

T H E D I A L .

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MAN IN THE AGES.

THE ages have presented man in a two-fold aspect, as man, as not man. Human things, constitutions, politics, laws, religions, all have gone, either on the fact, rather we might say, have grown out of the intrinsic reality of man's individual worth, or else, and contrary to this, on the tacit assumption of man's individual worthlessness. With the one, man, the living soul, the individual in his sole being, is more than king, noble, hierarch, church, or state; not he theirs or for them, but they nothing save for him; with the other, state, church, hierarch, noble, king, each is more than man; he theirs and for them, he little or nothing save as a fraction of the general order, a part and instrument of the whole. Lactantius has preserved to us a quaint illustration, which he refers to an earlier antiquity than his own, in which the course of each man is compared to the letter Y, and as he comes forward into action, through the point whence it divides itself into two branches, he passes either in the direction of the one, or in that of the other, through sin to death, or through holiness to life. The ages of our race have presented a like divergency. They have parted off in a direction congruous to man's true nature, or into a direction incongruous and contrary to it, verging and branching out, now toward hell, now toward heaven.

These divergencies, whence are they? Not out of time, which rolls over man as a flood; not out of place, which surrounds him everywhere; not out of any outward power

pressing on him by laws of adamant necessity; not out of such things exterior to his being. They are of himself, tendencies in his own nature to the high and the low, the true and the false, the free and the servile, the divine and the demoniac. The ages of man are not centuries of time or chronological periods of fact—history. They are the garments spun and woven out of man's own nature to clothe him with, which he wears till they are outworn, then drops off for a new robe, likewise self-evolved. Their quality is of course one with the nature out of which they grow. The robes are as the filaments, these latter as the interior life, out of which they are drawn.

The Fall of Man—that first great evolving of the lower nature, wherein his essential worth is lost in admiration and pursuit of something exterior—a mystery, which all nations hold in uncertain tradition, and of which the earliest records, even those of the Hebrew Scriptures, give but a very general notice—is indeed his fall; his fall from a spiritual preeminence over outward things into a vicious servitude to nature and outward things. The highest transcendentalism, reviled as it is, for soaring so far above the reach of humanity into the midst of remote skyey vapors, has never yet been able to soar up to the level of man's true height and destiny. It is the pure ethereal region of spirit, spirit that quickens and reduces to one all that exists, wherein man has his true life and abode. There spirit is all; phenomena of sense are but phantasms. The man lives within, and the inward life communicates itself to all without. God is first, dwelling in the soul, making body and nature his temple and his vesture. The soul converses first with God, through him with the world and itself. His fall is from this high state. He sinks from God under the world, from faith to sight, from spirit to flesh, from freedom to servitude. The ancient Grecians had an expressive mode of representing such servitude in any of its instances, saying that the man is less than pleasure, less than money, less than whatever it be which enthral him. In his fall, we may likewise say, man becomes less than nature, less than the world, less than the body. Now, the very moment this depression of the true manhood begins, that moment begins the merging of soul, of individual worth, in exterior worthless appendages. The

tree of knowledge of good and evil—call it what you will; the whole wonderful narrative symbolizes this one thing, free spirit enslaved to sensual nature, soul lessened below flesh. The permanent *I* subjects and enthrals itself to the changeful *MINE*, all which can be brought within the compass of this same *MINE* is sought rather than the being and growth of the *MYSELF*. Such Man's first debasement, fountain of all his reputed worthlessness, in the successions of the ages.

