

THE WONDER-LIGHT

AND OTHER TALES.

TRUE PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN.

BY

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TO THE
LION HEART
NOW KNOWN AS
HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS OFFERED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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HOW THE CHRIST-CHILD WAS BORN.

CARLO stood by the window making pictures. He made them by breathing upon the pane and drawing upon it with his fingers. His Papa was shut up in his study with all the nasty bottles and jars and things. His Mamma was where she always was now—upstairs in bed, looking so white and tired. The servants were in the kitchen laughing over the very biggest turkey you ever saw, and Carlo was just here in the parlor, alone and cross and tired. He was tired of his playthings; tired of the Christmas tree; tired of having a good time with his little cousins who had just gone home. He felt just like being a torment to somebody; that was what nurse called him when he began to fidget and ask questions.

When you are a little boy a great many questions come popping into your head, and you think grown people are put there to answer them. Carlo supposed that God put them there; He seemed to do all that was done; at least the grown people said so. But Carlo wondered why God did not make them tell things right; some of their answers were certainly wrong, because Carlo could not understand them. They made the world out to be quite another place from what Carlo saw. He had eyes; he could see

very well; and he didn't see anywhere some of the things that grown people said were there. They were silly to suppose that he, a big boy of five years, would believe such stuff about babies, for instance. He never, never found one under the cabbages, though he had looked every day since his new little cousin had come to the world. Why should the grown people find all the babies? They didn't get up so early as the children. And when people died; that was another thing. They were put in holes in the ground. No grown person—fond as they were of puzzling children—had ever said they weren't. Except, indeed, Uncle Dick, who said sometimes they were burnt and sometimes they were roasted and eaten. That was in foreign countries, however, and Carlo didn't believe in foreign countries. He believed in what he saw, and his Papa, who was a very wise Professor, said that was the only wise way. But the sharp eyes of Carlo saw that his Mamma always looked sad at such words; looked sad, indeed, at much that his papa told him; "just like she looks when she wishes I wouldn't," thought Carlo. And he had heard nurse say to cook that his Papa was "a worse haythen than all thim Protestants." He was sure this must be some dreadful thing, because nurse said it with the same voice in which she told Carlo what became of bad, bad boys when they died.

Altogether there were many questions Carlo wanted answered, if only the grown-ups would tell him the same things. They didn't; they never did. When he asked his Papa what Christmas was, for in-

stance, he said it was "a fool's day,"—whatever that was. He said he wouldn't have a Christmas in his house if Carlo's Mamma were not so sentimental and so ill. And Santa Claus. His nurse had told him about Santa Claus, and had even shown him the real picture of the saint. But when he had said, "Papa! what is Santa Claus?" Papa had answered in his very gruffest voice, "*A lie!*" Only think! But how could there be a picture of him if he wasn't alive somewhere? Carlo asked his Mamma next, and she said, "Santa Claus is a real spirit of love and kindness, who comes every Christmas to children whose parents love them." As for nurse, she just held up her hands and exclaimed, "Master Carlo! where do ye expect to go to whin ye die, if ye don't belave Santa Claus is a little, fat, rale, live gintleman, what will lave yees a bunch av sticks an ye're a bad bye, Sor!" It was so about everything. The grown-ups all told you different stories, and frowned at you if you didn't believe them all at once. If they only knew how tired a child gets sometimes with all their mixed-up tales, and how many new questions come popping into his head then!

Now there was one, this very minute. It was a question that was an old friend of Carlo's. He had been asking it ever since he could remember, every once in a while. He wondered what "God" was, and why He let grown-up people be naughty, and not children. Nurse was always talking about Him, and how angry He would be for every fault. "The badder a boy is, the more God keeps coming around!"

poor Carlo cried out. "I should think He'd hate to be so near, always getting children scolded. Why don't He never come when I'm *good*? Perhaps because being good is so dreadful stupid," thought poor Carlo. Down deep in his little heart was a thought he was afraid of; a thought which he knew would draw down upon him the frowns and anger of all his little world. It was a thought only to be whispered to a bird in a tree; or to the moon on bright nights; or perhaps to some trusted companion when you were both naughty and in punishment, two stubborn little rebels together. This was the thought,—if only you please won't be shocked at it. "Perhaps there isn't any God at all! Perhaps He's just an ogre made up by the big people, like the one in Jack-the-Giant-Killer, on purpose to make boys behave!" Some days Carlo felt sure this was true; and he knew, he *knew* his Papa would not scold him for saying so. What he feared was the sad, sad look in the eyes of his pretty Mamma. But he could *think*, and think he did, that if a boy was to behave like this God of theirs did; spying, meddling, killing people in Bible stories, and being different to everybody; always on the side of the grown-ups and always hard on the children; Carlo was sure such a boy would be put into dark closets for life. "It just makes me mad," thought Carlo, "to have them say He loves me. He's nasty; I don't want Him to love me. He made His little boy grow up so unhappy and be *killed* for me. I'm glad I ain't God's little boy, and I won't be, either." By this it may be seen that Carlo's Papa

was partly right when he said the boy would get no good from Sunday-School. But like Carlo himself, his Father dreaded the mournful look in the eyes of his dying young wife. "There are times in life," he groaned, "when a man has to choose between being a brute or a liar." Uncle Dick had suggested that there was a third way, a golden mean between the atheism of the Father and the strict theology of the Mother, but while she lay there dying, trying with her last breath, as it were, to bias the fresh young soul of her son, for whom she feared perdition if she could not set his mind in a fixed direction before leaving him;—while she so lay, it was impossible to wound her. Uncle Dick resigned himself and trusted to Carlo himself; to something that he was sure was in Carlo, and would some day speak to the boy. Meanwhile, how sad to see the awful waste of energies directed to the thwarting of nature, to the attempts to alter the immutable Laws!

Carlo's last thought made him fling himself impatiently on the rug by the fire, the better to gaze up at the Christ-child on the Christmas tree. It had wings, and a star on its forehead. It was all gold and pink and white, like pretty Mamma, and Carlo loved it. He hated to think that such a lovely being had been nailed on an awful cross, had grown up to be a man, just like Papa's friends, only better, he supposed, and had been so good that people hated him and killed him. "It is stupid to be good, and people hate men for it out in the big world," mused Carlo. His little brain ached with all the contradic-

tions about him. Unknown to himself, the child felt the strain of the contest which was killing his Mother; which was rending the world all about him; the contest between Science and Theology, and, still more, between Matter and Spirit. He looked up at the shining figure on the tree, and said in his clear young voice, "Christ-child, I do wish you would tell me the real, true Truth."

It was so still that Carlo heard all the clocks ticking. There was a pause. The child lay so still, with the fire shining on his curls, that you would have thought him asleep.

Then the Christ-child spoke in a voice like the chime of bells, and said: "I will, Carlo! What do you want to know?"

You may be surprised, you big people. Carlo was not. He had always known that there are fairies, and that things can speak. He once talked with a squirrel in a tree, though neither of them made a sound. Children know well that all that you can think is possible. So he simply answered in a pleased little tone, "Then tell me, Christ-child, how you can be God if you were a man, and if you're up there on my Christmas tree."

"I am not up on your tree," said the Christ-child.

"Oh! Christ-child! Do you tell stories too? I hear you speaking up there."

"That is not myself," said the Christ-child. "That is my picture. You have known before now, Carlo, that pictures could speak."

"Yes; all the pictures talk to children," the boy

assented. "I hope I sha'n't forget it when I grow up. But where are you really, then?"

"I am everywhere, Carlo. Everything is my picture, and all try to speak of me. I am in the stars and in the glow-worms; I am in the winds and in the mosses; I am in the fruits, in the oceans, in the storms, and in the heart. I am All. I am God."

"But how can you be so big, if you are just the Christ-child?"

"They call me that when I am young," the voice said. "But I am not in one little body, like yours, Carlo. I am in all bodies, but they are not me. Listen! You will feel me in yours!"

Carlo started. Down in his heart he felt a stir, a strange sweet feeling that filled him so full of joy.

"Here I am," said the voice in his heart. "When you do wrong, it is I who speak to you and make you sorry."

"I thought that was Carlo's own self," cried the boy.

"It is yourself, but I am yourself, Carlo. I am the inner Voice in your heart. I live in the hearts of all men and all things. I am *the within* of all creatures and all beings. Long, long ago I slept in the Heavens. Then I woke, and I came into the world. I came because even God wants to feel and to know the great world which is himself. When I came I was a child, because I had not grown up in that world. You know what growing pains are, Carlo! When I entered into all these bodies, when I tried to make them speak of me, and tried to make them so pure and good that they should become my-

self, and when they would not, then they crucified me. The nails and the thorns are their evil deeds. And when men are entirely wicked, then they kill the voice in their hearts."

"But you are alive all the same, and I don't understand that."

"I am alive because I am the Christ-spirit."

"What's a spirit?" Carlo interrupted.

"I cannot tell you. But you may feel it. When you gave your lunch to the lame beggar, you felt a spirit in your heart. When you said you had been good, and Mamma kissed you, but you knew you had told a story, you felt a spirit inside that reproached you and would not let you rest. When the storm howls outside and you lie listening to music stealing through the darkness and over the uproar of the storm, and you feel safe and happy without knowing why, then you feel a spirit. When you look up at the bright stars and one shines and shines till you can't look away, but you love it and something goes out of you to the star, and something comes from the star to your heart, then you feel your spirit and the star-spirit meeting."

"Then what I feel is a spirit?"

"No, Carlo. But that which causes all these things; that which is *behind* everything; that which you cannot see or hear, but only feel when you are very still; that is Spirit and *in it I am*. I ride in that feeling as your heart rides in you."

"And why do you take so much trouble for everything, Christ-child?"

“Ah! Carlo! my Carlo! I love men. They may be mine. They may grow up to be me. I cannot tell you how to-day. It is a long, long story. But I will tell it every day, if you will only listen. I will teach you better than any one can if you will only ask me in your heart.”

“And what will you teach me first, Christ-child!”

“To love all beings, for all are mine, and I am speaking in the heart of all. Even the stones grow through the wonderful music of my Voice. If you kill the bird, you kill my picture, and you drive me out of that pretty form I loved. If you strike a child, you strike my image. No one can hurt *me*, or pain *me*, or kill *me*. For I am God. But these creatures which I came to help, to raise up to great Beings, they can be destroyed and scattered for a time. Even a little child can interrupt my work for a while. If you do not listen to me, Carlo; if you do not obey me when I speak in your heart, and believe my voice above all others, then I cannot join you to myself; then we cannot grow up to be one great, wise Being; then I cannot take you home to God where we are one, you and I. And thus you can prevent my work.”

“When I want to be bad, is it you who speak to me then?” said Carlo, puzzled.

“No. It is yourself, that thinks it does not know me. It is because you do not know that I am really Carlo; I am what Carlo may grow up to be, but what he is not yet.”

"How shall I know which voice is you, then, Christ-child?"

"You may know by this: I shall never tell you to treat any person, or anything, any different than you would me myself. I will only speak to you in gentle, quiet hours. And often you will make mistakes, for that is just what you are put into the world for, Carlo; you are put there to learn to know my Voice from all the rest. If you try you will know. When people have puzzled you so much, it was I said down in your heart, 'Never mind! Let us go play.' For it was not time for you to think of those things. Often I whispered to you, '*Carlo! it is not true.*' I am always speaking from your heart and from the hearts of all things. Listen for me. Try to know me when I speak from the lips of other people. For I love you! I am yourself. And you, little Carlo, you may grow to be everywhere in the great world. Wait, try, and you will understand."

