

AS IT SEEMS TO ME

BY A PRISONER OF HOPE

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting. The soul that rises with us, our life star, Hath had elsewhere its setting, And cometh from afar. Not in entire forgetfulness, And not in utter nakedness, But trailing clouds of glory from God who is our home."

It seems to me so unspeakably glorious that we are! That we live! As we are conscious of life, so are we conscious of God. Every light-beam is a glory-point, every ray of light a beam of glory. Matter that we fit our tiny feeble-point minds upon all they can cover and say, God is this. He is that. He is here, He is there. With a prism we may separate the rays of a white beam of light into the colors of a rainbow, each of us choosing our own. But the glorious yellow sun shines on, and we gaze in wonder at its inscrutable face, with all our learning never going farther than the first thrill of wonder.

"God is everywhere! The soul who framed Mankind to be one mighty family—Himself our Father and the world our home."

And God is good. "What is, is right." Why should it not be so? It seems to me that we are very small and weak when we stand before a great thought like this. A pebble before a mountain—a pebble lost in the mountains of a world! God! The power that fills all the infinity of space with suns and worlds that know the limits of their pathways and the unmarked line of their orbits. The power that feeds a grass blade and balances upon its bended greenness a drop of dew.

And our home is good. The fair sweet earth that He, in His wisdom, sees to be a fitting place for our dwelling.

It seems to me that He must have a great use for all this that is His. A use that we may not even very dimly understand. For the earth and the fullness thereof, and for "this breathing house not built with hands," all His purposes are good. This is a wonderful knowledge that comes not from without but from within. There is a still small voice that is more distinct than the cry of pain, clearer than the shriek of anguish, and it comes simply, naturally through all the honor of loneliness, all the confusion of suffering, all the bewildering pain of injustice. "It is I," "Peace, He still." All's well, all's well! Were you ever a little child, and was there a storm? Was there, too, a mother, a wonderful mother with strong arms, and were you held close, close against her breast and did you hear in the voice that no other is like it, "Don't be afraid, it's all right. We are perfectly safe. Mother knows." And even while the storm raged, perhaps you fell asleep. Well, it is like that, this great, wonderful, God-spoken "All is well."

"Those whose eyes are only turned below Gazing upon the things with thoughts that dare not glow."

It seems to me a thing most passing strange that in one breath we love our home too well and hate it too unreasonably. And whence have we the idea that our consciousness of life is the ultimate object of our living? It may be merely incidental to some great use that we can know only after ages of evolution. Pain is real. The flesh suffers. The tearing of a beast of prey, the infection of germs just as truly alive and hurtful to us. Bruising and breaking of flesh and bones and the introduction of poison into the blood, all these bring the pain of physical death. Why? God knows. It seems to me that all hurt of the body is by violence, by accident, by not being able to keep out of the way. But pain, the suffering, the grief, the sorrow, the agony of mind—these are not these the children of Darkness? It seems to me that they come of our ignorance, our lack of understanding. We cannot know. We cannot understand. So there is Faith. We are out of tune. It seems to me that we need not worry about the trouble being hereditary.

"Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own. Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind, And even with something of a mother's mind, And no unworthy aim." The homely nurse doth all she can To make her foster child her Innate Man."

And the pleasures of earth are good. There is nothing wrong about them. They are ours, a gift from God. But we misuse the gift. That is where we strike the false note. It is where the discord begins. And it comes of simple misunderstanding. Were you ever a little child sent on an important errand, and was the way that you went a path through Wonderland? All the paths used to lie in the country of Wonderland. And did you forget all about the object of the journey because of the beauty of the butterflies and the wonder of the bees and the sweetness of the flowers and the music of the wind in the pines and all the wonder of shine and shade? And was not that a little lesson that we need to remember? The way was not bad. All the ways of earth are good ways. But they are merely ways and not abiding places and we must not linger. They are ways, and ways lead somewhere. Along these ways God's earth-child goes.

"Fretted by sallies from his mother's kisses, With light upon him from his father's eyes."