In an Abel we have a type of the rise and return of the soul to its true dignity. He is the man, the soul living in faith; that is the highest to be said of any man. But he stands almost solitary. Cain and his sons, morally his sons I mean, predominate as examples of all who prefer man's appendages to man, that is, sight to faith, nature to soul, flesh to spirit. Plato proposes as a fundamental principle of political institutions, that the soul shall be deemed of highest worth, the body next, property third and least. With reason, for soul alone is absolute being, the other two but relative contingencies, body least remote, property farthest off. Those men and those human things, which have Cain for their prototype, reverse the Platonic maxim; with them body or property, we can hardly say which, is first and second, soul third, and either least, or, as some improvements of these later ages have taught us, nothing. Now and then, as in an Enoch or a Noah, man develops himself in his manhood above its appendages and accidents, strong in the strength of an inward life. But Noah is left alone. Universal corruption, unchecked, nay, cherished, diffused, is in the severe phrase of Tacitus, the *seculum*, the age, the morality of the times, into which others thrust themselves to be festive, frolicksome beasts, spending their mirth or rage upon the dreaming bigot, who fancies there is such a life as spirit, and dares to preach the obsolete doctrine of righteousness. The age ends, as we might look for, in violence filling it. Other end it could not have. Truth, Good, Rectitude; this is infinite, and infinite to each and all. Thing, property, appendage, this is finite, and can come but in crumbling fragments to each and all. The more perfectly the inward self is developed in forms of faith and love and uprightness, the better it is for all; the infinite of right and good is as boundless and

accessible as ever to each new man, like light which no man may appropriate, but it may be whole in every one. Nay, the revelation of this inexhaustible infinitude, open to all, is in each succeeding instance a new communication of blessedness; so that always,

“By an office, though, particular,
Virtue’s whole common-weal obliged are;
For in a virtuous act all good men share.”

The contrary with whatever is accidental and finite. Property is not only appropriation but exclusion; in what proportion it holds, in that repelling; what it keeps in itself, that keeping away from all others. In proportion as the havings of an individual become great and extended, himself meantime less than they, not their lord but their servant, does he either diminish the havings or cross the wishes of his neighbor, who seeks with the same desire the same things as he. The more land, for example, he has within a given space, the less is there of course for another; and although the greater growth of his own cannot lessen the growth of his neighbor’s absolutely, yet it does lessen it relatively, and he is so much the more rival or superior to him in amount of riches. So in the arts. He who does but embody in song or sculpture his own idea of beauty, for the love of infinite beauty, loses nothing, but enriches himself and others, though some other bard utter melodies, some other sculptor produce forms, beautiful as his own; but he who cherishes these divine arts, not as the effluences of his own soul, but for what of praise or money they may bring, feels himself injured in every rival, loses whatever another gains, and is high just as others are relatively low. Thus it is in all things. Whence emulations, whence extortions, whence oppressions, whence strifes, whence violence. What is infinite in man, man himself, is merged in exterior things, finite and mutually repulsive; which things, as feudal lords, draw out the whole train of vassal thoughts to potent or cunning warfare. So was it with man in his first age, dimly known to us as antediluvian; and the record of the flood bears in it that everlasting testimony, which God has left, that one soul, living in faith and truth, is of higher worth than nature and the world.

This first age is substantially the type of every other. Say but this at any given instant, ‘Longer is it now than formerly, since man lived evolving the ages; more men are now in the world, new habitations, trades, cities, new names;’ and you have said the whole. As vapors these, fair children of sun and water, ever-changing, always one, now just steaming up out of river or fountain, now lying thin over low ground, now resting heavy on hills, now gathering into thick clouds, now black like night, now again shining out in all hues, one in each, the same earthly element, obeying the same skyey powers. The one human nature, thus endlessly modifying itself, we recognize in the two forms into which it perpetually goes out—Society, Worship. Society, instead of being as political fiction-makers would have us think, a cunning device, a thing of compact, grounded on a self-interest ascertained by experience, is in fact the first natural growth of the human instinct. Put two men together, or two thousand, or a million, and they will not live one day separate persons; they will flow like so many confluent streams into one centre, and seek after that unceasing goal of human effort, the realization of that unity pervading the whole, whereof each individual is a type in himself. So for worship. The apprehension of infinitude, the idea of eternity, the sentiment of reverence, is rooted in the depth and heart of man’s soul. All toils of the flesh to root it out are vain. But the pure spiritual principle corrupted, Society becomes forthwith the organization of despotism, Worship the act of superstition. This process grows out of fixed law. Through greater strength or cunning, one man will seize and hold more than another; each inlet to gain will be self-multiplying; possessions will be enlarged, transmitted. By this accumulation of wealth and power, the stronger man will come to appropriate what another has to himself, ultimately to subdue his neighbors, and become their lord, their chief, their king, their tyrant. Come to worship. The idea which is left of God passes of course into kindred and affinity with the spirit thus lessened below the flesh, with the soul living an outward life. Divinity, of which man’s inward nature is the image, will be mixed with these lower elements of humanity to which it has no true correspondence. Such is fact of history. So-