"I will try, Christ-child! I will try!" cried Carlo, springing to his feet. The room was quite still. The shining figure hung upon the tree. Everything seemed as usual. Yet down in his heart Carlo felt a strange warm feeling, a something bigger than himself. When he tried to tell his Mamma, he could not make it real, and she said it was a dream; but whether or not, on that Christmas Day the Christ-child was born again.

FOHAT'S PLAYGROUND.*

LITTLE Carlo stood alone in the empty nursery. It was twilight of the last day of the year, and stars came leaping one by one into the cold skies. Carlo watched them, a small dark figure outlined by the fading firelight, his black kilts and blouse making him look thin and pale. Over his whole dainty person, as he leaned, slight and lonely, against the window frame, there was that pathetic and indefinable look which every woman knows to be that of a motherless child. It overshadowed the little figure, giving it a gravity beyond its years, that smote the heart of "Uncle John," who at that moment entered the nursery. Carlo turned around with a shout of joy.

"Come here to the fire, you small elf, you," said his Uncle, folding him in what Carlo called "the bear's hug."

"No, no. You come to the window, Uncle, I want to show you something. Say, do you see that there black spot up there? Now you watch, and, I bet you, you'll see a star pop in there, and then move, and more too. All them others did it just

* Fohat—Cosmic Electricity and more. See *Secret Doctrine*.

that way. Somebody must be a-going round scratching places with a match, and making stars just that-a-way. What fun he must be having. Don't you think so, Uncle John?"

"I do indeed," said his Uncle, promptly.

Carlo gave a squeal of delight. To find an Uncle, a grown-up person, who says you're right and goes on to tell you more about it,—a grown-up who makes all your fun seem real and true instead of saying "Hush," or telling you something so tiresome that you don't want to know, and can't, *can't*, CAN'T understand—why; what a New Year's present an Uncle like that is to a boy! Carlo adored his Uncle John; his favorite playfellow, his best friend. He felt that a new and delightful game or story was coming. He jumped on his Uncle, hung around his waist, wrapped his small legs around the Uncle's strong ones, gave a squeeze and a bite of ecstatic affection, squealed again, dropped to the floor, put his small thumbs in his small blouse pockets, set his chubby legs well apart, and then, in this manly attitude which was as like his uncle's as he could make it, he tilted his curly head back and asked:

"Well then, Siree Bob, who is he?"

His Uncle smiled. A slow smile just to tease him. Carlo stamped with impatience and butted his Uncle with his head. This was a Freemason's sign. It meant that Carlo wanted to be taken up into those broad arms, but was so big now, he was ashamed to say so. Uncle John lifted the little form, cradled the sunny head upon his shoulder, with a suppressed

sigh for the sweet young mother and sister whose soft breast would never know the touch of the beloved body of her child. The sigh was too low for Carlo to catch it. He wriggled joyfully, and again asked:

"Who is it lights them stars?"

"It is Fohat," said Uncle John, impressively.

"Fohat," repeated Carlo, pleased with the name.

"Who is he?"

"Fohat, my boy, is one of the Great Ones."

Carlo already knew some of his Uncle John's "Great Ones," or Great Powers. He called them "those big fellows," himself. They were his giants and his fairies. He chuckled now at the idea of hearing about another. "Is he a very big one?" he asked.

"Fohat," said Uncle John, "is one of the greatest of all the Sons of Light, and the heavens are his playground."

"What does he do in 'em, say?" cried Carlo in excitement. "Tell us about him, quick."

"The heavens, you see, Carlo, are full of stars, and the worlds are full of atoms. Atoms are tiny sparks that only the Great Ones can see; they shine and they live. But where do the stars and the atoms get their life? From Fohat. He touches them, just as you said; he touches them with his flashing diamond spear; a spark leaps from it to them, and that sets them on fire, they burn and live. All the little atoms are scattered through the fields of the sky at the world's daybreak; there they are, soft and milky-

white and sleeping, all huddled together like little chicks under the wings of the mother hen. The mother hen of the atoms is the Darkness. Then comes great Fohat, winding along like a serpent, hissing as he glides. He comes upon those lazy little atoms, he pours cold light upon them; they jump up and scatter; they run through the sky. He scatters himself and runs after them in many waves of light; he catches up with them; he blows upon them till they are cold and shivering; this hardens them and they shine. When they shine they are glad, they laugh. All at once, from idle little atoms they become stars, they become souls. Fohat has done it for them. When they begin to shine and sparkle, then they begin to understand. They love Fohat; they move along in a starry dance and sing a song that praises him."

"Fohat likes that, I bet you, *I bet you*," said Carlo in his funny way. "But, Uncle, what is that thing you said? What is a soul?"

"A soul is the spark you feel burning in your heart. Don't you feel it right there?" and the Uncle laid his hand on the boy's heart.

Carlo thought a minute. Yes, he felt it. It was a warm spot down in the place where he felt things. When he felt good or when he felt bad, that was where he felt it. He had another name for it, a name most children give it. "That's my Thinker, Uncle John," he said gravely.

"I know; and that's your soul. I have one, too."

"And has Fohat got one?"

"Fohat has the biggest spark of all," his Uncle answered. "He has to have, for he has so much work to do."

"What's he do?"

"Oh! He has so many games up in his playground. He can change himself into ever so many things. Sometimes he puts on a cap of fire and wings of light, and acts as herald to the sunbeams; he leads their blazing march and sings songs of the sun; his songs shine, they are as radiant as the sun and moon. When clouds meet with a loud thunder-call in heaven, and lightnings spring out, it is Fohat who calls and drives them on; they sweat, and rain falls on the dry earth. Then he loves to make things. He takes some star-dust and makes a daisy; then he makes a big world, or a sun, all on the same pattern. When he is tired of that he becomes the great Propeller, and merrily, merrily, he pushes the world along."

"He must be awful busy. Don't he never get tired?"

"Never. Fohat can't get tired. You know I told you the Great Ones never get tired, because they haven't got any bodies like ours to get tired. You know that little spark in your heart don't get tired, but it beats right along night and day. The Great Ones are great splendid sparks like that, and they can think too. Besides, how could Fohat get tired, when he is Motion itself?"

"What's that? What's Motion?" said Carlo.

"Motion? Well; when birds fly, or when you run through the air, that's Motion."

"Oh! I know that. It goes fast, fast, and wind blows on your face."

"Well; Motion is not the bird. It is not Carlo. It is not the wind that blows on you. It is that Going-fast; it is the Fast-Fast's own self," said Uncle John, gazing into Carlo eyes, to see if the little fellow would understand.

"Going-fast its own self," repeated Carlo. "I *fink* I know what you mean. I *fink* I don't *understand* it, Uncle John, but I can *feel* it. Will that do?"

"That will do," said his Uncle, delighted. "I often feel things when I don't understand them. My Thinker feels them. Well, then, when you go fast, fast, fast—"

"Awful fast," interrupted Carlo.

"Then it gets hot, it gets hotter, it bursts into fire, on your face, or like the car axles last summer—"

"Oh! I know, or like when you rubbed them sticks together in camp, and the Fast-Fast made warm air (I *feeled* it), and then smoke, and a fire jumped out."

"Exactly." His Uncle, pleased, gave him a hug. "Great and fast going, as big as the world, then fire and light that fills the skies; all that is Fohat."

"But what's he do Sundays? Does he have to sit still then?"

"He does just what he does on other days, for to him every day is a sun-day, a day of the sun. And so it ought to be with us, too. The great eye of the sun sees us every day; don't let it see us doing un-

kind things. At night the moon and the stars keep watch. Let them see our heart sparks burning bright and clear, not cloudy with dark smoke made by unkind acts or thoughts. If we are unkind, our heart sparks can't help to play Fohat's favorite game."

"What's that, Uncle?"

"At dawn, Fohat calls the Sons of Light together. He says that they must bind all the stars and worlds together with diamond threads. Along every thread blow a soft breath of love and a little note of music; that will make those threads strong. Then when the Sons of the Shadow come along, they cannot break the singing threads and scatter the worlds down into the dark. When this is done, Fohat says: 'Now all the stars and worlds are harnessed together; come let us join all the atoms and all the heart sparks of men and women and children together with the shining threads, and we will drive them all.' Then when everything in the whole world is singing and going together, the Sons of Light are glad, they say it is good."

"But s'pose something kicks up and rears, Uncle John?"

"If it is a star, they cut it loose, and you see it fall. If it is a man or a child, you see that he doesn't go with all the rest. He is lonely; he is unhappy. His heart spark is lonely, and it thinks sad, unhappy things. He is cut loose from the shining rays of Fohat. But, my little Carlo, when Fohat comes to light the Christ-spark in a man's heart with that diamond spear of his, then that man becomes one

of the Great Ones, he is one of the Sons of Light."

"Could Carlo be?" asked the smiling child.

His Uncle whispered: "Yes, he could, if he listens always when Fohat, Son of Light, speaks through the silent speaker in the heart. You do not hear its voice with your ears, but it speaks; it thinks, and you understand."

"Sometimes it sings in there," said the boy. "It sings when Carlo loves you."

"May the Sweet Law bless your golden heart, my darling. For it *always* sings when we love."

That night when Carlo fell asleep he was smiling. He had fallen asleep listening to the song of Fohat.

CARLO'S GAME.

"As the One Fire, after it has entered the world, though one, becomes different according to what it burns, thus the One Self within all things becomes different according to whatever it enters, but it exists apart."

CARLO was playing a favorite game, although you would not have supposed him to be playing at all. He was lying flat upon his back, his small heels planted against a pine tree trunk, his dreamy little face upturned to the blue sky glimmering between the boughs. This game he called "My Remember Game," and so he told his Uncle John, who came up and asked what he was doing there.

"Playin' my Remember Game, Uncle John," he said. "Come an' lie down this-a-way, Sir, an' maybe you'll remember too."

Uncle John glanced at the feet vigorously tattooing the tree trunk, and inquired, "Why do you put your feet on the tree, Carlo; is it a part of the game?"

"Put 'em there 'cause I feel the tree tickle me. Somethin' inside that tree runs up and I feel it makin' me shiver. I call that the tree's blood. Papa calls it nonsense. What do you call it, Uncle?"

"I think it must be what you call the tree's blood, Carlo, but I have a different name. I call it the life force."

"An' which's the best name?"

"Well; let us see. Why do you call it the tree's blood?"

Giving his curly mane a toss, Carlo rolled over and bit a mouthful of sorrel grass in delight. He felt sure he should win in this game of reasons, with Uncle John. They often played thus, looking into the reasons of things and trying to find out the "Why." He laughed aloud in his pleasure.

"Guess I'm goin' to beat you, Sir. I've got an awful good 'Why.' When I cut my finger, other day, blood runned out. Everybody in the whole world calls it blood. An' when I cut the tree, a yellow stickiness runned out; so I called *it* blood. It must be a-runnin' there, an' I bet it's what tickles my feet."

His feet were covered with yellow moccasins, bead embroidered.

"Is wearing moccasins part of the game?" inquired Uncle John.

