

THE MORNING STAR

AND

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"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THEM THAT BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"

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MORNING STAR AND CATHOLIC MESSENGER
NEW ORLEANS, SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 1868.

MORNING DEW.

The dewdrops vanish one by one.
That seem to glisten everywhere.
Drawn by the kisses of the sun
Into the thirsty lap of air.
They vanish, and they do not die,
Although the thirsty road be dry.

The dew at night will fall in vain
On broken burials by the way.
The dew will change to gentle rain,
And waken far-off flowers to May.
Yet herbs and flowers in every sky,
In every land, are born to die.

The pleasant thoughts of dawning youth
Are parched away by toil and care,
And leave the dusty road of truth,
The trodden path of duty bare.
And yet our pleasant thoughts are true,
Although they pass like morning dew.

They pass from us, their light is shed
On broken works of weary hands.
They pass from us, their sweetness fed
Some nobler soul in happier lands.
Yet every man beneath the sun
Doth all his deeds to be undone.

Our pleasant thoughts are like the dew,
One half of heaven, one half of earth.
They seem to die, but they renew
The sacrament of their sweet birth.
But fruitful plants and deeds of men
Are earth, and turn to earth again.

In thirsty fields of barren air
The dew is born to fall in vain.
Our thoughts go up to heaven, and there
They change to rains of golden rain,
Whereof the fourfold fountain-head
In Paradise is always fed.

Our thoughts, that seem to come and go,
Abide indeed in God on high.
For He ordains to water so
The only tree that does not die,
And angels in its shadow sit,
But who is he shall eat of it?

(Written for the Morning Star.)

LOST FAITH;

OR

THE TWO SISTERS.

BY JACQUELINE.

CHAPTER V—CONTINUED.

"Why, Charles, don't you know that if I still adhered to the rules of the Church I could not marry you? Brothers-in-law come within the prohibited degrees. So, if you are really anxious to secure my hand, I suppose you will feel very thankful for my hesitations."

But, strange perversity of man! Mr. Stewart was really shocked by this candid and apparently heartless confession—a confession that, years ago, coming from the lips of Kate, would have filled his heart with joy.

The ceremony, then, performed by a Unitarian clergyman; and Nellie started at once for her new home. Mr. Stewart had naturally supposed that she would prize those things which had belonged to her sister. Accordingly, with the exception of new carpets, some ornaments, and general repairing of furniture, he had left all things as Kate loved to see them arranged. But Nellie's undisguised surprise and discontent with "such a want of style—such old-fashioned rooms," etc., soon discovered to him, not only his mistake, but, sadder still, opened his eyes to that inherent want of tenderness which, in some hearts, can invest even inanimate objects with associations and memories that impart to them almost the vitality of life. Thus, she never rested until she induced her husband to sell the old house and furniture, and buy one more in accordance with her taste, and commensurate with her position.

We have said that Nellie was high-spirited and dominating; and a purpose once conceived, never allowed her to rest until her end was accomplished. She studied her husband closely, and learned all his weak points, and was not long in discovering that she possessed the most dominant will, if not the stronger mind also. The truth was, that through the remorse this man had suffered for his tyranny over his first wife, he had grown softer and more pliant, and thus lived in dread of repeating the same errors a second time. Nellie had discovered this weakness, hence, she seized the reins, and used her power cautiously, circumspectly, but always with success. The error which was greatest in her, and for which Mr. Stewart could find no palliation, was her total indifference to her dead sister's children. Whilst her own were pampered with every luxury, humored in every whim, and petted and caressed unceasingly, those motherless little ones were left entirely to the care of servants; their wants neglected, and their poor little hearts never taught to feel the love and dependence which only a mother's care can invoke. Mr. Stewart redoubled his own affection and attentions, and this elicited a complaint from his wife, that "her poor little ones were looked upon as dependants and interlopers."