ciety soon after the flood appears in the aspect of vassalage to exterior power; worship in the aspect of perverted reverence to gods, shaped according to the fleshliness of man's lower nature. An arbitrary king represents the oneness of society; a bodily god, the oneness of the universe. Absolute monarchy absorbs society, fragmentary polytheism pollutes worship, hierarchal rights take the place of individual faith and love. If we might refer to the three forms of government, into which society shapes itself for the expression of its unity, we may say that monarchy and aristocracy come nearest to the representation of the appendage; democracy nearest to the representation of the man. Or if we look to the different systems of religion, although perhaps all surpass institutions of polity, yet it is only Christianity which stands forth as a faith and worship of the soul within itself, for itself; which finds in individual man the beginning and end of humanity; which takes off crowns, gowns, robes of state, all outward appendages, and sees nowhere on earth, king, noble, priest, master, slave, but man and only man. Quite unlike man reflected by the ages. In them we have Hebrew, Egyptian, Chaldean, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Gothic, Frank, Saxon, English, and the like, not man. Egypt a mighty kingdom, mother of ancient wisdom; Judæa, the seat of Solomon and his successors in their glory; Chaldea, that proud imperial power; Persia, the empire of the East, which had, we might almost say, but one man; Greece renowned for war, for song, for philosophy; Rome, the emblem of compacted strength; Gothic lands pouring out torrents of armed hosts; France, the beautiful; Germany, the strong and heavy; England, island empress; of these and such-like forms our historical ages are the apocalypse; who has condescended to remember that man is? Who thinks, as he reads Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Livy, Gibbon, Robertson, Hume, that the splendid things they point us to are but fringes and furbelows, which hide and impede the true man with their fickle flauntings? that the poorest man who tilled the banks of the Nile, or the vineyards of Palestine, or helped build the wall of Nineveh or Babylon, or walked unsung in the city of Minerva, or gazed on the triumphs of the first Cæsar, or dwelt in British or American forests, or wore wooden shoes in his fair France, is a

sublimar form than Greece or Rome ever framed or fancied?

Of the ages, so I have ventured to call them, of these evolvings of man in time, we may say what has been said of that single portion of them, political institutions, they are not created, they grow; the leaves they are and flowerings of humanity. Observe, first, they are by consequence, what man is; spiritual, when man is spiritual, sensual usually, because man has been oftener sensual. Observe, secondly, they react upon man, shaping him to themselves. Thus the very leaves and flowers, which grow out of the tree, have their effluences into the air which hastens or retards vegetation, and even when they die, pass into the soil which sustains the root and aid in a new growth. Every thing indeed, which lives, besides its own inward vitality and essence, is in its turn a source of new outgoings, not only into the things which surround it, but back also to its own root, in ministrations of good or ill. As thus their deformity bespeaks an internal disorder for its origin, so does that same deformity likewise reproduce itself, and aggravate the disorder whence it flows. Thus do the ages distort and belie man.