"No. Least I think not. But it tickles more through them than my shoes."

"I shouldn't wonder if that were really so. You gave me a right good reason, Carlo Boy. Now I owe you mine. You said the tree's blood, which is called sap or resin by most people, ran out when you cut the tree, didn't you?"

"Well, it didn't 'xactly *run*, but it kinder comed

out, that-a-way. Trees are slower than people in everything, isn't they?"

"They are, my boy; they are. A tree is never in a hurry. We might take some good lessons from trees. And I see you've been taking some. Always, when you see anything, try to see something else like it in some other part of the world and in yourself, and then you'll understand better. To do that is called Comparison or Analogy."

Carlo yawned.

"I don't fink I care about those big words, Uncle," he said. "I don't fink I do. But all the boys allays looks around to see what will esplain things to them 'when peoples is too busy'."

"Explain is the word, Carlo."

"I don't care for them words," said the child with some impatience. "You know what *fings* I mean; any old word will do when you know the fings. An' you ain't gived me your reason yet. Did I beat you; is mine the best?"

"My reason is this: When your blood runs, or the sap moves, do you think the blood and the running are one, or two? Do you think the sap and the moving are the same thing, or two things?"

Carlo considered. "I dunno," he slowly said.

"You saw an engine moving yesterday. Was that two things, or one?"

"Two," he shouted joyously, kicking his heels in the air. "Two!" In his exuberance he rolled upon his Uncle, now seated on the grass beside him, and began to pommel him lightly with his fists.

"Why two, Carlo?"

"Because steam made it go. I seen it. I seen the engineer, too."

"Anything more?"

"You bet I did. I saw a fire, a red one. I fink Papa said it made the steam."

"Then there were four things, old man. The engine is like the tree. The steam is like the sap. The moving that comes from the sap and from the steam, that is what makes both run, and makes your blood run. That is Force. In living things it is life-force. All things have their own kind of force, don't you see; but all are different ways in which Force shows itself. Force puts on many masks, as the clown did in the circus yesterday, but behind the masks is always the same one moving them all. Tree's life and engine's life and boy's life don't run the same way. The tree, the engine, the boy, don't move alike, either. But Force, the hidden Mover, is the same in itself. It moves you, me, the world, the ants and flowers; our ways are different, but the Mover is the same."

Carlo breathed hard. He was interested. He knew and loved his Uncle's ways; generally he understood them. When he didn't he used to say: "I don't understand, Uncle, but I love you." Then the Uncle would answer: "That does just as well; it's the same thing. Love will bring the understanding bye-and-bye." So Carlo got to speaking of his "understanding" and his "love-understanding." He said now: "I know what you mean with my love-understandin', Uncle. Just that-a-way. An' does all the

Motion, does that Mover come from fire, everywhere?"

"Yes, that Mover is Fire; different kinds of Fire. Some kinds we see with our eyes, and some with our minds—"

"Our Thinkers," Carlo interrupted.

"Yes; and some with our understanding."

"And some only with our love-understandin's?"

"Some only that way just now. But I told you that love will bring truth after a while. There is really only One Fire, but when it enters the sun, the air, coal, or a man, it looks different, it has different ways. Forty-nine ways, the wise men say."

"Forty-nine! Is that more than a thousand?" asked Carlo, whose kilts and curls had never yet been inside a school-room. He was learning things outside. The world was his object-lesson, and his Uncle the skilful teacher. With a pleased little chuckle he asked now: "Did you forget the engineer, Unky? Did you?"

"By no means, my boy. That engineer is very important. He can run the train up, or down, or off the track to destruction. You and I can run our engines where we please, always according to the laws of Motion. A man can run his body as he pleases, make it a good instrument to help the world, or he can do a great deal of harm, but he can only follow the ways of the hidden Mover. His ways are patterns for ours. And we must have good fires in these engines of ours; the right fuel is a good will. Isn't that so?"

"May be so," answered the boy, rubbing his curls. "You telled me never to say I was sure when I hadn't tried it. Carlo ain't tried that yet. I guess I don't know that about lots of fires, but I want to know where's the tree's engines. Has it got a Thinker like ours?"

"Not like ours, but a Thinker of its own kind."

Carlo sat up suddenly. "What fun! Did you ever see a tree's Thinker?"

"No. Nor did I ever see your soul or mine, (Thinkers, as you call them). Nothing else has a Thinker like men. But one great Thinker is at work in us all. Everything lives, acts, goes on. That is life, and life is thought. Everything that moves has thought of its own kind. To think is to be."

"An' flowers an' nuts an' leaves is the tree's thoughts, I know. My Remember Game told me so."

"Is that so? Do tell me about your game, little one. What else does it say?"

"It says—" The bright eyes filled with tears. "Promise me you won't tell Papa, nor any laughin' people. Promise."

"I do promise."

"Well," said a small and solemn voice, "my Game Remember says my beauty Mamma ain't dead at all. No! She isn't. *True!* Aren't you glad, Uncle John! She was your Sister, you know."

"Indeed I am glad, Carlo. She was, and is, my dear Sister. I always hoped she was not really dead. In fact I don't think I ever believed she was."

Carlo caught his Uncle's bearded face in his two

plump hands and squeezed it, looking eagerly in his eyes for an instant, then with a soft sigh of satisfaction he kissed his friend. "You ain't laughing like the rest does," he explained. "I wonder they want to laugh at children; it makes 'em look awful ugly."

"Tell me more about your game, Carlo."

"I jess lie down an' look straight ahead at the sky, 'cause I ain't really lookin' at nothin', you know. Then fings comes a-sailin', a-sailin' with music, right spang frou' my mind. A many fings. But you have to keep so still. If you jump about an' say 'Oh! no, Oh! no,' then it all stops: all them sky ships sails home again."

"What news do your ships bring you, boy?"

"Such stories about fings. Funny fings that Carlo used to be. Nice fings too. Sometimes fairies; not often. Sometimes they make me understand what the birds say when they sing; an' when squirrels chatters, too."

"And is that all?"

"Uncle John, you allays inter—rumps at the bestest part. My Game Remember says Mamma is 'round me like the air. It says she's a-comin' back to me some'eres else. It says I'll be her Mamma, an' she'll be my little boy; bet I'll be good to her when she's a he. It says we were once two butterflies; two little baby deers in a forest too. It says we used to fly in the air; the one that loved God best could go fastest. To-day it said we was beautiful lights, an' God was a big Light that lit us all up and made us feel like a good long heaven shining.

An' an'—I disremember more now. You lie down here an' play my Game Remember, Uncle John. I call it that 'cause I fink it remines me of some fings I knew when I knew lots more than these old grown-ups do. It makes me feel werry big in here." He struck his breast with his hands. "Play it an' tell me if it says true."

"I have played it; I think it says true, on the whole," the Uncle answered, smiling at the boy's excitement and delight.

"Hurrah! But say; how could I be all those fings some other time?"

"Do you remember what I told you about the One Fire, and all its ways?"

"Ess—" said Carlo.

"That Fire never dies. It lives forever in a darkness of its own. It comes out of that Darkness; it goes back into that Darkness. You have seen our earth fire do that. The One Fire is the Father of all Fires, the Father of Lights. It goes into a form. It comes out, and the form falls to pieces, like the wood which is ashes when the fire has left it. That Fire goes into many, many forms, in very many ways. Each form, in dying, gives life to something else. Cinders and ashes make food that is good for grass and flowers. The acorn dies, and from its grave springs a tree. Some dead forms give birth to worms that creep, and some to winged things. Some worms die, and butterflies arise to kiss the flowers. Some germs ferment, and little children are born. So you see there is no Death; there is

only another kind of life, another form from broken forms. But always the One Fire in its many ways and lesser fires gives life and motion to worlds of forms. There are shapes of air, shapes of light, shapes of fire, just as there are more solid shapes, and all are always melting away into one another like the pictures of your kaleidoscope. What makes them move and change so? The hidden Mover in the lesser fires that are the souls of men."

"I see! I know! Them little fires is the children of the great Fire, the fire with the Thinker as big as the world. Now I know why Mamma taught me to say 'Our Father;' she wanted me to fink about that good fire what makes all these splendid things. It's a great light: far, far away an' everywhere too; my Game Remember says so. It loves me. I heard it a-sayin', 'Come, Carlo; let us make errybody werry happy an' we'll shine forever an' ever.' It just *loves* to shine, Uncle John."

The boy's voice fell. The sun was about 'to disappear in the west. Birds twittered in the trees. Carlo's eyes followed his Uncle's; he clapped his hands.

"See the red fire that sun makes. Is the sun one of the ways of God? Then I fink he's goin' down to that One Fire, to say that the world is werry well. The great Fire will be glad to know that; I fink it must like us werry well to take trouble to make such a many fings. An' I fink that God is here, too, an' everywhere. He's the hiding Mover, Uncle John; he's life, if he never dies. I feel him movin' in me,

now. He burns me; he loves me; he moves me. My Game Remember says that's God."

Uncle's John's lips did not move, yet he was saying:

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

THE WONDER-LIGHT.

ONCE a lonely little child awoke in the night and saw a great Light coming towards him. He was not afraid, for, as the Light came up about him, he saw that it trembled; it was as soft as his Mamma's arms, as clear as his Mamma's eyes.

This child was Carlo. He slept alone because his dear Mamma was dead. He sat up in his wee bed to look at the Light, and it grew brighter as if it smiled at him; a silver voice seemed to come out of it and said:

"Carlo, I have come to take care of you."

"What can you do?" said the child.

"I can shine," said the Light.

Then it wrapped Carlo up, Oh! so softly, and began shining. It grew brighter and brighter; lovely light-blue waves rolled from it; they were blue as the egg of the robin. One after another they rose, fell, and rolled on, just as if they moved to sweet music; they broke against Carlo's breast very gently, and their spray was like blue diamonds scattered on the night. They made him feel so happy, so good, as if he loved all the world and it loved him; he seemed to see in those blue deeps the angels that help and pity the poor old world. Out of these waves yellow rays

of light came flashing; one touched him between the eyes, and lo! he saw more and more of the beauties of those waves. There were so many wonderful things there, they puzzled him.

"Light," said he, "Carlo can't understand all that."

"Some day you will," answered the Light. "Now you need only remember."

As the sunny beams sparkled about him, splendid dark-blue lights fell from their tips, like blue bells from a high skyrocket. One fell into his mind, and as it slipped among his curls he began to understand; he knew then that the Light was his teacher and friend. He lay down again, nestling into that soft Light.

"Show me more, Light," he said; "shine more."

Just then the Light changed all at once to a splendid green ocean, whose billows spread far, far over the earth. Carlo looked, and saw that this was a sea of green grass with the moon shining upon it. Every blade of grass danced, and on each was a tiny fairy-like creature; these tickled the earth, and more grass and flowers sprang up. Great numbers of these tiny fairies came and went; they were the earth-builders: some made the great trees full of glowing fruits, which made Carlo want to go and pick them. Others helped to build the mountains; still others tended the mosses; there were more who went to and fro among the animals and among people on strange errands of service which Carlo could not then understand. Troops of these little people

were bustling about everywhere. They were not all like people; some were like specks of light with a dark ring or belt about them; others had other shapes, translucent as those of the sea creatures; some lived in water, some in fire, some in earth, but they were all busy, they all worked in the service of the world. The more they worked, the more they shone, the more they grew. All this was so interesting, so bright and bustling, that Carlo clapped his hands.

