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A Selected Tale.

THE IMMORTAL FOUNTAIN.

Or the Travels of two Sisters to the Fountain of Beauty.

BY THE REV. R. EDLESTON,

Minister of Albion Chapel, Leeds.

"Without a parable spake he not unto them."

As they travelled along Aucune related the adventure, and told how she had been deceived, and what an awful night she had passed, and how she was delivered, and how the notes of the silver trumpet had directed her to them. "I knew," said the Wise Man, with exultation, that "my trumpet of Truth, would bring her to us, if I could cause the sounds to be heard by her! She is not the first poor soul that it has saved; and by the blessing of God, it shall always be exercised in behalf of such lost and erring creatures." In a short time they arrived at the Wise Man's, and after partaking of a feast that had been provided to commemorate the happy deliverance of Aucune, the sisters departed on the morrow, to their father's who who was astonished at the adventure, and thankful for the safety of his daughter.

When the circumstances were known, all the neighborhood was filled with gratitude to the Lord, that he had so mercifully preserved Aucune; for they all now began to look upon her as a pleasant and good sister; and she, as may be supposed, was delighted to perceive the estimation in which she was held by those who previously had shunned her.

Her time passed happily on, and the six months were soon over. And as she was reflecting what had passed since she was in the spiritual world, the Lord again opened the eyes of her spirit; and the same good angel stood before her, and with a smile of welcome, led the way to the Gate of Obedience. The angels there congratulated her with a kiss; and to the astonishment of Aucune, they seemed more lovely, and their robes more beautiful, than ever. As she went into the lofty hall, she was still more powerfully impressed with the beauty of every thing she saw. The walls were of pure alabaster, and numerous figures of gentle beasts and birds curiously wrought upon them. The roof was of cedar wood, richly carved, and supported by pillars of porphyry. The light descended through a dome, and had a rich mellowness, and what was remarkable, it seemed to be living, and look like living golden light; and as its beautiful rays played upon the walls, it created wonderful images, that portrayed the state and character of the affections and thought of the angels. "Astounding!" exclaimed Aucune in her first surprise. And turning to the angels, she enquired "why all things were so beautiful to-day?" "O," said they, "we enjoy all these wonderful and beautiful sights every day!" "But," said Aucune, "they are very different from what they were when I last saw them!" "Very likely," said the angels; "but then, you know, you did not love your sister; now that was wicked; and wickedness causes a dense mist to rise over the mind, which distorts and perverts the loveliest of objects, and thus true beauty becomes complete ugliness to the wicked!" "Oh how many glorious sights I must have lost by my wickedness and folly!" thought Aucune. And with this conviction she determined henceforth to avoid all evil, and particularly all desire to injure her sister.

In a short time she was clothed with heavenly garments, and to her surprise they were as beautiful as any of those which the angels had on! The black spots and filthy appearance were entirely gone; and in addition to what she was before clothed with, there was given to her a garland of sweet flowers, which was placed upon her head, by a majestic being of superlative beauty and glory, who informed her, that that was a symbol of the crown of life, and the badge of sisterhood of that heaven. And thus she proceeded on the path of Beauty. It seemed as if there was no necessity for a guide, for the way appeared perfectly familiar; but, notwithstanding, an angelic band bore her company, and directed by the star of knowledge, they rapidly proceeded with their journey.

They travelled on, delighted with each other and every thing they saw, until they came to another gate, composed of solid shining silver,

so brilliant that they could scarcely look upon it, and over the top was written "The Gate of Duty." "Here we must part with you," said the angels, "we cannot live in that land, for it is much more glorious, and more holy than ours. In our own land we are happy, and our cup even runneth over with blessings, but our spirits are not fit to breathe that purer air; and so for the present we must bid you adieu!" Aucune was surprised at this, but said nothing, for she was anxious to get to the Fountain. The angels then gave her an affectionate kiss, and turned away; while Aucune boldly ran up the steps and knocked loudly at the gate. Almost instantly it was opened by a glorious being in shining white; and Aucune entered. She told her errand, and the angel said, "you shall proceed immediately." And in a little time a company of heavenly beings came to her, and signified that they were ready; Aucune soon accompanied them, but they had not proceeded far, before she felt a similar oppression upon her head, to that she felt when she was obliged to return before. She knew its meaning, and bursting into tears, said, "Am I not pure enough yet to go to the Immortal Fountain?" "We would gladly take you, dear sister," said an angel, "but it would destroy you if we did, until you can breathe with pleasure, the air of our heaven." "What must I now do?" asked Aucune, almost with despair. "You must again change your motives;" said the angels, "hitherto you have done good and avoided evil, not from a sense that it is a duty you owe to God, and to your fellow-mortals, but that you might acquire some selfish good. At first you wished to be beautiful, that you might deprive Chacune of her neighbor's love and praise, and then you wished to be beautiful, that you might share them with her. Now cannot you see, that in both these motives, there is something very selfish, particularly in the first? You must, therefore, return to your world, and do no evil, not simply because it has been commanded, nor yet to avoid any misery or punishment; for the one is blind obedience, and the other selfish fear; but you must cease to do evil, because it is a sin against God, and an injury to your brethren.— You will thus gradually lose sight of self in your inward motives, and do good because it is of God, and for your neighbors' benefit." They then bid her be of good cheer, and trust in the Lord, and all the difficulties of the task would, in time, be overcome. "Return to the world for twelve months, and at the end of that time, you shall come to us again," said they, and parted with the usual kiss.