Religiously, we have before regarded them as formations of sensual worship; politically as formations of forceful government. A law of works in opposition to faith and love in the former; a law of might in opposition to right and kindred sympathy in the latter. The vicious element of Popery, at the time of the Reformation, was not the Papacy, nor the vicious element of Feudalism in the middle ages the Feudal Tenure; not the fact of a church with an universal bishop, not the holding of all lands by grant of the king. Deeper the evil was than either; these, symptoms, not radical disease. Popery, so far as it went out into penances, masses, crusades, the whole aggregate of its works and forms, what mean it and they?—what the notion which they symbolized? Sanctity consisting in outward observances. The very worst age of popery was but one Christian form of this almost universal corruption. Plato contended against it in Greece as actually as Wickliffe in England, or Luther in Germany. For aught I know its first symbols were the fig-leaves sewed together in Eden. Certainly it was in the unaccepted offering of Cain.

It passed into the idolatries of the heathen, and the ancient poets are full of it in their delineations of incense and oblations, efficacious with the gods. It was Pharisaism in Christ's time among the Jews, Judaism in the Apostles' time among the Christians. While in the East, under Mohammedan form it appeared in war, or pilgrimage, or oblation, in the West, under Christian form it appeared in thousand forms of saintly merit. Reformers assailed it under the name of Popery, denominating the general evil by an occasional expression of that evil. In reality it passes into every sect — every sect indeed, so far as a sect is one of its shapes — Heathen or Jewish, Mohammedan or Christian, Popish or Protestant, so soon as faith is only the letter of a creed, and hope only the dream of reward, and love only the shadow of dead work — Feudalism, so far as it went out into proud kingship, and jealous baronies, and vassal homage, and fealty, and degrading villanage, and the whole aggregate of its social usurpations, what mean it and they? — What the notion which they symbolize? Soul which is man, bowed under strength, which is brute. Under numberless names and forms the same fact is, has been continually appearing. All ages bring it out to visibility, each in its own peculiar way. Myriad shapes are they to one form, ever-varying disclosures of one element. From the little village, where the selfish, cunning man reduces his poorer neighbors to dependance and servility, to the extended empire or commonwealth, tyrannous at home, unjust and rapacious abroad, we see this subjugation of the individual to the age, of the inward essential man to an exterior evolved force. The Jew stands by himself, strong in a fancied sanctity, and oppresses the Gentile. Which oppression the Gentile has met with reasonless scorn and unrelenting persecution. The Grecian has no other name for foreigners but barbarian, and is their enemy. To be repaid in kind by the barbarian. Within itself, Athens, that fierce democracie, holds its myriads of servants; Lacedemon, that anomalous military state, its wretched Helots; Rome, aggressor on the rights of all others, boastful of her own freedom, rears within the gates of the republic, that high wall between Patrician and Plebeian, that higher wall between freeman and bondman. Nay, the world over, the ages throughout,

beneath those deceptive words, king and subject, lord and vassal, republic and citizen, you may be sure of detecting everywhere this one vicious element, Soul bowed down beneath Force. Yet again; as all religious corruptions may be reduced to one, spirit lost in form; as all political tyrannies to one, right absorbed in might; so likewise, both these may be reduced to one, the absolute supplanted by the relative. To repeat a preceding phrase, for our one element we have Soul prostrate to Force, which Force, in worship, is misnamed God, in society, Government. God, Government! with true man, sacred names of the Divine; with false ages, desecrated titles of the Brutish.

But why dwell on the evil which the ages have disclosed? First, the topic demands it; secondly, the evil is more prominent than the good. For the present, however, I desist from this view, passing to the antagonist principle, the mysterious man at once weaving the ages out of himself, and shaking off the bonds with which he is thereby straitened and enveloped. Man is man, despite of all the strengths which would strive to unman him. There is a spirit in man, an inspiration from the Almighty. Tyrants, Hierarchs, may wish it otherwise, may try to make it otherwise. Vain wish! fruitless attempt! What is, is. The eternal is eternal; the temporary must pass it by, leaving it to stand evermore. There is now, there has been always, power among men to subdue the ages, to dethrone them, to make them mere outgoings and servitors of man. It is needed only, that we assert our prerogative, — that man do with hearty faith affirm, 'I am, in me Being is. Ages, ye come and go; appear and disappear; products, not life; vapors from the surface of the soul, not living fountain. Ye are of me, for me, not I of you, or for you. Not with you my affinity, but with the Eternal. I am; I live; spirit I have not, spirit am I.' Every man, would he be but true to himself, might in lowliness say this, and so rise to supremacy above all exterior things. Whenever one man, as a Luther, a Knox, a Milton, a Wesley, does say this, then do Kingships and Lordships, Bishops and Hierarchies, Popedoms and Heathenisms, then, do Universities, and Parliaments, and Priestly Dignities,