"I like this best," he called out. "Let me go and eat those fruits." Indeed, the fruits were so brilliant and glowing, they seemed to call to his eyes to see them and to his lips to come taste them: he could hardly keep still.

"Would you rather eat them, or see what makes them all grow?" said the voice of the Light. It was not a loud voice, it did not stir the air, nor yet did it come out of the air; it seemed to speak in Carlo's mind.

"I would rav-ver eat them," said Carlo, quickly.

Then an odd thing happened. All the Light grew paler, darker, as if sadness came over it. It was still beautiful, but it did not shine so happily; it went under a cloud, and Carlo felt its shadow in his little heart.

"Ah! you are not wise," murmured the voice of the Light. That voice had been like silver bells before; now it was heavy as lead. It sank down, down deep in Carlo's breast; the deeper it went the sadder he felt, as if joy could never dance in his heart again.

"It feels as if Carlo had been naughty," he said. He looked again at the fruits on those splendid trees, hanging like star clusters from the boughs. "I 'spose little children isn't werry wise, and those fruits must be puffickly 'licious." The light grew colder and darker; it began to go away. Carlo could not bear that. "Couldn't I have both?" he asked.

"You must choose," said the voice, far away.

Carlo made a great effort; he gave a big sigh, shut his eyes, clenched his dimpled fists, and shouted out fast, in a big, cross voice, as if he was afraid he'd change his mind:

"Show me how they grow, and be warm and glad again for Carlo."

At this, the Light kindled into new beauty. How it beamed! How it shone! It did not hurt Carlo's eyes, and yet it was so strong that he saw it through his forehead, when his eyes were closed.

"When peoples is good, does it make you shine more?" he asked.

"Much more," answered that silver voice.

A long ray stretched towards the tree and flowers, pointing at them, then touching them. They became luminous, inside and out, as a house does when big fires are lit in every room. Now Carlo could see into them. He saw that they were all made of the very tiniest specks of colored lights, moving fast in every leaf and flower and tree, and in all creatures too: they were like little currents in water; their motion kept everything warm and made everything live; an orange-colored light ran, thread-like, through

all the rest. An orange-colored star was also sitting in the heart of every fairy, every stone, mountain, tree, flower, insect, bird, animal, child, man, and woman. Every star wore a crown; it moved to and fro just as the Light did, singing as it moved.

"What are those beautiful stars?" asked the child.

"They are my children; they are souls. I am the soul of the world; each soul is a sparkle of me," said the Light. "All are in me, each is myself, that makes all souls one."

Carlo looked again. The Light kept changing from pale to bright, and whatever change came over the Mother Light was felt by the child stars; they changed with it. Rays spread from each star out into the Light and to all other stars; these rays were veins and arteries like those in Carlo's arms; what ran in them was not blood, it was more Light, and that Light was the life of men. Lights of all colors ran to and fro, messengers of the Mother Light to her children, carrying love and peace from star to star. From those rays a rainbow mist rose up, then fell back again in a frozen rain which took the shape of all the things in the world; all the forms that ever were seen were there, made out of the colors of the Light. These shapes seemed like magnets, they drew Light and earth about them, and the fairies worked so busily on them that presently a heart-star was kindled in their center. A warm Breath, blowing out of the Light, set the heart-star to moving in time with the Light, and when that happened, the forms became alive.

Carlo was much interested and surprised. "Just look at that," said he; "it seems as if the world was all made out of Light."

"So it is," he was told. "All things are made in me, the One Light; all things are made out of me. There are higher and lower Lights, all are not alike, but all, from earth's fires to the Christ-Light which is the Saviour of men, all are made in and from me; they are all one Substance, it is Light. Look again."

On looking closer Carlo saw a difference in the Lights. For instance, the heart-stars of the stones were small and pale; they hardly shone at all. The heart-stars of plants were brighter; those of the animals came next, while the hearts of people moved fastest and burned brightest of all. It seemed that the faster your star moved and the brighter it burned, the greater and better you were. The vegetables and plants lived more than the stones; the animals lived more than they, but were not so full of life and thoughts as the people. As for the earth-builders, they had not so many colors in them as the rest, and their heart-star had no crown; it was more like a dot of light than a star. Carlo wondered why this was, and the voice answered him as if he had spoken.

"It is because they have not received their souls yet; they only have life. Life is the orange Light you see running through all the rest."

"And has peoples got the biggest souls?"

While he said this he looked up, and there he saw a great Being, like an angel, moving in music across

the sky. This Being was all of Light; he was robed in crystals and rainbows; he was all starry; moving tongues of rosy flame went before and after him, little love flames with singing wings. The heart-star of this angel was most glorious, larger and brighter than any Carlo had seen. By his face and the deep kindliness of his eyes Carlo seemed to know that he had once been a man like other men. But now the splendor of the Christ-Light was in his heart.

"Light, how do you make everything? I wish you'd tell me," he coaxed.

"I make them as you make your thoughts in your mind. I am the Thinker. The worlds and all the things in them are my thoughts. When you think, when the Light in you thinks, that, too, makes forms in me, although you cannot always see them."

"When will I see them?"

"When my yellow ray has opened your eyes. That will only be if you are a very good man. Be careful meantime not to think bad thoughts, for that would make ugly things in the Light. Come! I will show you more," added the voice like falling water.

Again a golden beam touched his head; a violet cloud was all about his body; the Light put a golden bridle upon it; he mounted and rode away into the big world of things. He saw then that while the heart-stars of stones were much alike among themselves, and all of about the same degree of brightness, and while the heart-stars of plants and animals

were alike among themselves, each in its own kind, yet the heart-stars, or souls, of people differed very much indeed. While some were of a mighty brilliance and purity, others were surrounded by a thick black smoke, through which their stifled Light was scarcely seen, a smoke which prevented their shining. Though Light lit every man in the world, it could not always shine forth. This left some people in darkness; the places where they lived were like dark spots in the Light, so they stumbled and fell against each other. This made them angry, for their minds too were so dark they could not see the right of **anything**; they struck at each other; they shouted **angry words**. Those words were like poisoned arrows, they had a life of their own, they rushed through the Light, making confusion in its soft rays. Wherever their sharp sounds fell, a red fire of wrath sprang up, cracking and roaring, making new smoke and greater darkness. All the smoke in the world, smothering the heart-stars, came from red fires of wrath in dark minds, and many of the people cried out:

“What shall we do in this dark world?”

“Let your Light shine!” Carlo shouted back. He felt so sorry for them, and, as they did not hear him, he asked the Light why it did not speak to them as it did to him.

“I do speak,” it answered, “but they cannot hear me because those red fires roar so. I am only heard in the quiet heart. My voice is the voice of Love. When they are kind to one another, when they shout

no sharp words, when they make no red anger fires, then they will hear. When you were greedy about the fruit, you saw what a shadow it made in me. All selfish thoughts make a cloud and coldness in the Light. That runs along my rays and many heart-stars feel it. The rays are roads running from one part to another. Whatever is done by one person runs along those lines and is felt by all."

"Make me understand better, dear Light," said the child.

"Suppose you have a tub of water and you want to blacken one drop of that water. You pour ink in the tub; instead of blackening one drop, it blackens all. If bad, selfish thoughts are put into the Light which fills all the world, they run through that Light and cloud it; every heart-star is choked by the smoke unless it is so much purer and stronger that it throws the smoke off; hearts that move very much faster can do this, but weak hearts are hurt. Be good, *not* for yourself, but for the sake of others; then your Light will shine."

"Ess," said Carlo. He saw that the Light was like an immense spider-web, filling the whole world. Wherever the countless lines crossed, there was a point where something lived, whether star or man, or beast or plant or stone. Whatever it was, that point was its heart-star; if any of the lines were touched, all were moved. If touched with Love, that Love was Light; it ran along the rays and they trembled into music, moving faster, growing brighter. If they were touched with unkindness, that was a

harsh red fire, smoking as it ran. What touched those lines? Not hands; oh, no. Whenever any heart-star moved, that touched them. Some moved with love and some moved with selfishness. Some moved for all others; some moved to please themselves. That made the difference.

‘But why is Love Light?’ asked Carlo.

‘Because the Light is all in all and is for all. To live in all—that is true Love.’

‘And why is selfishness a red, smoking fire?’

‘Because it wants to take all for itself, just as fire burns all to feed itself.’

The child looked at the many dark hearts struggling like flies in the web of Light, the kindly web that was their home, if they only knew it. Tears of pity filled his eyes. It was too great weight for his heart. The voice whispered that he must not mind this too much, that dark hearts learned through pain, just as Carlo learned not to put his finger into the candle light after it had once burned him. Then the Light let down its pale blue curtain between the child and the world. He felt himself once more in his bed; the violet cloud was gone, and again he lay softly in the lap of the Light.

‘What more can you do?’ said the child to the Light.

‘I can sing,’ said the Light. ‘Listen!’

At first there was only a deep, sweet silence, such a silence as comes when you are going to sleep on the Mother’s breast. Then musical ripples arose in that silence, like waves on a moonlit sea. They

gathered together, coming faster and faster, white crests on a storm of sound. On and on they rode, each sound sparkling as it came. There were sounds of all colors, more fragrant than flowers; they fell as sweetly on the lips as on the ears. Thick and fast they fell, shining snowflakes now from the dark dome of silence; they joined themselves together in radiant bands, singing a grand song. "All the morning stars sang together." They flocked about the little child; he clapped his hands, he sang with them, he rose and danced in his small bed; his yellow curls, his white limbs shone among the shining jewel sounds; the Light gave him wings of violet and silver; it was the happiest hour in the world.

When Carlo was tired he lay down again and asked the Light what more it could do.

"I can make worlds with my song," the Light replied. "See!"

Once more a golden beam touched Carlo's forehead; he felt that he saw with all his body, which was full of Light. Far in the distance was a huge fountain of Light, a fountain with a dark center; the edges of this dark ring broke into the Light that sang, bubbling up with joy. Here, too, every ray of Light was a color, and as color touched color, as ray met ray, music leaped out as fire leaps when a match is rubbed upon stone. Where the red met the green, where the blue met the yellow, they were glad, they met like brothers, a grand song arose. These songs were the life of the Light. There was something still more wonderful. When that Light

sparkled through a color, Carlo saw it was made up of tiny golden specks, like gold-dust or sun mist. These specks, or atoms, crowded together, calling out in joy at meeting; the sounds they made ran round and through them, drawing other atoms to the group; the sounds touched that group here, there, everywhere; they were like hands shaping it, just as a boy moulds clay or putty into a shape, and soon Carlo saw that Sound was making beautiful things out of the Light.