One day, at dinner, when Mr. Stewart had asked the waiter to hand him some particular dish, he was terribly shocked and pained by seeing upon her finger an emerald ring which had belonged to Kate, and which she greatly prized as a gift from him in the early part of their marriage. Sending the servant out of the room on some plea, he turned to his wife, and asked her with great agitation in his voice, what it meant. She coolly replied, that "the girl had been very faithful; that she wanted to give her something that morning; and as the ring was at hand, and of no very great intrinsic value, she thought it would answer the purpose." Mr. Stewart, in the face of such heartlessness, could neither speak nor finish his dinner, but left the table, called the girl in the hall, and telling her that his wife had made a mistake in giving her the ring, handed her ten dollars, and got it in his own possession. He next went up stairs, opened the drawer that contained the estate of Kate's jewels, which he had confided to his wife in trust for his children,

took it out, and placed it safely under lock and key in the secret drawer of his secretary.

At first, Mrs. Stewart took quite an interest in her handsome new home, but ere long she became too much engrossed by her position and calls in fashionable life to pay much attention to domestic details, save to see that its style and adornment were always *comme il faut*. As it was necessary to have some show of religion before the world, and the Unitarian Church was frequented by the literary elite *par excellence*, the service short, and preaching good, the chief object of the minister being mainly to interest his hearers, and never by any chance to shock their sensibilities by hard and unwelcome truths—under these considerations, Mrs. Stewart took a few therein, and managed to attend one service on Sundays. Attendance at such an assembly as this was a mere pleasant pastime, and conscience slept easy under the lull. A few Catholic families had made the acquaintance of Mrs. Stewart, either induced thereto by a previous feeling of interest in her sister, or by the accident of meeting her in society, and being won by her beauty, and charming, graceful manners. Among the number were several members of a very staunch Catholic family, who, at first, were inclined to visit her apostasy by a decided negative of their presence, but who, ultimately, won over by her fascinations, consented to cultivate her, hoping that there might yet be some germ of the old faith left in her heart, which, under proper influences, would blossom into fruit.

CHAPTER VI.

Over vine-clad hills, through lovely valleys, teeming with the cereal blooms of our Western lands you passed, to reach the house of Mr. Miller, the head of the family above alluded to. The situation was a beautiful one, abounding in splendid scenery and many picturesque points, which were a constant source of delight to the many visitors that frequented this hospitable home, particularly during the summer months.

Mrs. Stewart had been invited, with a few other friends, to make Ellerslie a visit, and as everything appertaining to country life was a novelty to her, she gladly accepted the invitation. After several days of great enjoyment, passed in visiting many of the surrounding picturesque scenes, the family and guests were seated in the evening around a bountiful and appetizing supper, combining country rarities, with city luxuries, when a discussion ensued as to the programme for the amusements of the next day. Each one proposed a plan, without, however, eliciting any very warm response, when, finally, Mr. Miller, turning to Mrs. Stewart, asked:

"If there were any Shaker settlements in Louisiana?"

"No, indeed," replied she, "we are far too conservative down there, for any of those new fads and fies to take root. Our people have the reputation of being far behind their Northern brethren in intellectual culture, and all political, practical, and scientific development, and I won't say that they are not. But, I think, there is reason to rejoice, when you see such a steady repulsion to all moral and religious innovations as we have displayed, and such a brave adherence to the older and safer principles of those statutes upon which the security of the social life and family circle depends."

"That is true," said Mrs. Harvey, a young married lady, and sister of Mrs. Miller, who had spent several winters in New Orleans. "But, if the savans and philosophers are not particularly cultivated, the muses and graces most assuredly are. There is no Northern city that furnishes so many opportunities for elevating the tastes of the lower classes, by public entertainments, such as grand church ceremonies, imposing military parades, solemn and impressive funeral processions, and the kaleidoscopic pictures of the Carnival season. There, too, Flora reigns supreme in public square and private garden; and almost every landholder manages to afford a patch of ground to be devoted to her honor; whilst here, the money value of every inch regulates the taste, and sacrifices beauty and refinement to utility and gain. But, above all, you can enjoy such a feast of music in New Orleans, surpassed only in Europe; for it is the only city in the United States that can and does support a full operatic company for six months in the year. To go to that city," continued Mrs. Harvey, now quite warmed by her subject, "of genial climate, warm, loving, and generous hearts, from one of the cold Puritanical towns of the North, is, indeed, like exchanging the dismal fogs of London for the glorious valleys of the Rhine-land."