and all of man's workmanship and God's outward production, pass into brief accidents, and the self-conscious *I* is greater than they all. Shows these are, empty shows, not full, lasting entities. Nay, 't is only because in such pomps, more than in common things, Soul dreams of seeing its own infinite forms; only because disgusted with familiar, every-day trivialities, the spirit hopes here to regain its innate and diviner visions; that they reach and touch the soul, the spirit, at all. Mystery covers them; sacred words they continually speak, God, Truth, Law, Right, and mocking man draw him to homage. Well for him if he sees through the delusion, and goes back to find the divine idea in himself, and in the mirror of nature! Whence learns he to say, 'Tell me not henceforth of your Orators and Statesmen, your Priests and Scholars, your great heroes of all sorts; the true man I find to be more than any or all. Meaner things than these, houses, lands, money, what are they to me? Winged things, which light a moment on me, or pass me by, while I stand fixed in eternity. I have seen the butterfly hanging on a field-flower; shall ever the true Psyche hang for its life on shows? Let me rather control them all, make an age of my own to wear for its hour, servant to none or nothing.'

Inseparable from this principle of antagonism to corrupt ages is that essential element of spirit, Freedom. All things in the universe come under one or other of these two categories, freedom or servitude. Two grounds are there of all changes, mind, force. Freedom, of mind; Servitude, of Force. All which comes within the domain of sense is subject to the latter, to the mechanism of necessity; all which is within the sphere of spirit we assign to the former, the spontaneous life of freedom. The ages are complex. So far as wrought out of man's mechanical nature, they come under the laws of necessity; so far as the working of his spiritual power, they are out of the compass of those laws, free deeds, not fixed doom. This divine element unfolds itself, in every high, noble impulse of the internal being, and can never be wholly destroyed. The two ideas, spirit, freedom, are inseparable, as shadowed forth in their type, the wind, breathing at will over mountain or valley, land or water. Which inward Freedom is the archetype of all liberty. State, Church, family,

individual, is free just in proportion as this archetypal freedom dwells and develops itself from within, in opposition to necessity constraining, or impelling it from without. Now the ages, so far as developments of what may be termed the force element in our nature, have always sought to extinguish this inward power, at least to obscure the consciousness of its presence. Incapacity of man for self-government, ignorance and viciousness of the poor, necessity of property qualifications for a voice in protection of personal rights and interests, sacredness of ancient opinions and institutions, hereditary ranks, the whole array indeed of doctrines and ordinances, designed to transfer power from the man in whom it dwells, to the appendages of men, in which it dwells but constructively and unnaturally, have been resorted to for the purpose of suppressing the flame of freedom, which burns up out of the inmost depths of every soul toward its kindred element in heaven. That flame burns on forever despite of all. As of the divine nature itself some wise men have doubted to say, that it has been, it will be, but only, it is; so may we say concerning this celestial principle, It is; neither coming nor departing, never past, never future, always present, it is. Whence absolute and unqualified Slavery, save as absolute, unmitigated sin is it, there cannot be. No thanks to men, however. They have done their utmost to unmake the perennial life. Fetters, chains, monopolies, thefts, sales, statutes, all engines of tyranny, they have found insufficient to annihilate freedom, for the good reason, that they cannot annihilate the Soul whose first law of being is freedom. Despite of lies which the ages have told, of tyrannies which the ages have established, Freedom lives imperishable.