"Once I see Uncle John run his fiddle bow on a pane of glass what had yellow grains of sand on it, and the grains runned together at the sounds an' made real pretty shapes on the glass," he reflected. "Seems to me there's a awful lot of things to know." He saw stars made in this way, enormous stars that bounded off into the sky and wheeled about the sun with choral songs. Each star had its own color, each star had its own song, but all the colors together made pure white light, and all the songs blended into one song, the life-song of the sun. When the sun sang that, it warmed the earth; then it was that flowers bloomed, that trees arose, that birds laid bright eggs in their nests, and children were born. The seas became full of fish; out of the air came all winged things. The snake came, too, and the owl, bird of night with solemn eyes, the fierce tiger, the elephant with his trumpet, the timid things of darkness and all the poisonous lives of the jungle were drawn to that grand Sound. They were tamed by it; the wildcat purred and the tiger crouched; the

snake danced, the elephant forgot his lair; they all loved the Sound and the Light; in them all were gentle and kind as children are at the mother's breast; they knew that the Light had mothered them all; they were wiser than many people are. Carlo saw that if men would do the same, if men would hearken to the Light and would be filled with it, letting it shine, all things would be good, and heaven and earth would be one happy place of peace. The voice told him that there were no bad things, only the use to which things were put was bad. The creatures would not hurt men if the men had not made dark, evil places in the Light to darken all the weaker souls. All things are made for Nature's good uses, but darkened, blinded hearts do not always obey Nature's laws. All evil comes from darkened Light, from rays turned back, or twisted or broken, where the red fire swallows up their silvery beauty and they can no longer do their proper work.

While he thought this, which the light seemed to put into his mind, he saw the singing colors cluster very thick about a place larger than our world. The place became glorious with Light, full of angels that obeyed it and flew to do its will. Soon so many rays gathered about this wonderful place, they pressed so thick, they moved so fast, such fires were struck from them, such dazzling lightnings, such moving songs arose, they seemed to be doing some mighty work. All at once a last marvelous blaze shot up, the rays melted together, a bell note pealed to the ends of the universe, and lo! a Sun sprang forth in

glory, bearing the angels in his resplendent heart. The Sound and the Light had made a new Sun!

Up rose the child in his little bed. He fell on his knees and clasped his hands as he had been taught to do in prayer.

"Light, I fink you must be God," he said.

"No, I am not God," answered the Light. "I am the spoken Word of God."

"He must be werry glad he spoke you," mused Carlo.

"Why do you call God *he*? God is not a man."

"Does she love little children whose mothers is dead?"

"God *is* Love, Carlo, but God is not a woman," said the Voice.

"What is God?" the child asked.

"I do not know," the Light made answer.

"Why, I thought you knew everything."

"I do not know that. No man, no angel, no Being, however powerful, knows it. God is in me, for I feel the Breath of God and I tremble. That Breath, breathing in me, makes motion, sound, color, makes all that is. I only feel the 'Breath-which-is-eternal;' I do not see God."

"I s'pose God is the hidden Mover Uncle John told me about."

"No; the Breath is the Mover. God is not known."

"What shall I call God, then?"

"Do not name the Unseen One at all," spoke the Light. "Let your thoughts rise to It in silence and

in love. Such thoughts have wings of Light to reach the Silence where dwells the Everlasting One. If your thoughts speak, they lose breath, their wings are feeble, they fall by the way. Adore and be still."

"May I whisper something?" said the child in a small, low voice. "Often I heard peoples talk about God. Some tells all He finks about us, an' what He does, as if they knowed Him werry well."

"That is ignorance. They see some idea of their own minds, and they think God must be like it. Some think one of my angels is God. God means good, all the good in the world; but God cannot be seen or known even in thought."

"If nobody knows God, what tells them God is good?"

"The divine laws they see in Nature. Those laws are good, they are laws of helpfulness, they can only come from goodness. The chief of those laws is the law of harmony and love; you saw that law working in me: it rules me; I have mercy and compassion for every creature, and I make all by the will of the unseen, eternal God."

"How do you know that will?"

"It is whispered in the Breath. Hark!"

The innocent child listened. He heard the song of the deathless Bird, the Swan of Time. He heard what it is given to few to hear,—the almighty Breath moving upon the Universal Soul. It cannot be described, but those who have heard it never forget, and none hear it but those who love the world more than themselves and cherish every creature.

"If you have all things, kind Light—" the child began. Tears filled his eyes; his heart swelled; he could not speak.

"What do you want, little one!"

"I want—Oh! I do want to see my Mamma," wept the lonely little child. All the glories of creation could not fill his human heart. Even as he spoke, a beautiful woman stood at the foot of his bed; her eyes were dark and deep with tenderness like still pools of the river; his sobs were stopped, his sore heart healed. "Mamma!" he said wistfully.

"It is not your Mamma her own self; it is her picture," spoke the voice that he had learned to trust. "Her picture is all I can show you; it is the sweet house in which her soul lived. The body is the house of the soul, and the soul is not to be seen after it flies out of the body at the call of God. You may always *feel* your Mamma near you, for the soul is always near all that it loves, though it lives for awhile in a better place than this poor world."

A feeling of peace and delight filled the boy, just as it used to do when his mother rocked him to sleep. That was the best thing about his mother, that feeling he had when he was near her. It made him so happy now that he was quite content; he did not notice that the lovely picture was fading away. His sleepy eyelids fell. What was that he saw? It was his own heart, with a crowned star in the middle. He remembered what he had heard one Christmas Day about the Christ-Light.

"I want my light to shine," he murmured drowsily.

A trumpet called out of the Eastern skies and a voice in the daybreak said:

“I shine in all. All are myself. In me all are Brothers. Who hurts his neighbor, hurts himself. Who hurts the dumb beast, hurts himself. Who breaks Nature’s laws, breaks his own heart. But he who helps the world is he whose Light shall shine until it becomes the Christ-Light and brings him to me.”

“Can a little child help?” asked the boy.

From North and South, from East and West the Sons of Light answered:

“Of such are the kingdom of Heaven.”

BUBBLES OF THE BREATH.

‘The air has bubbles as the water hath,
And these are of them.’

PIT-A-PAT fell the rain on the gabled roof of “Hide-away.” Pit-a-pat on the low, wide porches, on the overhanging branches and broad leaves. It was a wee houselet, a shelter in the hillside forest; it sat like a dark red fungus at the foot of a tall tree. The branches shaded it here, and there opened to let in the view of the slim, fair, peaceful valley girdled by hills of every delicate color-tone. To this resting place came Uncle John when the world roared too loud and too long, bringing Carlo with him. It was all of wood inside and out, lined with polished wood as a woodpecker’s nest is; the crackling wood fire cast its flickering shadows on the shining walls; it had a look as if it had grown there of itself; as Carlo said, it was “the most comf’ablest place.” Every one and everything seemed to think so; the pealing thunders of Uncle John’s organ had no terrors for the birds or butterflies that sometimes dashed through it, nor for Juno, the burly St. Bernard dog, dozing under the table. Maude with her kittens, Blondin and Brunette, lolled in their sheepskin rug, pretend-

ing it was a savage lair; Brunette, as usual, taking her dinner of fresh mother-milk, and Blondin the Bold gravely chasing a wasp entangled in the rug. Not a sound was heard except sounds of water, the rain taps and the gurgles of the stream falling into the marble basin from the outside spring in its unchecked flow. Uncle John lay back in his steamer-chair, a book on his knee and a pipe in his mouth; except for the puffs of smoke you would have thought him asleep. In a little alcove, just big enough for the organ and its stool, but not big enough for anything more, sat Carlo, swinging his dangling legs and marching his fingers over the organ keys, while he pensively watched the swoop of dark clouds over the hills and the races of rain-drops over the panes. Presently he clambered down; stealing on tiptoe into the room, he squatted down under the sage-green umbrella of the lamp, looking like Puck under a toadstool, wistfully watching for his friend and comrade to awaken. Perhaps Uncle John saw the weary little face from under his half-closed eyelids, as he had a way of doing; he gave a kind of grunt, a signal well known to Carlo, who said, very gently and without moving:

“May you be 'sturbed, Uncle?”

The Uncle answered by another question. “A rainy day is a long day, isn't it, old man?”

“N-o-o, not 'xactly. But the kits-cats won't play with the bird any more.” The “bird” was a queer mass of cotton and feathers, dangling from a line passed through a ring in the roof, causing the cats

to make mad leaps after it, tumbling and rolling, to Carlo's delight; even Juno did not disdain to play with the bird. To-day they had all had enough of it.

Maude got up and stretched herself. She trotted to the stationary washstand, on which she jumped, pawed the leaden plug into the basin, patted about until she had fitted it into the hole, and then demurely watched the water filling the basin until she thought it was full enough for a drink. This taken, she sprang to the window-sill and began to wash her face with her paws. Carlo ran to remove the plug.

"Naughty pussy!" said he. "Some day when we're not here, all the water will run over. Why don't you know enough to pull the plug out again?"

"If she could speak, she would probably say that she knows more than most cats already," his Uncle answered. "Time enough for her to do that when she gets to be a boy."

"Oh! Uncle. Will she *ever*?" and Carlo opened his eyes very wide.

"Did you never hear of Reïncarnation, my boy?" asked his Uncle, looking at the book he held. The book had this big word on its back, where books wear their names.

"What is it? A game?"

"That's a capital idea, my boy; we'll make it a game. You will understand better so." Rising, he stretched his tall form, fastened the girdle of his yellow dressing-coat about him, and ran his fingers through his fluffy blonde hair. "Rainy days make me go to sleep all over," he smiled, while Carlo

watched him intently. Going over to the oaken table under the book-case, he took from a hammered brass tray a clay pipe and an earthen bowl gaily painted with Japanese flowers. Into the bowl he poured hot water from a big brown jug upon the stove, and, taking a bit of soap, began to make strong suds. While Carlo looked on, Blondin suddenly caught the wasp, with a squeal as it stung his tongue, bit it, carried it in pride to Brunette, and said to her in cat language:

"You can't catch a thing like that, Brunette. You're only a girl."

"Pooh!" Brunette answered in the same way, "what's the good? You can't eat it," and waddled to her Mother to get some more dinner.

"I know, Uncle," Carlo called out. "It's soap-bubbles. That's prime!" Taking the clay pipe, he danced about impatiently.

"We are going to do more than blow bubbles; we are going to talk about them."

With a sigh of immense satisfaction, the child climbed on to a chair. Of all his pleasures, he valued most a talk with his Uncle.

"How I wish Mr. Bert was here," he said, alluding to a chum of his Uncle's whom too he loved.

"You can see if you remember what I tell you well enough to tell him," answered the other.

Carlo wriggled with joy. Next to hearing a story, he dearly loved to tell one, even to the kittens if no other hearer was at hand.

"Now, blow me a big bubble," the Uncle went on

to say, and soon a bright globe was rounding itself from the pipe and was tossed off into air, with another and another to follow it. Blondin ran up and slapped one with his paw; the look of astonishment on his stupid, innocent little face when it disappeared was most ridiculous, and made the bubble-makers shout with laughter, while puss snapped at one with her huge jaws, and looked so sheepish and silly when it vanished. Carlo called out in glee:

"Where's they gone, you poor old am's" (his word for animals); where's they gone?"

"That's just what I ask you, Carlo," said his Uncle. "Where have they gone to?"

"Why; into nothing, I s'pose."

"Do you remember my telling you once that there was not a spot in the world where nothing was?"

"Well, then, into air—isn't it?"

"Let us see. I am very much interested in bubbles, because they are just like people."

"Oh! come now, Uncle. People isn't so round and fat and all colors."

"How do you know?" What did you tell me that brown seed was, the one you were planting yesterday?"

"It was a pansy seed. It's goin' to be one of them beautiful gold and purple flowers with pussy-cat faces, you know."

