserable object. He was huddled together as if he wanted to sink into the ground; his face was hidden in his arms.

“Johnnie. dear Johnnie,” she said. She knelt down beside him and put her little arms round him. “Johnnie, it’s only me.” He lifted his woe-begone face, and she gently kissed him.

Someone whom I scarcely saw lifted her up. She gave me one look of entreaty, and then turned her face to the Light. Slowly it shone out, very softly at first, and then brighter and brighter, in great rhythmic waves; and tonight I felt no answering agony, unless, indeed, an almost intolerable joy can be called pain.

I knelt down beside poor Johnnie and raised him to his knees, but he kept his face hidden.

Just then a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and I looked up.

Who was it? Who were these? Father! Mother! - Last seen in the weakness of the shadowed valley! - Little Sister, whose short suffering life had been so sore a trial years before! -

Yes, they were all there, they and others also: my own kith and kin! They stood before me, radiant with life and joy and strength. I felt a boy again. The long years of separation fell away into nothingness. The bonds of love between us were as fresh and strong as ever. No! Stronger, purer, dearer.

As my Father grasped my hand, I heard him say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God Which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

* * * *

Close together we stood; in a full content, and yet thrilled through and through with expectation. The glory grew and grew. There was no mist. The grassy flower-starred slopes rose clear and bright, and their wide spaces were thronged with an innumerable company. Far away, and high above us, rose the Holy City, shining with the radiance of a very precious stone, bright and transparent.

Above it was a space of clear green light, a door opened into Eternity, and, spanning its unfathomable depths, a glorious double rainbow, rich rather than brilliant, against the pure pale green. From its topmost arch rose the radiant Cross, bright with no reflected brightness, but with its own inherent light; bright even against its glowing background. All around and behind it, depth beyond depth, fold beyond fold, shone clouds of golden light. Were they clouds? Or did I see a multitude of the Heavenly Host framing the Cross with glory?

We knelt with one accord, and suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the wide spaces where we were, touching every upturned forehead with a soft caress. Even poor Johnnie raised his head and fixed his eyes upon the Cross. Was it a Cross? Or was HE standing there? Clothed in a robe which reached to His feet, and with a girdle of gold across His breast, and His glance resembled the Sun when it is shining with its full strength": His arms held out from east to west; Arms that seemed to draw us all unto Himself.

Bowed down before the awful splendour, and yet rejoicing with joy unspeakable, we knelt and worshipped. And a clear voice cried to us from out the glory, "Lift up your hearts," and we lifted them up unto the Lord . . .

Then from the stillness came the sound of music. I heard the bells again; I heard the harpers harping upon their harps. I heard the sound of many Angels saying:

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing."

Then we thrice-blessed people sang our song:

"Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by His blood . . . to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever."

And then from far away came rich melody, less pure in tone, but sweet and true.

"Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High !"

* * * *

“And then HE came to us . . . To each alone, “as if beside, nor man, nor angel lived in heaven or earth,” and to all together, for we all were one in Him. He came - and in His hands were gifts. And when He left us, He was with us still.

CHAPTER XI.

Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. - Amen.

Jude, v. 24.

When at last I awakened to outward things my comrade still knelt near me, and Johnnie crouched between us. Together we raised him to his feet.

“Do you think we might take him home just for tonight?” I suggested. “I don’t mind a night on the floor.”

“I am sure you may, if you like,” said my comrade, adding with a smile, “Sunday is not over yet, you know.”

“We took him to my room, and before we had finished arranging my impromptu couch he was fast asleep. We stood and watched him. How the true character comes out in sleep! It was a weak face but not a brutal one.

“He will make a man yet,” said my comrade.

Of course he would! I knew that, and I had a hope that I was going to be allowed to help in the making.

We went out, and stood watching the river for a little while; but neither of us felt inclined to talk, and very soon I felt myself dismissed, graciously but unmistakably. I smiled to myself as I went indoors. I thought we should not be very soon parted, and I was glad to think so. We had not yet done all we could for each other!

Very softly I went through my room and entered my Holy Place. As I did so, an unseen hand closed the door behind me.

I knelt before the open window. Outside, the river of the Water of Life sang softly, and I could just see it in the subdued light that never leaves us here. Far away the City shone with a steady glow. The Presence that had never left me was with me now. I felt as if enfolded in mighty wings. Long, long I knelt. The best moments I had ever had on earth were but a shadow to this communion, and I knew that now it would last forever, untroubled, and unbroken.

I think I prayed: I know I listened. I think I sought: I know I found.

* * * *

When at last I went back to my room Johnnie still slept quietly. Poor Johnnie! My charge now! Mine 'to serve and save.' And without any fear of failure, either for him or for me. I think that is what makes it such a rest to be Here.

I lay down in a peace past all expression, past all understanding, and, rocked in a cradle of thanksgiving, I fell asleep.

* * * *

O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life ; grant us, we beseech Thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He is pure ; that, when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom ; where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

—Collect for 6th Sunday after Epiphany.