I have lived indeed to hear that blessed name taken in vain, used in caricature, uttered with a sneer. It will not be so always. It was not so once. It has been a sacred word. Bards sang it. Prophets proclaimed it. Noble men died for it, and felt the price cheap. None counted how much gold could be coined out of fetters. Dimly seen, imperfectly understood, its dimmest shapes, its shadowy visions, even rising amidst bloody clouds, have been heralds of joy. Not brighter, more glad, to the forlorn and weary traveller, the first rays which look out

through the golden dawn, than to commonwealths and men, the day-break of liberty; nor is light itself, or any exterior thing of good cheer to man conscious of bondage. Order, conservation, tradition, prescription, political constitutions, laws of nations, sanctions of the ages, these are all nothing to the unwritten, unseen, invisible law of true freedom in man's soul. Those are of men, this of man; those, of the world; this, of God. I may regret, to be sure, that a dagger should have ever been hidden in myrtle bough; I may mourn that in the name of Liberty the least wrong should ever be done; would that the blessed form needed never but voice soft as the gentlest evening wind! More deeply should I mourn, my tears more hopeless, if I saw her assailed, nor hand nor voice lifted in the defence. Nay, as in worst superstition I welcome the divine idea of Religion; as through dreams and filthy tales of mythology, I see and bless the living God, nor ever feel more sure, that God is, that Truth is, and that man is made for God and Truth; so in and through frantic excesses of an incomplete and infantile Freedom, I see, I feel, that Freedom is, and is sacred, and that it is everything to the soul of man. Carry me to Paris in the frenzy of its revolution; carry me to St. Domingo, in the storm of its insurrection; carry me to Bunker Hill, amid its carnage; carry me to Thermopylæ, while its three hundred wait the sure death; set me beside those whose names may scarce be uttered without contempt or hate, a Wat Tyler or a Nat Turner; set me where and with whom you will, be it but man struggling to be free, to be himself, I recognise a divine presence, and wish not to withhold homage. Pardon me; but in a slavish quietude of the ages, I see nothing but despondency; freedom, be it wild as it may, quickens my hope. The wildness is an accident which will pass soon; that slavish quietude is death. There is grandeur in the earthquake or the volcano; in the dank, dark, offensive vault, something else.

Soul, Freedom of soul, is thus evermore the antagonist of those ages, which man's lower nature has evolved. Revelations of what truth there is in the grounds and laws of society, of Worship, here without ceasing, joined in with this native life of man. God has spoken to man throughout time, now this way, now that, not through

lawgivers and prophets and apostles alone, but in more secret communications of his spirit to whose soever spirit of man is obedient. The aggregate and consummation of these his revelations we call Christianity. Of which we may say, whether regarded as a series of historical facts, or as a disclosure of doctrine, or as a mode of worship, or, in higher character, as the formation of Christ in us, it is no other than the revelation from God of man's absolute and inalienable worth. Beneath all words, unsaid in the record, unuttered, because unspeakable, unutterable, lives spirit for spirit to meet and interpret, deeper, mightier, than letter or word. Not engraving in stone, not law written in books, something more divine than this is there in the fountains of Christianity; Moses could give the letter, bondage and death in it; Jesus, the Lord, is the spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty—there is eternal life. Where over the whole earth the spirit has gone, as strong wind, as gentle air, it has quickened the expiring breath, recalled life, restored man to himself, that he might stand forth in assertion of his worth, and in boundless love shake off his bonds, sever himself from the age, live and be free.

Thus in all time we have the divine element—in man—in the universe—against the ages evolved of man's sensualism. Thence the great unceasing conflict between that fundamental fact, of history, of ethics, of religion, MAN, and that sensual and proud selfishness, which would substitute exterior appendages. Farther in illustrating this topic, to my own mind of most solemn import, I cannot now go, save that I may be permitted to translate into rough words the songs which two unnamed bards once sang to my fancy—perhaps to my heart: The first said;—

Woe is me! I am born in the decay of nature and of man. Earth yielded once her fruit, spontaneous, free, as sun yields light, as air its balm. Nor more did man, living in the life and love of God, seek each to draw the whole to himself, than he would now seek to draw sun, stars, moon, air, sky, within his enclosure. As gods all lived, as brothers all conversed, unenvious, of wide heart; then slept as one in their mother's bosom. Blessed day, whose sun is set!