"Why, that flower is not one bit like that brown seed, Carlo," said his Uncle, with half-shut eyes and his quizzical smile. Carlo looked at him in quick understanding.

"You caught me that time," he laughed. "Tell

me how bubbles are like people, while I blow the best one you ever saw."

"You know, child, how often I tell you not to judge of what a thing is like in its real self by what you see of it outside. About the bubbles: very wise men say that every person has about him a body of a rare kind of air, sometimes called ether. It surrounds him just as air surrounds the earth or the moon. Every thing, too, has just such a ball or sphere of air around it and belonging to it. Colors are said to run through that sphere of air, changing as the person's thoughts or breath changes. So to people who see this, man would seem to be in the center of a bubble with ever-changing hues."

"Does everybody see it?"

"Not all people, for all eyes are not the same. Many persons do. Don't you remember telling me about a wonderful Light you saw one night?" Carlo nodded. "You saw something like that, then. But there is something even more interesting in bubbles and men. What do you think it is?"

Carlo watched a bubble bursting in the air.

"Is it that they both dies?" he asked.

"A good guess. But I do not think they either of them *die* exactly. I think they only change. Let us see. What makes the bubble? Come; tell me and I'll match you with what makes a man."

"Soap," said Carlo.

"Body," said his Uncle.

"Water," said Carlo.

Uncle John matched that by saying "Soul."

"No more," said Carlo.

"Oh, yes. One thing more." Carlo shook his puzzled head. "Stir your brains now. A very important thing. What makes the bubble, after all? What do you put into it?"

"Breath!" shouted Carlo gaily.

"Exactly," his Uncle assented. "I'll match that with Spirit."

"What is spirit, Uncle?"

"Spirit is the Great Breath of God. See—we have soap, water, and breath. And body, soul, and spirit. Soap makes the bubble hold together. The water would not hold alone. You can't blow pure water into a bubble. Bubbles such as you sometimes see on the edge of running water have gas in them, made from decaying slime or plants; it acts as the soap does. Just so the soul, the light which is the mind or Thinker of men, needs a body to hold it or it cannot act in this world at all. But if air is not blown into the bubble in some way, then no shape is formed. And Spirit is the Great Breath of Life. It is in the body; and also it is outside of the body. Without that Breath the soul could not live and think at all, and without the body it could not live in this particular kind of a world."

"But bubbles burst, Uncle."

"And men die."

"Yes; I heard a man sayin' that once when Mamma took me to church. He was up in a big box lookin' down on the peoples. I wished it was me, up there. Say, Uncle; what is it, anyhow, *to*

die? Get planted like the flowers, don't you? I fink to die is bein' snuffed out like a candle, just this-a-way." He tossed a bubble on the shining maple floor and stamped on it with his foot. "Gone! Then there's no more Carlo; no more Uncle," he said.

"How do you know that? What is that spot on the floor?"

Carlo looked at it. "Just a drop of water left from the bubble."

"Then it is not all gone. That drop of water thrown off from it is like our cast-off body which is put into the earth. The drop disappears, swallowed up by the boards and the air; so our bodies sink into earth and air again. I saw some spray from the bubble fall back into the bowl, from the air, when it burst. How about that? I will tell you. The soul goes back to the World-Soul, the Wonder-Light. It stays there for a time. And the breath; where is that?"

"In the air," said Carlo.

"And so the Spirit Breath is in the Great Breath. Is that all?"

"I 'spose it is," the child answered.

"Then you do not wish to blow bubbles any more?"

"Oh, yes I do!"

"And suppose the Great Breath too goes on making more of the bubbles called men? That would make many men. But suppose one is made again with the same spirit and the same soul, what then?"

"Oh! Why then, Uncle, why then—yes—they'd

have to come back again here, wouldn't they, if the Great Breath said so?"

"Of course they would. That is called Reïncarnation, that coming back of soul and spirit into a new body. Now let us see what you do. You blew breath into the bubble and confined it there; air and water were held in that form, as in a prison, by the soap. When their motion got too strong for the bubble, it broke. When the soul wears out the body, the body dies. The heaviest part of the bubble, soap and water, fell on the floor. So the gross lower part of the soul dies with the body. Some fine spray blew off into the air and back into the bowl; so the fine part of the soul, the Thinker, goes into the World-Soul, and there the Breath is always moving. The human soul waits there awhile. And now tell me what you did after breathing your breath out."

"I breafed more in."

"So the Great Breath does. It is drawn in and out. It breathes out and into forms; that is life. It is breathed in again, and out of the forms or bodies of men and things; that is death. Death is only a change; the soul still lives, in another state or condition, until it is breathed into another body again. The soul is the real man. It never dies. See; you draw the water and soap up again from the place where the spray fell in and you blow another bubble. It is the same water, mixed with other soap, blown by the same breath. So when the body dies, or changes into earth and lime and flowers, it is seen that even bodies do not die; *nothing ever dies*; they

only change into new forms of life, they become bodies for other things, for the ant or the wheat or the fruit tree growing from the soil. The soul rests awhile, out of the body, in a peaceful, beautiful kind of happiness called heaven. Heaven is not a place; it is a condition of joy and rest. After a while, spirit in its wisdom breathes again into the soul-sphere all the glowing colors of life. The soul moves and draws together a new body, just as that spray drew new soap and water to itself, and the motion of the Breath in it helps to round out a new form. So the soul of every man comes back again and again, and this, as I said, is Reïncarnation, or coming back again into a new form. Spirit is the companion of soul."

"Why does soul come back?"

"To learn more and more, so that at last it may have such a pure, wise heart-star that the Christ-Light may be born in it."

"But where is *I*? Where's Carlo, Uncle John?"

"That part of you which goes into the Breath, that fine part, your Thinker, as you call it, is the real Carlo. It never dies."

"And was my Thinker in a great many little boys?"

"Yes; it has passed through many bodies. The soul, as the Wonder-Light showed you, passes into stones, plants, animals, and then into men."

"Goodness! Was my Thinker in all those bodies?"

"I believe so."

"Well, then, just you tell me why my Thinker

don't *r'member* something about it. Now I've caught you, haven't I?" Carlo laughed roguishly, showing all his pretty teeth in his red mouth like a cherry. His Uncle smiled, throwing one arm about him.

"Do you forget your Remember Game, Carlo? Aha! now I've caught you! Sometimes your Thinker does remember something about all the past, you see. But I think it remembers all the time, but you and your brain are too busy to listen. When your brain and body sleep, the soul, the Thinker, does not sleep. Often you remember what it saw, and you call it a dream. It reflects all the world as that mass of bubbles in the bowl reflects the room; see the little images there. Because you sleep, the Thinker does not sleep. So in daytime while your brains are busy with the outside world, they do not hear the low voice of the soul. Now dip your pipe *deep* into the water."

Carlo did as he was told. But he could blow no bubble; the soapy water fell back into the bowl without taking shape.

"See," his Uncle continued, "there is too much heavy matter there; your breath cannot blow it. So it is if the soul thinks too much of the body and mixes too much in the body and bodily pleasures, such as eating, drinking, and so on. The breath cannot inform the soul then, and, after a time, body and soul disperse, mix with their own elements, and do not return. That is only when a man has been horribly wicked. But for the most part, the Thinker passes through many forms till perfection of heart-light is reached. You are Carlo now. Last time

you may have been a beggar, and next time you may be a king. So it is with us all. We all came from the Great Breath, the mover. We all go back to it and come forth again. We are brothers; men, animals, plants, rocks, creatures of the elements, all come from the World-Soul. Each has passed through the river of life the same way; each will go out and return again, so each should be kind to every other. You may change places, next time, with the boy to whom you are unkind to-day."

"Oh, Uncle! I was cross with Juno yesterday. I hit her. Have I got to go back and be a dog next time?"

Carlo's eyes grew bigger and darker. He looked as if he would like to cry.

"No indeed, my boy. Did you ever see a river flow backward! The river of life never stops, turns around and flows the other way. Souls come up into life from the lowest lives on to the highest; the river flows onward; your soul will not again go through the bodies it has left behind or take on lower forms of life. Yet be kind to all things as well as to people. If you are unkind you may hurt their lives, and your own heart-star cannot become pure and great. That star called the soul enters all bodies, knows and conquers all bodies, until it becomes splendidly pure and wise. Men are only the bubbles of the world. But souls that become pure spirit are eternal, immortal; they are like God."

"I fink it's beautiful. Ess; I do!" the child said slowly. "Re-carnations. I'll tell it all to Mr. Bert

when he comes in. Maude is so smart. Will she be a baby boy next time?"

The Uncle smiled. "I do not think so. The animals are a long way off from men yet. And there are wiser animals than cats. Some learned men say that the elephant is the wisest of animals and has the most mind, so that the last time a soul is in an animal body, it is in that of an elephant. I do not know how true that is."

"Oh, Maude!" exclaimed the boy, "you'll be an elephant like Mr. Barnum's next time. What fun that will be! Won't she be s'prised? She's so cute and little now. Wouldn't it be awful for her if she came up again only a dandelion?" He hugged the cat in sympathy.

"Remember what I told you, Carlo. The law is that all things, as they come out of the Great Breath, shall go upward, shall improve. The unseen God made that law. The animal will not be a plant again, nor the plant a stone. Some animals are wiser in many things than some men are. They obey the laws of nature better than we do. The animals are true to their own nature, but men are not always true to theirs; they do not always listen to the voice of the soul, the conscience whispering in us when we do wrong. For those who do listen, a great future is in store; there is nowhere any stop on this long journey: they go on to greater lives, on to other worlds. At last, no longer mere bubbles of the Breath, they enter that Great Breath itself; they are all one with it and in great peace."

"That's splendid! I'll try to be good and go on with you, Uncle."

As he spoke, the door opened and a young man entered. Carlo ran to him.

"Here you are, Mr. Bert," he cried, "Come in; I'll tell you about some three-carnations—not the kind you have in your buttonhole. You think you're a man, Mr. Bert. You aren't any such a thing. You're only a bubble, what the Great Breath has blown. If you're good, you'll get back to God's house some day. God's house is the Great, Great Breath."

The two men smiled at each other over the dear little curly head. Both thought the same thing: "May we three always meet in the long journey." Carlo, as if he felt their thoughts, said as he climbed up on to Mr. Bert's shoulders:

"But you both must go along with me. God's house wouldn't be home without my friends."

WHAT THE FOUNTAIN SAID.