At first Aucune felt great difficulty in banishing all idea of reward from her mind. But, in time, by constant attention to her motives, she found it was possible to "do good hoping for nothing again." She ceased to make any more bargains with God, by saying, that, if he would make her beautiful by permitting her to bathe in the Immortal Fountain, she would be kind to Chacune, and good to all. She was gradually led to see that it was a right, a duty we owe to each other, to do no evil either in thought, affection or deed; and thus that we are placed in this world to learn to contribute our mite to the treasury of human usefulness and human good, so that we may all have a common right to human happiness.

After repeated trials, the good Providence of God once again opened her spiritual sight, and she was conducted through the Gate of Obedience, to the Gate of Duty; and on this occasion its grandeur and magnificence had become heightened to a wonderful degree. It shone as if ten thousands rays of the noonday sun had concentrated themselves, and were consolidated into the form of a gate, Aucune knocked, and at the solicitation of the angel in shining white, entered; and as she looked around and beheld the astonishing grandeur of the place, she trembled, lest anything should be injured by contact with her. She was first struck with the mighty intensity of the light; for it seemed to her, as if she was placed in the midst of a diamond, on which all the glittering rays of a thousand suns were shining. And, strange as it may seem, it was not painful, but wonderfully exhilarating and delightful! And the heat that was with it elevated and sanctified her whole soul; for it was spiritual heat, that could warm the heart, and kindle up the best affections, and produce a reverence and veneration for everything around. The angels robed her in pure shining white garments, and set out upon their journey.

Aucune had noticed a strange peculiarity in the circumstance of the persons of the angels, and the scenery of heaven becoming more beautiful and interesting at each succeeding visit. On a little reflection, however, she perceived that the change was in herself, for in that spirit-world all things have an immediate correspondence with its inhabitants. Every thought and affection of angels takes up an external objective form; and thus all that is seen in heaven, is the outbirth and reflex of angelic minds. Each angel, therefore, sees himself portrayed upon all that surrounds him. Every beast and every bird, yea every object that is beheld, is thus made a mirror to reflect the inward souls of the angels, upon their external senses, so that they cannot possibly mistake their equality!— This is one reason why angels are so singularly happy; for there is a continual harmony and correspondence between their state and external objects. No annoyances or difficulties or troubles can possibly take place with them; for the desires of the mind flow forth into external objects, and provide, as it were, for their own wants. Here is the reason too, why Heaven is so glorious, and hell so monstrous; for goodness and virtue are the soul of real beauty; so that the beauty of heaven is the reflection of the beauty of angels. And wickedness and vice are the essence of all deformity and misery; so that that the dreadfulness of hell, is the outbirth of the wickedness of the sinner. Just, therefore, as Aucune's state improved, did all that

she beheld become more beautiful and delightful. She was gradually brought into a pure angelic state, and then she could breathe the air of heaven, and associate with its purer inhabitants. And, so they journeyed on, they beheld each other's state, and wish, and life, and glory reflected before their eyes; so that each enjoyed his own and others pleasures, and in blessing others they become blessed altogether.

"They saw beautiful palaces on their way, some were of polished marble, with steps of alabaster in front and at the sides were pillars of jasper supporting rainbow roofs. Within these colonnades were angels walking two and two, with long flowing robes of shining white, like those that the woman saw the angels clothed with at the sepulchre of the Lord. The companions of Aucune told her "That those and all angels, had once been inhabitants of the natural world, but, having made their spirit perfect by the Divine assistance, they were transported from earth to Heaven, to live in everlasting bliss.