And earth's kisses are good and right. I like to think that the great mother loves us. The big, awful, incomprehensible earth whence our bodies came, whither they must return! How do we know what sort of life it is that thrills it? Senseless matter? Ah, God knows. "Earth, ocean, air, the mountains, wind, how good they are! Even the little glimpse we get in passing, even the tiny note that is all of the melody we catch in our going, how great it is. The meaning of it all? God knows."

Have you seen a little baby in its cradle beside the nursery fire? What a little, soft, feeble thing it is! As yet it has lived but just a little, little while. And what a tiny nest the cradle is, and the walls about it are not far apart. But this all that the baby knows of God's universe. And there is a mother with gentle hands and this is all that the baby knows about God's care.

And the mother-eyes is a light that reaches into the sleepy brain of the little one. And this is all that the baby knows about God's love. No faintest idea of the Outside drifts in to the baby. You know all about the father-love that builds the walls about the home. You know something about work, and shelter and sacrifice and food and all that makes

the peace and comfort about the baby's life. But the child does not know. Why? Only because it cannot. There is no other reason. Presently it will think of walls and then of the outside, and by slow development of all that we know. But not now. The knowledge is simple and good. But the baby is too small. "A cup cannot contain the measure of a bushel." It seems to me that we are like that. Babies here with our mother, knowing so little about our cradle and nursery, not because there is nothing to know, not because knowledge is not good, but only because we cannot, we are too little, too young. That is all. And is it not enough?

Perhaps through a window a sunbeam falls upon the baby's hands, and the child laughs aloud for the first time and holds up its hands to claim the spilling gold. For a little moment the plaything lingers and then is gone. And the baby cries, for was not the sunbeam its very own? You know better. You know that this ray of light has traveled ninety-one millions of miles on an important errand to the earth and elsewhere that only God can know. The instant of toying with the pink fingers of the baby was incidental. But can you impart your wisdom to the child? Because it is not true? Only because the child cannot know. The baby cries and holds out pleading hands expecting the sunbeam to come for the smile that it is wanted. And you smile because you know that never, never in all the ages that the earth shall turn her continents to the sun, in all the eons of her steady journey around the mighty centre of her orbit, in all the unthinkable eternity of her sweeping flight through space with suns and systems toward the awful mystery of the pole star, never will the sunbeam come again to the baby's fingers. Other sunbeams, please God, and many, but never the one that slipped away, never the one for which the baby cries. You know, but can you tell the baby? And why? Only because the baby cannot understand.

Are we like that when our sunbeams slip away, when we hold out foolish hands and beg them back with silly tears? God would let us know if we could understand. We cannot. That is all. But is it not enough? Have you watched the resistance of the baby, the poor, foolish fighting against what you know is right? Can you tell the baby that your will is best? It is, but the baby cannot know. You must just do your will for the baby's sake, for all sorts of good and worthy sakes, and let the small atom of resistance, the tiny morsel of rebellion, the minute particle of unbelief squirm and squall all it wants to. Who cares? The baby knows no better. Are we like this sometimes when we do not understand what it is that God is doing with us? Why don't we understand? Well, why doesn't the baby understand. We cannot; we are too little. All the great, simple, beautiful truth is there, but we are just as full of it as we can be. We can't hold any more. A child's top cup can be filled with sea water, but who can put into it all the splendid wonders of the ocean? And have you watched the baby trying to keep awake in spite of drowsy singing of dreamy lullabies? You know that sleep is best. But the baby likes to be awake. To us there comes a time when sleep is best. God knows why. And we are afraid. Afraid of death, the deep sleep. I wonder why? Do we love earth "only for its earthly sake"? Afraid of the dark, and yet, on the other edge of this small measure of life "Out of darkness came the hands that reach through nature, moulding men."