"Now," here interrupted her brother, "Rosa is off on one of her rhapsodies, and if she is not stopped, we will never get our programme settled for to-morrow."

"True enough," said Mrs. Stewart; "and that reminds me, Mr. Miller, that you were asking about the Shakers, and it occurs to me that I have heard, indirectly, that there was a colony of those people somewhere in Ohio. Is it so?"

"Just what I was going to propose, Mrs. Stewart, when the question proved such a prolific suggestion of apotheosis for your beloved Southern land. There is," continued Mr. Miller, "a Shaker settlement about twelve miles from this point, and, if the company are agreed, we will settle all further discussion, and make a visit there to-morrow."

"Oh, that will be charming!" cried all in one voice.

"But," said Mrs. Miller, "Louis, the carriage and buggy will not hold us all."

"Well," answered her husband, "then we can press the two riding horses into service, and as Rosa is always ready and eager to play equestrian, she, I know, will be delighted to ride one way, and if tired, can exchange seats with one of the ladies coming home."

"As early as 1836 there had been transplanted from Germany and England into the States of New York and Massachusetts the doctrines of the 'Free Start' and 'Perfectionism,' both of which embraced the 'Spiritual Wife' theory. Mormonism and Millerism were also, at that period, in their incipient stage of progress."

So it was all settled, and the party returned to the parlor and galleries to pass the evening. After some music from Mrs. Harvey, who was an accomplished vocalist, the conversation turned upon the sect they were so curious to see; and Mrs. Stewart, taking her seat by Mr. Miller, begged him for some information regarding their origin and peculiar tenets.

"This sect," replied Mr. Miller, "originated, I believe, in Lancashire, England, and was a split from the Quakers. They claimed the power of seeing visions and working miracles. Their ascetic and priestess was Ann Lee, a woman described as being coarse, vulgar, and ignorant. She had the blasphemous effrontery to call herself the Woman of the Revelation, in whom the Divinity dwelt, as it did in our Saviour, Jesus Christ; and she claimed the power of discerning spirits, and of being endowed with the gifts of miracles and tongues. Her followers still maintain, according to their book, that 'she travels for the whole world, and that no blessing can descend to any person except by and through her.' She was said to be a prodigal woman, but this, I believe, is an open question. At all events, between fanaticism and doubtful morality of her doctrines, she, with her followers, were driven by the civil authorities from Manchester, and they sought an asylum in America in 1774. After several years of patient waiting, success began to attend them, and they made various settlements as their numbers increased in different parts of the country, where they have formed themselves into societies on the communistic principles, and are certainly industrious, economical, and very harmless. Of many of their peculiarities, of their social life, and religious customs, you will be better able to judge when you visit them; and the fact of their numbers being always increased from the more ignorant classes is proof that a fanatical, rather than an enlightened spirit influences them. They have no books in their establishments, except the Bible, and such as treats of their own doctrines; hence, there is very little chance of their ever attaining a higher doctrine or wider information. And now, as we must make an early start in the morning, and I have several preliminary matters to arrange, I must bid you all good night," saying which, Mr. Miller left the room, and his example was soon followed by the others, who expressed themselves ready for a good sleep.

The sun rose gloriously, and gave promise of a lovely day. The carriages were filled, and Mrs. Harvey, with a riding skirt slipped over her dress, and a velvet riding cap to keep her hair in place—as a bonnet never will do—mounted Grey Eagle; and, in company with her husband, whose escort she always preferred, followed the carriages.

The road over which the route lay was picturesque in the extreme, alternating in hill and valley, river and wood; whilst trailing vines of grape and ivy, unbraced trees of oak, maple, and chestnut, made the ride one of ceaseless beauty and interest.