There is which no one can take for his own; a divine destiny holds it afar from his clutch. Proudest King! thine it is not to reach the sun, and part its tracts and its rays among thy vassals. Nor thine to catch the broad, blue sky, the boundless air, or ocean; here are not thine abodes, nor here thy lands to hold from any that breathes. Even I may see the blessed light, and drink of the hidden spring, and breathe God's free air; thou canst not stay nor let. This soul which lives of God, this spirit of divine inspiration, and the higher utterances it gives out in loneliness to infinite night or sunny day beneath vast mountain rocks or oaks by fountain side or margin of brook, lord of men! thou canst not destroy, thou canst not say, See, this is mine.

They may worship fire and light no more in the East. Priests pour out their libations no longer in Grecian, Italian fields or Isles. Druids dwell not in Celtic or British forests. God still is. My portion in him, my higher priesthood, can never cease, one with my human being, my fixed immortality. Into this sanctuary kings cannot enter; priests of man's making cannot pollute it; no power can take hold of it. There is freedom. Well that the universe has a harmony from the Father, which men's discord may not break. Else kings and lords and mightier men of all names would destroy the whole; and the spherical music go out in boundless dissonance.

There is which kings and barons by field and flood can win. This hard soil of Britain, these viny plains of Italy, forest and field of Germany, of France, stern coast of New England, lands watered by vast American rivers, the "coming" has called his own, and parcelled out to kirkmen or knights, and all proud vassals of the cunningest. Sometimes they kneel in false lowliness before him, their hands in his, and offer homage. Sometimes they come to us in our weakness, and take of us homage and fealty, and exact our service. And these poor villains, alas! they toil, they bend, they weep, they go to other's bidding from day to day, until death bids them rest in their first freedom.

Oh Nature! is it thus thou leavest thine offspring orphans, fatherless, motherless, cunning and strong men lording it over them? Father! whose glory shineth in

heaven, the earth thou givest to the sons of men. They have it of thee, of thee what it yields to their toils. They have it not, thy most free gift, for force and skill of proud ones who win and hold it all. One saith, England is mine; Scotland mine, saith another; these or others, Mine France, Italy, land of German tribes, worlds west of the Atlantic. Who holds of it, holds of my sufferance, for his money or his homage. And another saith, Essex is mine; and others, Normandy, borders of the Rhine or the Danube; let no man touch them. And another, This plantation is mine, and all it yields; and these men also who work on it, they are mine. So the world over. And in secret, where none eye seeth, nor ear heareth, nor any regard, cometh a lone one and poureth tears into the still stream: Ye rich, I envy you not; I complain not, I must yet weep, that ye are tyrannous, that the poor are comfortless. Ye tell me loudly of your charities, your gifts. Alms to the poor, forsooth! ye make them poor by your extortions, then feed your pride with largesses, which bespeak your wealth, their want. Give us back what God hath given, his earth, ourselves; then we shall no longer need your help. Priests, nobles, kings, men of wealth, cease to rob; then we shall cease to toil unrequited, unhonored.

Rich man, king, noble, priest, all men hear. Man in sorrow, God heareth alone. Bards of bright days, who sang in Ægean isles, by Scottish friths, or amid Druid forests, would that I might take your harp, and sing as ye once sang; then should this sorrow have voice. He who has none to comfort should be heard through strains of mine over sea and land, even to the heavy ear of courtiers and kings, of parliaments and congresses. Alas! in lonely wood I can but sing to Truth and Love the wrongs of men, nor any heed or hear but God.

I may take my harp to palace and castle, and sing of mighty deeds, of Arthur and Alfred, of Dane and Scottish chieftains, how Saxon and Briton warred, and Norman reigned, how king and knight loved and wooed and won the fairest of the land; then do cunning men applaud; and give me large gifts. Weep alone, ye poor; weep unpitied, ye who are only men; my strain is unbidden, unheard, if I but try to tell your rights and wants and woes and loves.