THERE was a fountain in the woods on the hillside. It was not like any fountain that Carlo had ever seen, but was a talking fountain, with a cool, soft voice of its own. Where it really lived, no one knew; high on the hill it came flashing out of a great wall of rock from its hidden home, falling into a bed of stone and pebbles with sound and churning, then leaping from this pool up into air again, scattering its spray over moss grown ledges. A wise man who found and loved it used its waters to heal the sick and weary, and had built a queer red hut about it below the thunder of the railroad track, which often came to drown the fountain's low voice. It is often so; the world's thunder often tries to drown the sweet, small voices of nature. The hut had a porch, overhanging the hill as an oriole's nest hangs from the branch. There Carlo loved to stand, watching birds and clouds floating above the distant valley below, where tiny men drove little horses hitched to small plows, and midges that were the town boys ran over the ball-grounds after something he could not see. Inside the hut was a little room with a barred and grated window looking into the prison of the fountain, shut up so that no one should pollute its

sweet waters. Carlo clasped the iron bars with his pink hands and peeped in, happy in the songs of the waters. Happier still he was when the Superintendent would come with his bunch of keys and let him into the cool rock room whose top was not roofed over, there to sit on a ledge, chin in hand, dreaming over the troubled water. Hands seemed to wave to him out of its downward fall, and airy forms to float in its smoke and spray. He was so used to seeing these fairies of the fountain that he was not surprised when he one day heard a voice speaking to him. He had been watching the waves of the pool running to the shore. A white blossom had drifted through the bars and into the pool, where the waves had great sport with it. It was carried to the shore, or stone edge of the pool, where Carlo thought its journey ended. But no; another set of waves seemed to catch it up and to carry it round, bearing it back towards the boiling center again, wind-driven and tossing. When it reached that place, Carlo hoped the poor, tired thing would be drawn up into the air by the up-leaping spray, but it was again driven away to shore, and so it traveled back and forth, poor wee waif, at the mercy of the stormy ripples. It looked so wet and wan; it had no rest or help; Carlo felt sad to see it.

"Oh! Fountain, let it go," he said; "do let it go again."

"I cannot do that," said a voice in his mind.

"Why; who are you?"

"I am the Fountain."

"I did not know you had a voice," Carlo said.
"Please excuse me."

"Everything in the world has a voice of its own," the Fountain sang, "and everything speaks, although men do not often understand the voices of Nature."

"Why do I understand you, then?"

"Because you love me, and because little children have pure hearts. When men have such hearts, they too will understand."

"Tell me then, please, why that leaf can't get out."

"It is because the good Law forbids it."

"Now, Fountain, I act'ally don't understand. What is a law?"

"It is a commandment which men may not break, and for breaking which they are punished. Some laws are made by men to protect people. If a man steals, the law shuts him up in prison, where he cannot steal. That is man's law. Others are laws of Nature. If an apple is parted from the twig, it must fall. That is one of Nature's laws. That summer shall follow winter, that cold shall turn into heat, is another law. But while man's laws are only the copies, all Nature's laws are the Children of the Great Law which all the worlds obey."

"And what does that Law say, dear Fountain?"

"It says that what goes forward shall come back. That what falls shall rise up. That what you do will return. That what you sow you shall reap. It is the Law of Justice."

"You'll have to explain that to me, I fink, if you please," Carlo said.

"Have you ever thrown a ball against a wall?"

"Yes; it came back."

"Have you ever seen the ocean tide rolling to shore?"

"Yes; it rolled out again."

"Have you ever said an unkind word?"

Carlo hung his head.

"Yes, an' the boy I said it to was very cross at me. He hit me. And I hitted him back."

"All that was your angry word passing back and forth. It is so everywhere. Look over the valley. Have you seen the farmer sow his seed?"

"Uncle John showed me that."

"If a farmer sows corn, what comes up?"

"*Corn*. Didn't you know that, old Fountain?"

"Are you sure it isn't apple trees?"

Carlo shouted with laughter. "Oh! you silly Fountain, you."

"Why do not apple trees come up when we put corn in the ground?"

"Because *corn* makes *corn*. And apple seeds makes apples."

"Then you see that like makes like. Anger sows anger, and love breeds love. But if an angry word of hate is spoken and you turn your heart from it and speak a word of kindness instead, only the person who spoke anger gets anger back, while you, speaking love, shall feel love return into your heart. Perhaps, too, your love can change that person's an-

ger to love, for anger does not cease by anger—that keeps it up—it ceases only by love.”

“I thought you said the law was that the same thing should always come back.”

“I did. And it does come back. But a thing may be changed into another thing in time, because the law makes all things go to and fro. See your heart. It beats forward, then it beats backward. You breathe out, then you breathe in. After day comes the darkness; then day again. After the beautiful days, the storms. Wet after dry; heat after cold; after the strong man works and moves, he is tired, he is strong no more, until with rest his strength returns. Men sleep; then they waken. The earth sleeps under the winter’s snows, and wakens in the spring. After a time comes a new winter and then a new spring; so on and on. The heart of man is glad, then sad; then joy returns once more. Suns and moons appear and disappear. Everywhere is this great Law of change, of what is called flux and reflux (like the ocean tides). Things change in periods, and return again to what they were before. Men die to live in ‘devachan’ or heaven. The soul enters a body, leaves it, returns to another body. Everywhere you find the same. Through all these changes the same thing moves; that is Life. Through all these changes, Life is the same. It looks out, like the actor, behind many masks. But as new harvests bring ripper fruit and improved grains, just so Life mounts from form to form, ever seeking higher forms. And the soul of

man can stop the journey of evil, turning it into good, just as you can pick up that drowned flower leaf from the pool."

Carlo picked it up and threw it into the air.

"Blow back, dear leaf," he said, "into the woods again."

But the leaf was so heavy with water that it fell back on to the window-sill.

"So it is with man," the Fountain said. "You may return a kind word for his angry one, but his heart is so heavy with the wrongs it has done and which have come back in his thoughts to live with him and hold him away from happiness, that he cannot rise. But see, your leaf has gone."

So it had. The hot sun had dried the leaf and a kind breeze had carried it away to the woods. Carlo was so glad.

"It was the sun helped it," he said.

"Yes. The sun of love helps all creatures to mount and rise to higher things. We all go to whatever we love. So if a man loves evil, help him to love the good by showing him how much happier that is, and he will change to that. For just as the world moves on to greater life through the changes of seasons and times; just as the child grows to manhood through going back and forth over the years, now in heat, now in snow; just as the rock life becomes the flower life, and as that passes on into the life of winged things, so the great Law moves ever *upward* through movements backward and forward, and it is called Karma, or the law of

action and reäction. Look at me, Carlo. I am the image of Life. I am the picture of the living soul. Out of the darkness I come; no man sees how or why. At the call of the Law, I fall. My waters plunge down deep, stirring up the sand and slime of the pool. They eddy backward and forward, shut into the narrow world they have found. Is there no way out? Yes. For the finer parts of me there is freedom, once they have cast back the sand and slime to the deeps where they were gathered. The light, diamond-pure drops of me will rise in spray into the air. They fall on tall rocks, they feed the moss flowers, the high skies drink them up, they are drawn into the sun. The drops that rise are, to the drops that fall, as wise men are to mindless babes. The falling waters know nothing of the world to which they come; senseless, they are hurled down. But the rising spray has learned all about that new world and mounts among rainbows to a place in the heavens, richer by all that it has learned. So it is with the souls of men. Down from the Infinite Dark they come. In the pool of life they drive to and fro. Like water-drops they enter many shapes. Now they live in the center, now sleep awhile on the shore. Then they are hurried into a shape again; back, back to the boiling center, and ever so, till they are free."

"That's what Uncle John telled me somefing about. He calls it 'Re'carnation' when anyfing comes back into a new body after it died or slept. But tell me what can make a wave or a soul free."

"It's own nature can make it free. It is part of of the Law. It has in itself the power to rise. Bye-and-bye, after long driving to and fro—or action and reäction—the wave becomes finer, swifter; it tries to rise. And the sun, shining down into the center of the dark pool, finds a little sun shining in every drop; it attracts or calls to those little suns which are its children, parts of itself."

"Like the mother hen clucks to her chicks, you mean, don't you?"

"Yes. That draws the drops upward when they are pure and light enough. So the soul of man, when it loses the heaviness of this world, gives itself up to the divine Sun of Souls and rises into the higher Life. I will show you how this is. Watch this wave that is falling now."

A white wave came out of the darkness and dived to the bottom of the pool. When it bubbled up again there were scum and sand upon it from those deeps.

"That scum is like the dark acts and thoughts of man, gathered from his lower life," the Fountain said.

The wave was driven to the shore. It broke there and seemed to pause a little.

"So the soul of man rests in heaven after death is passed and the earth body divides and is broken," the voice spoke. "The soul rests in the invisible world, like the wave, which you do not see *as a wave* now. Though it is broken as a wave shape, every drop of water is still there. So when man's body breaks up in the earth, the unseen soul lives on without that form. Look deeper now."

Carlo peered into the pool. He saw presently that under-currents took up all the water drops that had made the wave, formed them together again, and drove them below the surface of the pool, back to the center once more.

"So the life currents gather up the soul and propel it back into the visible world in a new form," the Fountain went on to say.

"I fink the drops are stupid. Why don't they jump up into spray when they get to shore?"

"Because the heavy scum and sand grains weigh them down and hold them in the pool. It is these earth particles that keep the drops imprisoned, and allow them to be driven back again. And it is the earth love of man and his evil deeds that draw his soul back to earth out of heaven where he sleeps."

"I do fink he has a hard time," sighed Carlo.

"Oh, no. Remember that his good deeds are there to help him. His soul is a part of that embodied Law which is the Sun of Souls. It is his nature to rise, just as it is water's nature to rise, both drawn by the sun. Now watch again."

Carlo saw the drops, formed into a new wave, rise up into the center of the boiling pool, among other waves. It was still heavy with earth grains. It struggled. It was lashed into greater life; it moaned like a thing in pain. It could not move fast. It was driven often from shore to center, from center to shore. It seemed to think and to feel, as it wildly tried to get free.

"Poor, poor wave," cried Carlo.

In its efforts, the wave threw down some of the heavy load it carried, losing part in every journey. Carlo saw that it grew lighter and moved more swiftly to and fro. When next the drops came into shape as a wave, it moved along with more speed, more joy. There were rainbow colors here and there instead of scum, and when it reached the center again, all the earth grains were worked off, it rose in a fine shining mist, released from the trouble of the pool, looking like an angel form as, with a low note of joy, it swept away. It would have done this sooner, only it jostled against other waves in those wild journeys. It hurt them, it broke them; it was hurt and broken by them, and this kept them all back. In much the same way men push through the world, all for themselves, never thinking that this really hurts them and others too, and so all are kept back from the higher, beautiful Life. Is it not beautiful to be strong, great, able to help all the world's suffering ones; to be full of knowledge and power, using them for the world? The just Law gives back what you have given.

"I see," Carlo said. "Like waves, people get low earth feelings from low lives, feelings what drags them down."

"And these act and react (or go and come, come and go) all the time. But like the wave they can drop these one by one. The good Law helps, for it says all things shall come into life, shall go through every kind of life and form until the highest heavenly place is reached. They do not go straight up in a

straight line. Life rises in moving to and fro. That is the easiest way to climb a mountain—to zig-zag up. Butterflies and swallows mount into the air that way. The lark's egg does not bring forth a robin; the apple seed knows nothing of the peach; the kind deed brings kindness and the evil deed brings sadness. But the bird's soul, in long ages, may become a child's soul. The life of the apple may pass into the life of the peach or the bee. Why? Because the life spirit is always the same, though it changes bodies. Because the soul in all things changes and learns. How does it do this? By moving on faster and faster with the Law. It is only if men love the low places of life and cling to them, that they cannot rise out of the earth pool. The Law brings them into life. Once there, they are free to sink or rise. They can try to do either. All things, too, have a life and a mind of their own, different from man's mind, but just as real. Do you not hear my voice in your mind? Do you not see my life? Hurt nothing, then. Stop no creature, no thing upon its upward way. Remember, dear child, remember that what you sow you must reap. The world is the field where man sows the seed of his thoughts and deeds. The harvests are as many as the lives. Death cannot free you from the scum of life. Death cannot change the Law. Death is only a sleep of part of the soul. When you wake up in the morning, you have the wishes and thoughts of yesterday. And when the soul awakens, the earth thoughts are there, drawing it back to lower places in life. That is why

there are so many unhappy men and women who do dark, wild things. Try to help them, so that they may have kinder hearts, and have a better place next life. Try to throw away all unkindness from your own heart. Then great shall be your harvest. You shall reap the seed that feeds the soul, that makes the bread of life eternal, and you shall give it to the hungry world. The just Law will bless you."