After leaving a branch of the Miami river, which elicited many expressions of fear from Mrs. Stewart and Mrs. Wheeler, both of whom said that they "infinitely preferred traveling through water by steam rather than by horses," they reached a retired, shady lane, bounded on either side by bushes of crimson slumage, tall spires of golden rod, trailing vines of black-berry, white with blossoms, all interspersed with large locust trees, the flowers of which made the air redolent with their perfume.

From this lane, they emerged upon a macadamized road that looked as if it had been freshly swept and sanded, and which was beautified by large orchards on either side, laden with green fruit. This, Mrs. Miller informed them, was the farm owned and worked by the Shakers. In a few minutes, several buildings appeared in a row; first, a large barn, capacious enough to hold an Egyptian harvest; then, the meeting-house, and, next it, a large dwelling, which was divided so as to hold two separate families. They were all of brick, plainly but substantially built.

Mr. and Mrs. Miller, having visited the settlement on previous occasions, were well acquainted with the principal members of the society; and "the men" had exchanged samples of grain or grafts of fruit trees whenever a wish was expressed to have them; and as Mr. Miller cultivated his farm according to horticultural rules, the Shakers were very glad to get some ideas from him on the subject.

They knocked at the front door, which was opened by a large woman, dressed in brown stuff, with a yellow cotton handkerchief crossed on her bosom, and a white cap, similar to those worn by the Quakers, upon her head. She at once recognized Mrs. Miller, and invited the party to walk in, not, however, with smiles of cordial welcome, but with a solemn gravity of manner that denoted the performance of a duty rather than a pleasure. From a door on the opposite side of the hall appeared, at the same moment, a man, with hair closely cut, a la convict, and dressed in a suit of brown, similar to the cut worn by the Quakers. He took charge of the gentlemen of the party, and seemed in great haste to get them separated from the ladies. They were ushered into a room where an old woman sat, darning stockings. There were two beds, a table, and some chairs, and everything denoted the extreme of order and cleanliness. All floors in the house were bare, and, instead of being kept clean by scrubbing, were waxed and polished until they were almost as bright as mahogany.

The ladies, expressing a desire to walk in what looked like a garden, from the window, were told to do so; and just as they opened the door, the dinner bell sounded, and a long procession of women, all dressed alike, walking by twos, with their hands folded over their breasts, filled the hall, and went down a staircase to the basement dining-room. These were followed in the same order by the men, who emerged from the opposite side. The women numbered somewhere between twenty and thirty; the men, not so many. In age, they ranged from twenty-five to sixty; though there was one man among them who might have been from his general appearance, upward of eighty years. What particularly struck the visitors was the unhealthy, cadaverous

countenances of the women, and the total want of intellectual, spiritual, or happy sensations expressed therein.

When the ladies reached the garden, they were struck by the absence of all flowers, save a few sweet rose bushes. There was an abundance of vegetables, and all kinds of savory herbs, and bushes of the smaller fruits, and everything was in the most perfect order.

When they returned to the house, Mrs. Harvey, who was a great lover of flowers, asked the old woman, who still sat where they had left her, "how it was that they had no flowers in their garden?"

"Because," she replied, "they are devotees of the enemy to pamper the dwellers of Sodom."

Mrs. Harvey, not caring to enter into an argument, which this personal compliment almost provoked, said:

"But, mother, you have roses, and we consider the rose the queen of flowers."

"Yes," replied the old woman, "we raise roses because they are of use for medicinal and kitchen purposes; but we don't waste our time in growing anything that is not useful, but give our hands to labor, and our thoughts to God."