Not always so. Lift up your heads, ye poor; your redemption shall come, your hour is at hand. Jesus was poor; God's glad message is through him to your stricken hearts. Priest and King, Bishop and Noble, Mighty and Rich, are nothing to him. He knows nought but man, whom he shall restore to himself. Blessing on thee, man! Sacred, venerable, thy name! Thou shalt live, the divine germ of thy nature shall yet expand and grow, and bear celestial fruit, God's own Freedom and Truth and Love.

Deeper woe, surer hope, sang the second;—

Nor freedom, nor truth, nor love, groweth of redemption from these outward bonds. Broken be those bonds! God speed the rescue! But the holy fountain of life wells out from within. Oh! when shall that fountain be open and flow?

Through heaven, earth, ocean, moon, stars, one inward spirit lives, breathes, nourishes all. Through soul of man that spirit lives most vitally, breathes mightiest, as itself. Finds spirit but spirit to welcome and interpret its mysterious presence, there is holiest communion. God is in us; we in God; divinest life! fountain of freedom, of manhood, of a Godlike age!

Woe, woe, woe to the sons of men! they have belied their nature, belied God. Man a beast, so have they said; God mechanic power. In the universal spirit they behold but might and skill. Infinite love, once in God, in all spirit, whither is thy flight? Men see thee not. Thy light-life was in all, thy dove-wings hovered over all; where dwellest thou now?

Where thou art, there God is, in God, freedom, truth, blessedness. Where thou art not, in rich or poor, mighty or feeble, lord or vassal, God is not, nor aught divine. Deepest of laws, mightiest of powers! eternal fountain, whence true law, right power, hath flowed evermore! Men, ancient, modern, dream of some outward laws and powers, in nature, in their ages, and obey them. They have obeyed the soulless voice, and gained soulless wealth. See! These splendid palaces, these rich store-houses, these hunting-grounds, these fruitful plantations, these horses and coaches and gay dresses! All are of obedience to law; but what law? Sure, other than the deepest, the everlasting. Nothing here of divinity: Law there is, in

which God dwelleth evermore; law of spirit, prolific of spiritual fruit; divine, wherein God goeth forth to bless the soul, and in soul the universe; life of the Father, Love.

Proud things cannot raise thee without it. Low things cannot debase thee with it. Neither proud nor mean, neither high nor low, where this law dwells. All are one in God. Out of Him through all, one boundless blessed harmony. The ages themselves of men, it swayeth at will; woe to him who severs his age from its eternal oneness!

Law to winds, waves, heaving seas, of our time; in all through all; first, midst, last of all. Whoso walketh in it, is in freedom and joy. Whoso walketh out of it, is in slavery and wretchedness. Man fell, when he ceased to love; his rise is in the birth of love. Man! thou art wretched, for thou hast shut thy heart to God; open thy soul unto Him, be thyself again, thou in God, God in thee; then shalt thou be the life of new ages, central orb of boundless radiance. Evolve of thy purer self, let grow from thy reborn spirit, the epoch of a true manhood; so shalt thou be free, blessed within, without. So shalt thou meet anew thine inmost life reflected in the calmness and infinitude which surrounds thee. So shalt thou greet unceasingly the divine light, going forth of thy soul to re-appear in all outward things, in this fair earth, in the serene moon, in stars and sun, in air and sky. So shall thy free soul dwell in the infinite of freedom; so thy being live and unfold itself in the communion of purest spirit. So, wherever man is, there shall the word of a highest inspiration be fulfilled. We have known and believed the love that God hath to us; God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

S.

AFTERNOON.

I LIE upon the earth and feed upon the sky,
 Drink in the soft deep blue, falling from on high.
 Walnut boughs all steeped in gold, quiver to and fro;
 Winds, like spirits, murmur, as through the air they go,
 My soul is filled with joy and holy faith and love,
 For noble friends on earth and angels pure above.