Aucune was walking on in silence, contemplating the remarkable instruction of the angels when she heard the faint notes of music. It came nearer and nearer, and gradually it seemed to emanate from every palace and every angel in heaven! It was a hymn of praise to the Great Creator and the song was this:—

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,
Which was, and is, and is to come!
Thou art worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor, and power;
For thou hast created all things,
And for thy pleasure, they are, and were created!"

Aucune, almost unconsciously, echoed the loud swelling song; for it was in unison with the chord that was most awakened in her heart. As soon as the music had ceased, and she had in some measure recovered from her surprise, she asked the meaning of such general praise. "These are glorifications," said the angels, "They are frequently heard in heaven, and are indication of the strong perceptions of the goodness of the Lord, which the angels sometimes feel. We are made sensible of the benevolence and mercy of God, and in humble thankfulness for all His mercies, we simultaneously burst forth into songs of adoration and gratitude.— Heaven then rings with the praise of God!"

They still progressed and talked about these wonderful things; and at every step new wonders appeared; at last they arrived at another gate, still more beautiful than either of the others, and made of solid gold. Over the top was written in letters of shining gold, "The Gate of Love." As soon as Aucune saw it, she felt a presentiment that she would not be able to pass, and involuntarily cried, "not yet!" "Not yet!" was echoed from within the portal.— "Not yet." She started, and was turning away, sadly dejected with her repeated failures, when the gate was opened, and a company of the sweetest beings ever mortal saw, clad in rich white robes, appeared, and invited her to them. As she was approaching, another company in the gate sang a song of condolence; and all the music she had ever heard was as nothing to it; the words were as follows:—

Young immortal, never fear,
Courage take, and go
Fill thy soul with love's sincere,
While on earth below.

Then through this gate of glory,
Thou shalt enter in
To realms of joy so holy,
Pure and free from sin!

Aucune felt inwardly delighted with this assurance of yet seeing the Fountain of Beauty; and felt that it would, indeed, be a fountain of joy to her. The angels all kissed her, and emboldened by their kindness, she entreated them to say what she lacked, to fit her to proceed through their land to the Fountain. "Thou must know, sweet immortal," said one, who seemed to be the personation of love itself, "that our's is the land of love. Here we do every thing from love, and not from a mere sense of duty; for in motives of duty we perceive something of constraint and servitude. They, therefore, who are in this state look upon God as a good Master, and themselves as His servants; and we love to regard Him as our Father, and ourselves as His children. Thou must go, then, immortal," continued the angel, "to thy world again, and make what has hitherto been a duty, a delight and a pleasure. Thou must learn to hate evil, and shun it because it is contrary to God, and the good of thy fellows; and thou must do good because it is good, and of God, and the unconstrained choice of thy soul. Thou must neither let fear drive thee from evil, nor the hope of reward, either in the life of the body or in that of thy spirit, cause thee to do good; but thou must do it, from the sincere and pure love of virtue itself; so shalt thou, in time, return to us, and pass on to the Fountain of Beauty."

The angels walked down the steps with her, and gave her the usual kiss, and hid her be of good courage. They stood affectionately gazing after her, and waving their handkerchiefs in the breeze, by way of encouragement, until they were closed from her view. Aucune returned to the world almost afraid, that, after all, she would not be able to bathe in the Fountain. "Hope not for the Fountain!" said the same mysterious still small voice, that had, more than once, taught her what to do in cases of trouble. She felt that it was a warning from heaven, but she was at a loss to understand it; "hope not for the Fountain!" said she to herself, with surprise, and thus she kept pondering and turning it over for many days.

In great distress of mind she wandered to the shady grotto, and prayed to be enlightened; and while she prayed the heavens opened, and an angel descended and stood before her. "Let not thy soul be disturbed," said she, "but rather rejoice that thou art able to see thy difficulty; for it is one that eludes the sight of thousands. Thou must henceforth cease to hope for the Fountain as an end of life, and go to Chacune, and she will instruct thee further." And as he thus said, he suddenly departed out of her sight. Aucune still felt disturbed, and imme-

diately sought Chacune, and told her all that had occurred, and implored her to tell her what to do. "Dear sister," said Chacune, "you have followed goodness hitherto, merely to prepare you to go to the Fountain of Beauty; now you must hereafter desire the Fountain for the purpose of leading you to goodness. What you have, up to this time, made the end, you must now regard as the means, and the means must hereafter be the end. Goodness and virtue should be the principal end up to a certain period of regeneration, but afterwards it must become merely the means to a higher and holier one, which is goodness. Learn, then, my dear sister, to understand well the true ends of human life, and without hoping for, you shall have blessings. Endeavor to make this change in your mind, and the barrier will become an assistance to the higher object you shall have in view!"