The gentlemen, in the meanwhile, were being entertained on the other side of the house, by the man who received them. Leaving them alone for a while, they were somewhat startled and amused by a scene which they at first took to be a religious ceremony, but which proved to be only the result of a habit of self-communing. An old man entered the room, and, without noticing the guests, walked straight up to a table, placed his hands on it, fixed his eyes on the opposite wall, and said, in a loud, commanding voice: "Knife, where art thou?" repeating this adjuration three times, with a pause between each louder tone. After a sufficient interval to allow the knife thus adjured to discover its whereabouts, he suddenly clasped his hands upon his head, and exclaimed: "Ah, I mind me now; I left it sticking in the trough over old Billy!" saying which, he left the room, still oblivious of the presence of others.

"Old Billy" was presumed by the gentlemen to be one of the farm horses; and they were greatly amused by this burst of Shaker eloquence and peculiar exemplification of the "yea and nay" doctrine.

The party were next invited into another room, for dinner, and found Mrs. Miller's description of the abundant variety and delightful cuisine of these people more than realized. There was no effort at style—everything was put on the table at one time; but the cleanliness, savoriness of the viands, and good appetites of the guests, induced by their long ride and fresh air, made it seem to them like a feast of Lucullus. Upon hearing Mrs. Harvey complain of a bad headache, a cup of delightful tea was at once brought to her.

They were waited upon by a young woman of about twenty-five years, who must have been a novice, for her countenance was not yet broken into that rayless expression that marked the others; and the twinkle in her eye, as she watched the ladies, listened to their conversation, and scanned their tablets, spoke an interest in the things of Sodom not yet quite extinguished in her soul.

After dinner, they were taken to the kitchen, to examine the various conveniences for making easy the large amount of preserving, pickling, and drying, that these people put up for the city markets.

Mrs. Harvey and Mrs. Stewart had gone over to the opposite side, to examine a bread-making machine, and were followed by two young women, who made good use of the opportunity thus afforded them of gratifying their curiosity and venting their long suppressed native hilarity. Every portion of the ladies' dress was scanned and questioned with a curious amount of interest.

Mrs. Stewart wore upon her neck a gold chain, to which a heart and cross were attached. One of the young women examined it closely, and said, with a strange expression between curiosity and fear:

"You are a Catholic, I know."

"Oh, you think so," replied Mrs. Stewart, looking somewhat abashed, "because you see the cross; but this ornament is the fashion, now, and even Unitarian ladies wear it; and they don't even believe in the Divinity of our Lord."

Then the arrangement of their "worldly jocks" was next examined; but, above all, and what afforded the most amusement, was the *tournaire*, then the rage in its most exaggerated form.

"Why, goodness me!" exclaimed both, "what are those lumps upon your backs?"

They were explained, but evidently failed to convince these rustics of their beauty or utility.

"Why," said one, "I guess if you saw somebody born with one of those things, you would think them very ugly. You had better do like us, and be content to wear nature only." Saying which, she turned herself round, to show the symmetry of the Shaker figure, divested of all artificial adornments.

The ladies laughed heartily at this simplicity, and left the kitchen, to visit, alternately, the butter and cheese rooms, the broom-making department, and the weaving rooms. Here the hand looms were worked by women; and one of them explained the process, and threw the shuttle back and forth with the rapidity of a machine. She was weaving a very pretty silk handkerchief of rose color—the silk and dyeing all their own production.

the orphan children of a relative of one of the members of the society, who, in dying, left them to their care.

These people look upon marriage as a deadly sin; and when asked how the world is to be populated, they replied:

"If the Lord needs children, He will raise them from stones."

So, the myth of Deucalion and Pyrrha still finds believers in the nineteenth century.

The bell for the afternoon service ringing just then, the ladies begged Mrs. Miller to request permission for them to witness the proceedings; but she felt some hesitation in doing so, as she knew that, owing to the insulting behavior of strangers on different occasions, they had determined to exclude them in the future from their services. One of the sisters, however, joining them at this moment, Mrs. Miller preferred the request; and thought at first there was some hesitation, she finally said:

"Well, as you seem to be nice, decent people, and no ways noisy, I reckon you may come in."

So they followed her to the church. It was a large room, or hall, with the centre entirely bare. A table and a chair stood at the upper end, and along the sides were arranged wooden benches, upon which the society were seated. The visitors were given the same kind of seats, at the end of the room.