Here Carlo heard himself called. Looking up, he saw his Uncle through the window bars.

"How long have you been here, my boy?" he said. "See, the sun is setting."

He lifted the child on to his shoulder and carried him out to the porch. The red sun was sinking behind the hill, going to light another part of the world.

"I don't know if I was asleep, Uncle. I was listening. The Fountain telled me a story. It was about the beautiful Law. That Law drives everything backward and forward until it is made pure and clean. Then up it goes to the great Sun."

He waved his little arms about like wings, rising on his Uncle's shoulder as if to fly into the sunset, his face bright with joy.

"Stay with me awhile yet, my boy, and tell me the story," said the Uncle, clasping him closer. He heard the whole story as they trotted down the steep, winding paths, and said that all the fountain told was true.

"Then, Uncle, I won't plant nettles in my garden for to sting when I hit the boys with them. I'll just keep honey blossoms for the bees."

“And what will you plant in your heart, my son?”

“Heart flowers,” laughed the child, “and that’s just Love. Here’s one.”

And the trees all said they heard something very like a kiss as the two friends went into their funny red house.

RAHULA'S INHERITANCE.

“ * * The spirit promised me that I should dwell with the crooked moon in her eternal beauty.”

IN that wonderful Age which our nurses call Once-upon-a-time, the Prince Rahula came into the Hall of Sages and demanded his birthright. The Wise Ones heard him in silence, and he seemed to be dismissed without an answer. On the following day he came again, with the same ill success; so the third time and up to the seventh demand, being always unnoticed and even, as he thought, unseen. On the eighth day a messenger, returning to the Council of Sages, found Rahula seated on a plinth at the entrance to the temple.

“What doest thou there, my Lord,” demanded the messenger.

“I have taken up my abode here, nor will I stir hence until the Wise Ones shall have heard me,” answered Rahula.

“But is it meet that thou shouldst sit here so lowly, Prince that thou art?”

“It is meet that a man do all things to obtain his birthright. For him there is nothing else, and great or small, honey or poison, mine shall be mine.”

The messenger bowed before him. "Thou art more than royal; thou art wise," he said. Then he hastened within, and when the Sages heard what he had seen they sent for Prince Rahula, who presently saluted them reverently and said:

"I am come to claim mine own. I am the Prince Rahula and I am well known to you; seven times already have I claimed it."

"Yes, my son," answered the Elder; "but it is customary to prove a man, that his determination may show him the true heir, so that no impostor shall receive the inheritance kept for him by the Sons of Wisdom. Only those who know their rights and wrest them from Fate by strong courage are true Princes of the royal line. But there is still a sign and countersign to pass between us ere we bestow thy birthright upon thee. Dost thou know them?"

The young Prince smiled a smile that was rarely sweet, drew himself to his full height and tossing back his mantle displayed to the Sages a crimson heart, transfixes with a golden lance. The Sages rose and saluted the Emblem, and parting their robes, each showed such a heart beneath his own breast. Only in the center of theirs was written the word *Humanity*, and the lances were of living light, and a musical throb that was in itself a perfume was the pulse of each heart.

"Thou knowest the sign indeed," said the Elder to Rahula. "Take now the countersign. Remember that the wise and perfect heart pulsates for man alone. Thou hast demanded thy birthright in the

name of the pierced heart: take it and go in Peace."

At his signal the messenger brought to Rahula a large and brilliant crystal. It was shaped like the crescent moon: one side of it was covered with hieroglyphs cut into the stone; the other sparkled from innumerable facets like a field of hoar-frost at sunrise. Rahula looked at it seriously. "A strange gift for a warrior," he said. "What is its use, my Lords? What shall I do with it?"

The Elder answered: "It is the birthright deposited with us at thy coming into the world, and we can give thee no other. Its use is for thee to discover. We are but the guardians, not the interpreters. I have spoken."

Vainly Rahula besought him, no other word was uttered; the Sages had resumed their silence, and at last, lit by the rays of the shining moon, Rahula left the temple and reëntered life. Long he considered the jewel; of the characters he could make nothing. So he determined to hang the great crystal beneath the royal gateway, where all men might see it, and perchance its use might be discovered. This was done, and the life of the great city passed on beneath the mysterious crystal. Soon strange tales were told of it; at night its wonderful brilliance shattered the darkness with a thousand rays, which were never so softly penetrating as when they lit the weary to his home or pointed out his task; which were never so blinding and sharp as when they shone into the face of sin and confused it. These living rays seemed to single out certain men and,

passing before them, to light them to happiness and good fortune. It was found that such men had always sought after the light with single hearts, so that people began to desire to be well considered by the spirit of the gem, and to take its rays for guidance. Others still, looking for the solution of grave problems of labor and of want, found the answer in the hieroglyphs of the crystal moon, and translated them into many longing lives. Nor was this all. The gem reflected the heavens and their mysteries to those who looked down upon it from hard-won heights, and cast also an illumination from those holy lands upon the wayfarers beneath who could not climb so far. It shed from its resplendent facets the life and warmth of the sun, and through the solemn marches of the nights it testified to the living Truth beyond the stars, and so renewed the religion of the people. All who appealed in faith to its hidden spirit were helped; the sick who struggled to touch it were made whole or given great patience and content. At the first touch of sunrise, at the last ray of sunset, seven musical notes rang from its flashing rim and turned to ineffable harmony the lives of all who heard them. Thus the light of a great peace fell over the city; friend and foe alike came from afar to share it, and the reign of Rahula blessed even his enemies.

The Prince thought long over the strange power of the crystal as the happy people passed and re-passed beneath it. He thought it too diffused; he determined to concéntrate and heighten it, and sum-

moning his servants, bade them take down the crystal from the gateway and bring it into one of the great halls of the palace. When this was done, and the soft shining no longer lit those stony ways, the people murmured, so that the Prince went out and himself spoke with them.

"I have been learning the use of my birthright," he said. "The crystal is too rare a thing to hang thus exposed to the elements, to the enterprise of my rivals, the greed of envious men, and to all the chances of fate. I have built an altar in the palace hall; the gem shall hang above it; incense shall rise; the Gods will answer me from between the horns of my crystal moon, and send riches to me and to my kingdom. These I will myself dispense to you, and the jewel shall still bless you, but my foes shall be confounded."

All were silent a moment. Afterwards a woman in the crowd fell to weeping and cried out: "Do not this thing, my Lord! Hide not the light of thy birthright from us. We love the gem, and that love is more to us than any riches."

"You shall still love it," replied Rahula—"more, you shall worship it, for this crystal is the abode of a mighty spirit; it is the signet of the Gods."

"To worship is not always to love," sobbed the woman, and the crowd complained loudly.

But Rahula replied again: "The gem will make my reign renowned. It shall not be profaned by the dust and steam of the byways, by the fevered touch of the sick and the desecration of unhallowed

eyes. In the shelter of a sacred place it shall shine for the good alone, and those who do homage to me and are taught of my priests, these the crystal shall bless, and not my enemies; yea, it shall still bless all my true people. I have said."

Rahula disappeared and the crowd went away muttering.

A great change came over the city. Little by little, the old turmoil came back, the old discord and wrangling went on beneath the gateways. The memory of that soft shining died out of the fevered hearts, and soon only the aged and the little children remembered to mourn for the lost gem. But within the temple incense rolled, priests knelt consulting the oracles, wise men interpreted the hieroglyphs seeking riches and fame for Rahula, while over all the white moon hung pale and shuddering in the perfumed breeze. A change came over it like the change in the city. The smoke of worship obscured the rays, then obstructed them; then they ceased shining altogether and the face of the moon was veiled in mist. The temple music drowned the bell notes, and though it was stopped when this was discovered, those notes sounded no more, for the sunrise and sunset glow no longer flooded the crystal rim. The hieroglyphs told wonderful tales of fame and pomp and war, but all turned out illy, and Rahula found that his priests had read them backward, that only the people knew their language by instinct, as the language of their infancy. The glory and beauty of the great gem were gone; none but the priests would

do it homage, and it hung, a dulled and impotent thing in the chill silence above the altar. Rahula felt a certain awe, a sense of coming disaster. He bade his servants take down the crystal, set cunning artificers to brighten and restore it, and then, ordering a great festival to be held, he had the stone replaced above the gateway, and waited for the joy and praises of the people.

Instead he heard jeers, flouting, and anger. "Does he weary of his pleasure, that he flings it forth to us again?" cried some. Others said: "The stone has brought him ill-fortune, and he would cast it over the city instead." Some pointed at it as an old superstition; some prostrated themselves in loud worship, but these were men of evil conscience who sought to propitiate the Prince for their own ends. Some indeed there were who tried to read words of comfort or peace in the gem, but the artificers of the Prince had altered the signs unknowingly and all the real meaning was defaced. While Rahula saw this, first with anger, then with deadly pain and grief, a black storm slowly rolled up, gathered, burst, and in an hundred lightnings the stone was shattered, its splintered fragments hurled down the tempest and lost. The people fled the city in terror, crying that the Gods had punished them for reverencing a birthright other than their own, as was forbidden to man. When the storm was over, one pallid star looked out of the clouds upon a deserted palace, and a lonely Prince brooding over his lost birthright, questioning the mystery of that destruction.

Long he searched his heart in the solitude, but it gave no answer that he understood; he too had forgotten a language. He rose with sudden recollection; he would go to the Hall of Sages. Even as he thought this the Elder stood before him. The Prince shot a glance of hope into that calm face, a glance that changed to one of dismay as the Sage said gravely:

“What hast thou done with thy birthright?”

“I? Nothing,” stammered Rahula. Mocking echoes multiplied the word. “Nothing! Nothing!” came back to him from all his empty halls like an accusation. He turned quickly upon the Elder.

“Answer me this,” he said. “What is this gem, whose power and value are so great, and yet so small? What is it that is both everything and nothing?”

“It is Life. Life which bestowed upon the world is of priceless worth to thee and to all, and which for selfish ends is but an empty thing; Life which thou shalt lose if thou keepest it for thyself. Used as a means, Life is glorious in power and opportunity, fruitful in blessing. Used as an end, a thing sought and worshipped in itself, it is the scorn of mortals and the sport of Gods. This was thy only birthright, and thou hast lost it.”

“But I will find it again; I will seek the world for the fragments,” spoke Rahula. “They shall once more mirror heaven, and once more shine upon the people.”

He went forth to search strongly, a weary search

of centuries, for wherever mankind may dwell, there still wanders Rahula, seeking those broken fragments, seeking to restore their scattered meaning. Happy he who, having received Life whole from the Gods, gives it back to them in unbroken integrity through the lives of all the people.