The sisters walked, in a meditative mood, into their father's beautiful garden; one was wrapped in profound thought concerning the interior wisdom that the angel and her sister had taught her, the other was hoping for the ultimate success of her sister, and meditating on the means she should adopt to assist her. In a short time they were aroused from their thoughts by the approach of their father, who informed them that the Wise Man of the Hill had come, and wished to see them. "Run and welcome him," said Aucune, "and I will go and gather a little fruit, for he will be fatigued with the journey." And away she bounded to the orchard and plucked the finest fruit she could find, while Chacune and her father went to entertain their visitor.

As soon as Aucune entered, the old gentleman, informed them of a dreadful occurrence that had taken place. He said, "as I was riding with my servants, not far from the district where we found you in the forest, Aucune, we met a boy, shivering with cold, and his face covered with blood. On enquiry we found, that his father and mother, and two sisters, and himself, had mistaken their way; and while in the act of retracing their steps, they were met by a woman, probably the same that led you astray, who told them to follow her, and she would lead them to a place of safety. Little thinking who they were following, they cheerfully obeyed, and were led on from one place to another until night set in; when a dreadful storm arose; and while in the midst of it, a faint light appeared, which they followed, and found it led to a cave, from which proceeded the noise of revelry and boisterous joy. The man refused at first to enter, but the storm was raging with awful fury; the lightning flashed among the trees, and the thunder rolled, and the wind roared, and the rain fell in torrents; and looking round upon his shivering and fatigued family, he at last consented. It so happened that the boy carried a little behind from weariness; and before he could arrive, a massive gate was drawn across the mouth of the cave, and shut him out, and his parents and sisters in. As soon as the gate was drawn, an infernal shout of delight proceeded from thousands of voices, and the noise and revelry increased! The youth was terrified, and fled from the place, not knowing whither, and wandered about in the forest, and more than once was struck with falling trees, that caused the blood to flow down his innocent face, and filled his soul with terror.

As soon as we found him, and heard his story, we judged that it would be the cave of the furies into which they had been allured, and we hastened thither, peradventure we might rescue them. On our arrival, we heard moans proceeding from within, which was indication that some one was still living. We sounded our trumpet of truth, that they might know that help was at hand, and setting ourselves vigorously to work, we very soon found out a crevice in the rock, through which we all entered as quickly as possible. But it was not until the furies had taken alarm; before we had all fairly got into the cave, we were obliged to draw our swords and fight the infernal hosts! The conflict was severe at first, but not long; for when manfully assailed the furies are complete cowards! and we drove them before us, and finally they descended through the earth, and fled by a subterraneous passage, and left us in entire possession of the cave. We were directed to the man and his family by their moans, and to our joy, we found they were still living, but much more than half dead. We broke down the gate, and endeavored to destroy the cave, and brought the unfortunate creatures to the light, and examined their wounds, and poured in oil and wine, and set them on our horses; and now, I am happy to say, they are at my house doing well!" The two sisters and their father were well pleased with the success of the Wise Man, and desired to return with him that they might see the family.

On their arrival, Aucune was filled with anxiety to render them some assistance; for she remembered the night of horror she had passed under similar circumstances. She stayed a whole week, and never left them night or day. At the end of that time they were so far recovered, as to be able to go on their way towards the city of Contentment; where they soon arrived, thankful to God, for having raised up so great a deliverance from so great a danger into which they had fallen.

Well prepared for heaven by these acts of kindness she was admitted into the association of angels; and as she approached the magnificent Gate of Gold, a glorious being came out and met her, and fell upon her neck, and embraced her, and kissed her. Their countenances bespoke incessant love, and they were filled with extreme joy; which strongly reminds me of the joy, which the Lord declares there is in heaven, over every repentant sinner. The robes of the angels were so beautiful, as almost to surpass, even a faint description. They were white with the purest light, and shone as

if some brilliant flame burned within, and all were bound together by a girdle of rich purple velvet. So perfectly did they fit their bodies, that there seemed not a single fold out of its place. Around their heads were wreaths of fragrant delicate flowers, which never lost their odors and here and there a ruby sent forth its beautiful reflected light; and behind each ear, every one had an olive leaf. As Aucune entered every angel manifested the utmost delight, and welcomed her as a sister; and a choir of voices from within, raised their harmonious voices and sung,

Enter, enter, young immortal,
Through celestial golden portal;
Welcome to our land of love,
Welcome to the realms above!
Sweetly shall the fountain flow,
On thee rich blessings bestow;
Sister angel passion, pass on!