Epilogue

(Compiled by Elsie Burroughs)

Authentic tidings of invisible things.

—Wordsworth

*What no eye has ever seen,
What no ear has ever heard,
What never entered the mind of man,
God has prepared all that for those that love Him.
And God has revealed it to us by the Spirit.*

1 Corinthians, ii.9.10. (Moffatt)

A living faith in things unseen is worth all the systematic theology that shelves ever groaned under.

—R. W. Dale.

The duty of making discreet systematic use of the power of imaginative vision for purposes of spiritual culture, "since the soul takes colour from its fantasies," is a

point on which he (Aurelius) had frequently insisted.

—Walter Pater.

*Make my mortal dreams came true
With the work I fain would do;
Clothe with life the weak intent,
Let me be the thing I meant:
Let me find in Thy employ
Peace that dearer is than joy,
Out of self to love be led,
And to heaven acclimated,
Until all things sweet and good
Seem my natural habitude.*

—Whittier.

* * * *

The Divine Plan for Mankind's Salvation

Working out down the Ages of Time

When the time was fully come, God sent forth His Son.

Gallations iv.4.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.

2 Corinthians v 19.

Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.

1 Peter iii.18 R.V.

My King . . . My Son . . . Ask of Me, and I make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

Psalm ii.6-8. R.S.V. cf. Ephesians i.3-10. Colossians i.12-20

In this Age – The Invisibility of the King

“He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down on the right hand of God: from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet.”

Hebrews x.ii, 13

In this Age - the Calling Out of the Church

“The Church which is His Body,” a Community drawn from all Nationalities, united in being personally committed, in grateful love, to Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord.

“All authority in heaven and earth is given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations; and lo, I am with you always to the end of the age.”

S. Matthew xviii.18-20

“. . . God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.”

Acts 15 12-18

To each ‘member’ of His Body, this Earth-life is an offered sphere of preparation, under the power and teaching of God the Holy Spirit, and in the light of the great Day of the King’s return. Only the personal experience, its joy and its cost, of crowning Him in one’s own life, ‘down here,’ can qualify for then “entering into His joy,” sharing in His stupendous work of establishing His Universal Rule. Do we not need to pray to be gripped - as St. Paul was - by the wonder of the “place,” in the remaining stages of the Plan, which He is preparing for His *completed* Church, the “first-fruits” Of His redeeming grace and patience? He “will present to Himself a glorious Church . . . holy and without blemish,” “that in the ages to come,” still seeking all not yet found, He may “show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to us,” in this age. So, “if we endure, we shall also reign with Him,” transformed from ‘liabilities’ into ‘assets’.

“Remain within Him now, dear children, so that when He appears we may have confidence, instead of shrinking from Him in shame at His arrival.”

1 John ii. 28. Moffat.

Cf. Ephes. ii.7. 2 Tim. ii.12. 1 Thes. iv. 13-8. 1 Cor. iii.12-15. Rev iii.21

A Glimpse of the Ultimate Goal

“He humbled Himself . . . even unto the death on the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Philippians ii.8-11

“As all die in Adam, so shall all be made alive in Christ . . . For He must reign until all His foes are put under His feet ... and when everything is put under His feet, the Son Himself shall be put under Him, who put all things under Him, so that God may be everything to everyone.”

1 Corinthians xv.22-28. Moffat

Prayers for Preparedness

O Almighty God, Who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men: grant unto Thy people, that they may love the things which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

4th Sunday after Easter.

O God, Whose love embraces every one of Thy children, and Who askest from each a return of love: grant that we may have faith to accept the love Thou offerest, and grace to give Thee the love which is Thy due; that in loving Thee we may become daily more like Thee; and by love may serve one another for Thy sake: through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us, Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer of Bishop E. A. Burroughs.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who art the Eternal Wisdom, upholding all things by the Word of Thy power; enter, we beseech Thee, into our hearts, forgive our sins, and overcome our infirmities with Thy strength: that, being made wise unto salvation, we may move as Thy friends and prophets among men, and shine as lights in this dark world; to Thy honour and glory, Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, livest and reignest, One God, world without end. Amen.

A Prayer of Bishop E. A. Burroughs.

A PRAYER ABOUT ONE WHO HAS PASSED OUT OF OUR SIGHT

We seem to give him back to Thee, dear God, who gavest him to us. Yet as Thou didst not lose him in giving, so we have not lost him by his return. Not as the world giveth, givest Thou, O Lover of Souls; what Thou givest, Thou takest not away. For what is Thine is ours always, if we are Thine; and life is eternal; and love is immortal; and death is only a horizon; and horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, Strong Son of God, that we may see further; cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly; draw us closer to Thyself that we may know ourselves closer to our beloved who are in Thee. And while Thou dost prepare a place for us, prepare us for that happy place, that where they are, and Thou art, we too may be, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bishop Brent's Prayer