After an interval of perfect silence, during which they sat like statues, one of the men, a deacon, took his place at the table, and recited a prayer, very much in the usual form of invocation to God. This concluded, there was another long period of silence, when, finally, a number of men and women, being simultaneously moved by the spirit, arose and took their places in the middle of the room, very much after the fashion of forming a cotion. They stood there, like automatons, for several minutes, when, presently, one of the women gave a sudden start, rolled her eyes wildly about, and cried out, in a loud voice:

"Mother Ann says you must do this," at the same time moving her feet in a sort of a shuffle, and shaking one hand and arm like one struck with the palsy.

All on the floor at once took up this motion, and as the dance went on, each one, by turns, became moved by the spirit of Mother Ann, and turned and twisted and gyrated their bodies like substances under the control of a powerful magnetic battery. The nervous excitement grew more and more intense; their eyes became dilated, the muscles of the face contorted, and a perfect frenzy of motion seemed to possess each one. When it was at its height, one of the young women fell upon the floor in strong convulsions. She was at once rescued from the death, where she would have been trampled to death, by one of the sisters who had not been moved by the spirit; not, however, with the least appearance of sympathy or tenderness, but merely taking hold of her under the arm pits, she dragged her senseless body across the room and sat her up against the wall, where she was left to kick and writhe until the spirit of Mother Ann should see proper to relieve her of her presence. One after another fell in like manner, and were similarly treated.

Mrs. Harvey, who was extremely nervous and impressionable, had become very sick and faint at the sight of the first victim in this revolting system, and was obliged to be assisted by her husband from the room. The rest of the party, having seen enough, soon followed, and as soon as Mrs. Harvey was sufficiently recovered, prepared to start for home. Two of the society had followed them out, and to them they expressed their thanks for the hospitality and pleasure derived from the visit, and bidding adieu, they took their seats and whirled rapidly homeward.

CHAPTER VII.

Our party were nearly all too much fatigued to rise very early the next morning, so the breakfast hour was deferred, and one by one they assembled, each in a subdued, quiet frame of mind, until a cup of Mrs. Miller's delightful coffee, with its accompaniment of rich cream, loosened their tongues and enlivened their spirits.

Mr. Ramsay, Mrs. Miller's brother, opened the conversation by bantering Mrs. Harvey on the susceptibility of her nerves, in comparison with those of the other ladies, who stood the scene so bravely.

"It was not simply the physical shock, George," replied Mrs. Harvey, "that so unnerved me; but far more the effect of the mental reflections induced by the scene. To see human beings endowed with so many excellent qualities, who really are anxious to do what is right and acceptable to God—the majority of whose lives we must, in charity, believe to be harmless and pure—to see such persons, and in such numbers too, so pervert the teachings of the gospel as to believe that by turning themselves into dancing Dervishes, and injuring their bodies that they may thereby save their souls, is indeed saddening, and I must confess, turned the very soul within me sick."

"Why, Mrs. Harvey," said Mrs. Wheeler, a woman with a noble heart and fine mind, but which had been perverted by the influence of an infidel father, and a dangerous course of reading; "I am sure that the religious orders of your Church, by their penances, do quite as much to injure the health as do these poor fanatics."

"You are entirely mistaken, Mrs. Wheeler; because, in the first place, with us, such a practise is neither a system nor an obligation, but an individual, voluntary act, predicated upon the teachings of St. Paul and the experience of the saints, who 'chastise the body that they may subdue the spirit.' But every religious understands that it is deemed a greater sin to injure the physical health by such excesses than it would be to omit such discipline altogether. It is true that there have been individual instances of this kind of mistaken zeal, but they have never been endorsed by the Church. Neither do our penitents, like those deluded Shakers, exhibit their works, but perform in secret, as commanded, so that He who seeth in secret may reward them."

Just then one of Mrs. Miller's children ran in, shouting:

(To Be Continued.)