And it is the same darkness. One ocean circles every inch of shore. We are afraid because we do not know. That is all. "This is our own palace; yonder is our throne." God's Truth goes all the way round. Knowledge is our poor little foot rule. It reaches such a little way. And

there is Faith. We cannot die. Nothing dies. There is change. The little baby changes and becomes a man, and we are content because we understand a little, such a little, of the process. But this fear of change is another matter. Is it? God knows. It seems to me that death is, to be sure, as simple and natural and beautiful as life. It cannot touch the real life. It is not an enemy of the spirit which it is not. It is not an enemy of the body. But it changes the body and we cannot understand as far as that. It is just the same beautiful Truth, just one entire Rightness, one perfect Goodness all the way. It seems to me that our ignorance and fear make no difference in our relation to the Truth. It is just as true when we do. That is the lesson that I find written all about me. I am sure that God takes care of us, always.

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Officers Heed Not Story of Alleged Hobbery. Special to The Observer. Durham, Sept. 5.—The officers have not yet arrested Lonnie Chamblee, whom Rufus Barbee charged Wednesday morning with having robbed him of \$20 and some greenbacks, besides this amount in gold. Though the item was featured in some parts, the officers believe none of it and made no effort to run down a man against whom they felt they had nothing. Barbee, who figured many

years ago in a spectacular murder and a trial acquitting him of it, says that after the performance of Gentry Bros. Tuesday night he lay down well drunk, on the sofa, grass Chamblee, he declares, came up and went through his pockets. Barbee then asked him what he was doing, and said: "You got my money." Chamblee called him a liar and said: "You killed Bill Cole, but I will cut your d—n throat," and Barbee said he was afraid. Sheriff Harward took the warrant and Barbee took the stump, telling all about it. The officers never attached one single bit of importance to it and they are not worrying over the escaped prisoner. They think the story was one of Rufus' dramatic ones and unworthy of official attention.

Ten Years' Railroad Expansion. Wall Street Journal. When it is said that the gross earnings of the railroads of the United States increased from \$1,122,089,773 in 1897 to \$2,596,914,002 in 1907, one obtains some idea of the enormous expansion of the railroad business in ten years. That expansion is one of the marvels of American business. The increase in gross earnings, measuring the expansion of the trade of the United States, amounted to about 130 per cent. in ten years. In the same time the population of the United States increased only 20 per cent, and the money in circulation less than 70 per cent. Is it any wonder that the railroad problem has assumed dimensions so colossal as to make the heaviest demand upon the technical skill and the financial ability of the world?

Estate of Late J. N. Campbell Valued at \$18,000. Special to The Observer. High Point, Sept. 5.—The executors of the will of the late J. N. Campbell, Mr. J. A. Newton and Mr. L. L. Campbell, had a meeting here yesterday to arrange for the settlement of the estate according to the will. The estate is valued at about \$18,000. There are three special bequests: Miss M. J. Campbell, \$3,000; L. L. Campbell, \$300, and \$300 each to Mr. J. A. Newton and two children. The residue is to be divided between his nephew, L. L. Campbell, of Winston, and niece and nephews of the deceased in the West.

CURES ECZEMA QUICKLY. New Drug, Poslam. Now Obtainable in Small Quantities. Since its discovery one year ago, the new drug, poslam, has successfully cured thousands of chronic cases of eczema and other distressing skin afflictions. Heretofore patients have been dispensed solely for the benefit of eczema patients in large jars sufficient for a month's treatment. This was found to be an inconvenience to many thousands who use it for minor skin troubles, such as pimples, blackheads, herpes, acne, scaly scalp, complexion blemishes, itching feet, etc., which require but a small quantity to cure. To overcome this, and in response to urgent appeals, the dispensers of poslam have been obliged to adopt, in addition to the regular two-dollar package, a special fifty-cent size, which in future may be found on sale at R. H. Jordan & Co.'s and other leading drug stores in Charlotte, or may be ordered direct from the Emergency Laboratories, No. 32 West 24th street, New York City. In all eczema cases poslam stops itching with first application, and proceeds to heal immediately. Chronic cases being cured in two weeks. In less serious skin troubles, results are seen after an overnight application. Samples for experimental purposes may still be had, free of charge, by writing to the laboratories for them.

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