She was immediately clad with similar robes; and one tall majestic glorious being, who seemed to be the prince of the company, came to her, and placed behind her ear, the olive leaf; and said, "this is the badge of our heaven, and by it we acknowledge you as our sister; come now to the Immortal Fountain; for the barriers are all passed; peace and tranquillity shall henceforth be your companions; joy and gladness shall forever attend you, and we will be your protecting friends." They all departed, and it is impossible to describe the beauty of the flowers, and the sweetness of their odours, and the glory of the light, and the purity of the atmosphere, and the happiness of that heaven, for to mortals they are ineffable! There was one object, however, the most wonderful and glorious of any she had yet seen, it was God clothed, as it were, with the sun! and from whom proceeded light, which illuminated all heaven with its glory; and on the appearance of his Divine Majesty, all angels prostrated themselves in humble adoration.

As they travelled, in a little time the murmuring of the waters were heard, and a thrill of delight passed through the soul of Aucune. She ascended the beautiful Mount of Innocence, on which it stood, and there before her lay the waters in the form of a lake, from the centre of which they rose up into the air, and fell gently upon the service. Angels were bathing their beautiful forms; and Aucune ran up and looked in, and saw the face of one beaming with joy and beauty, which seemed to be looking at her from within the water! And, as she continued to admire this lovely countenance, her sister Chacune came joyfully up, and kissed her, and in tones of exultation and pleasure, said, "O, my beloved Aucune! long, long have I wished to behold you standing upon the brink of these blessed waters, so that I could show you how beautiful you are! 'Look there,' said she, pointing to the face in the water, 'look there, and behold the beauty of your own countenance!' Aucune looked, and was astonished to find that it was her own purified soul, so infinitely more beautiful than that of her body, that she did not recognize it! 'But I have not bathed yet!' said she with surprise. 'True, you have not yet bathed in this type of the Holy Water,' said Chacune, 'but the true water of purifying, living truth, from the River of Life, has been flowing in your soul, since the time you first set out to reach the Fountain! Remember how your heart was once filled with the spiritual filth of sin, and then think of this holy commands and wise instruction, that were given you by the holy angels to make you pure, and fit for heaven; these were the waters of the True Fountain of Beauty?' 'O Chacune, Chacune,' said Aucune, 'I understand it all!' and falling upon her neck, the two sisters embraced each other with the ardency of angelic love; and then fell upon their knees, and with eyes and hands uplifted, they uttered in unison a holy and solemn prayer, which I heard as if ascending to the throne of the Majesty on High, blessing and praising God for all His mercies, and His wonderful works to the children of men. After this I awoke.

*Psalm civ 2. Rev. xix 17. xxii 5.

Slavery in California.—A friend from Newton county informs us, that he has just received a letter from his brother now in California, formerly a captain of a company of Texas Rangers, which states, that the writer has with him on the Sacramento river thirty-two slaves engaged in digging gold, who have made for him, each on an average, from \$15 to \$20 per day, since the 10th day of March last. The negroes are from 40 to 50 years old. They give him no trouble, nor does any one interfere with them. The letter also states, that a majority of the people in California, who went from the States, are in favor of slavery, but the natives and all other foreigners are opposed to the institution.—Milledgeville Union.

We have never doubted that slave labor would be extremely profitable in California. We learn that similar information has been received in this city, from Mr. William H. Mead.

We learn, from a gentleman who has had the best opportunity of judging, that slaves make the very best of miners—better by odds, than white men. They do more work in a given time, and such work seems to suit them better than any other.

There is room enough for all in California. If that country had been thrown open to slave labor, slave property would at this moment twenty-five per cent higher in North Carolina, and we should have stood some chance of realizing our proper and just share of the mineral riches of that remarkable land; but as it is, under this free soil administration, we are deprived of all this, while foreigners and natives of the free States are all reaping all the advantages and profits! And to complete the list of infamous measures against the South, New Mexico has just set up herself as a State, and excluded all slaveholders from her borders! These are the fruits of Taylorism. How do the people like them?—Raleigh Standard.